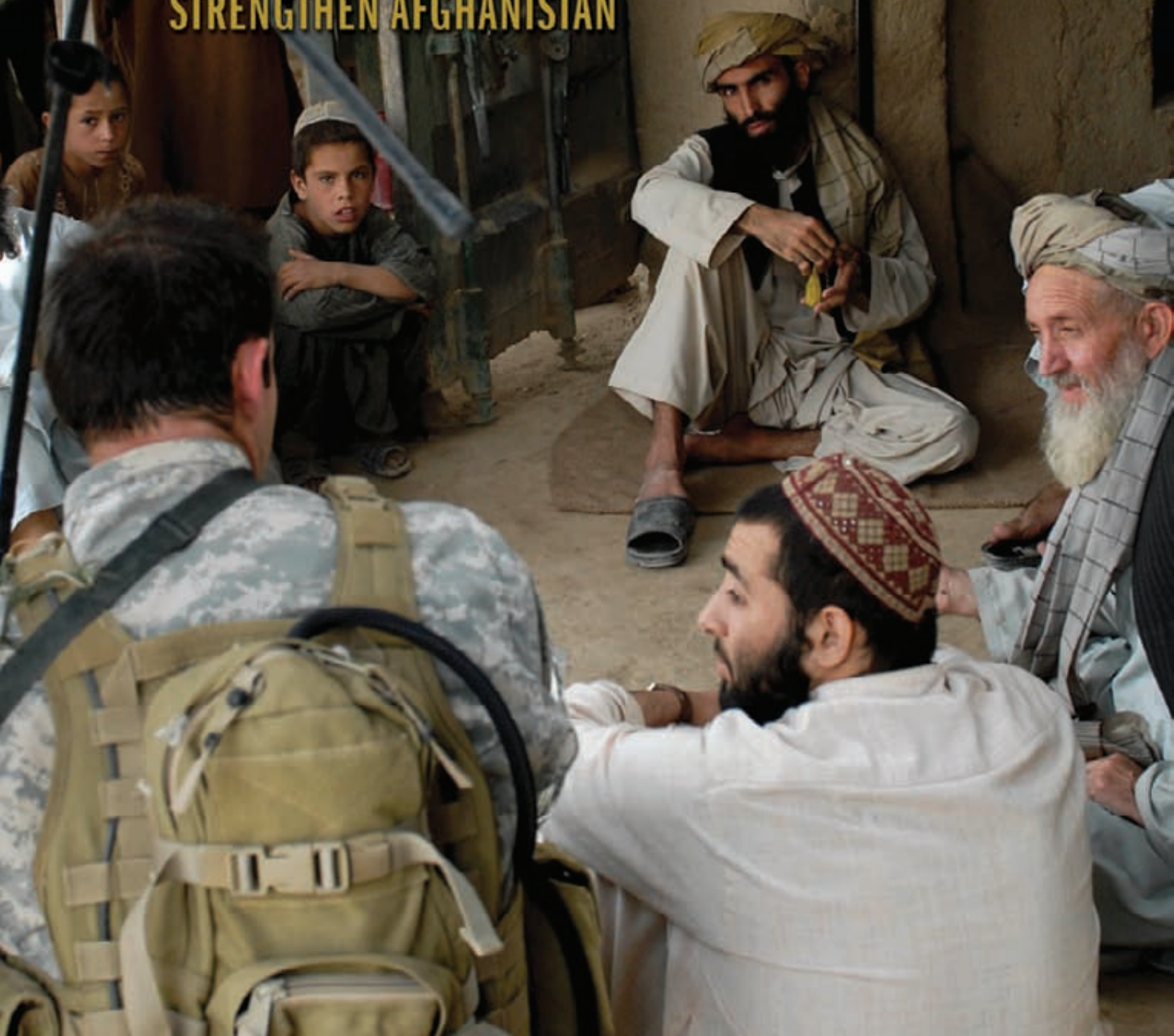


Special Warfare

July-August-September 2011 | Volume 24 | Issue 3

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STRENGTHEN AFGHANISTAN





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Manuscripts should be submitted in plain text, double-spaced and in a digital file. End notes should accompany works in lieu of embedded footnotes. Please consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th Edition, for footnote style.

Submit graphics, tables and charts with source references in separate files from the manuscript (no embedded graphics). *Special Warfare* may accept high-resolution (300 dpi or greater) digital photos; be sure to include a caption and photographer's credit. Prints and 35 mm transparencies are also acceptable. Photos will be returned, if possible.

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Special Warfare

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FROM THE COMMANDANT



We are going to build *Special Warfare* beyond the traditional trade/professional publication to make it a world-class forum for special-operations thoughts and activities. Beginning with this issue, you will notice some obvious additions to our content. We are including new sections that will provide you with more details on areas that are of special interest to the special-operations community. Specifically, you will notice new sections that provide training and education updates, not only for the curriculum at the Special Warfare Center and School but also for any relevant training and education within our regiments; the latest trends in fitness and nutrition; new equipment we have either tested, fielded or are considering; and an article specific to international special-operations forces. We will now publish four quarterly issues and one to two special publications annually, and will increase the size of each issue to allow us to include a wider range of articles and more diverse topics.

There is another addition that I believe will make the publication truly informative and dynamic, frankly, one that is beyond our control to affect: a reader's opinion page. I am asking for your opinion and comments about articles that we publish or for other opinions that you believe would be relevant to our readers. Pretty much anything is on the table with one exception: no anonymous articles. In keeping with the values of our regiments, you must be prepared to accept personal responsibility for your opinions. My hope is that we will develop an opinion-editorial section that will make *Special Warfare* a venue for our readers to share comments, opinions, information and even frustrations.

To get the ball rolling, I have written the first opinion piece that expresses something that I believe is important for our decision-makers to understand concerning the true value of our regiments to national security. You may not agree with what I say, and that's fine. Let me hear your views on the subject. If you want to disagree with me, bring it on, I want to get some sort of dialogue going. Once again, be up-front enough to give your name, and if your comments are legitimate, we'll publish them.

That goes for anything you see in SW that you feel warrants feedback, discussion or input. If you have information or experience that could amplify a point made in a letter or an article, whether you agree or disagree, let us hear from you.

Our special operators are facing some daunting challenges, and the future promises more of the same, potentially with less resources. As members of the regiment, it is our duty to prepare our soldiers for what they may encounter, and we need your great ideas to make us better. In special operations, we know that we already have the best and brightest Soldiers, and now we need to get your feedback, your ideas, your experiences and your opinions to encourage discussion and make *Special Warfare* a forum for sharing knowledge to best prepare our force for tomorrow's uncertainties.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "B. Sacolick".

Major General Bennet S. Sacolick

In Memoriam

MAY 2010 - MAY 2011

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

75th Ranger Regiment

Staff Sgt. James R. Patton

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

HHC, USASOC

Master Sgt. Jared N. Van Aalst
Sgt. 1st Class Ronald A. Grider

1st Special Forces Group

Master Sgt. Mark W. Coleman
Sgt. Andrew J. Creighton
Sgt. 1st Class Dae Han Park

3rd Special Forces Group

Sgt. Nicholas A. Robertson
Cpt. Jason E. Holbrook
Staff Sgt. Kyle R. Warren

7th Special Forces Group

Sgt. Nicholas A. Casey
Sgt. 1st Class Calvin B. Harrison

75th Ranger Regiment

Sgt. Ronald A. Kubik
Sgt. Jason A. Santora
Cpt. Kyle A. Comfort
Sgt. Jonathan K. Peney
Spc. Joseph W. Dimock II
Sgt. Anibal Santiago
Sgt. Justin B. Allen
Sgt. Andrew C. Nicol
Spc. Bradley D. Rappuhn
Sgt. Martin A. Lugo
Spc. Christopher C. Wright
Sgt. 1st Class Lane H. Vogeler
Staff Sgt. Kevin M. Pape

**“FROM THESE HONORED DEAD WE TAKE INCREASED DEVOTION TO THAT CAUSE FOR
WHICH THEY GAVE THE LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION ...
THAT WE HERE HIGHLY RESOLVE THAT THESE DEAD SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN.”**



USASOC activates new aviation command

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command officially activated its newest unit, the Army Special Operations Aviation Command (Provisional) during an activation ceremony at Meadows Field, Fort Bragg, N.C., March 25.

Lieutenant General John Mulholland Jr., the USASOC commanding general, presided over the ceremony activating the unit, which is commanded by Brigadier General Kevin W. Mangum.

The ARSOAC will be responsible for organizing, manning, training, resourcing and equipping Army special-operations aviation units to provide aviation support to SOF and is USASOC's aviation staff proponent.

"Today, the Special Operations Aviation Command embarks on our journey to build upon a magnificent legacy of those who went before us," Mangum said. "On that foundation, we are committed to developing and overseeing a USASOC aviation enterprise to represent, orchestrate and advocate."

ARSOAC, a one-star command subordinate to USASOC, will provide the appropriate command and control, manning and visibility for the complex and sensitive tasks required of ARSOAC aviation units and organizations.

ARSOAC comprises the headquarters and four subordinate units: the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Fort Campbell, Ky.; the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Flight Detachment, Fort Bragg; the Systems Integration Management Office, Fort Campbell; and the Special Operations Aviation Training Battalion, Fort Campbell.

Army SOF aviation is a complex enterprise that continues to grow in size, scope and expense. Under this new structure, the ARSOAC is



FLYING HIGH Lieutenant General John Mulholland Jr., commanding general of USASOC, and Command Sergeant Major Perry Baer unveil the ARSOAC colors during the activation ceremony March 25. *U.S. Army photo.*

a nondeployable, resourcing headquarters charged with:

- Providing command and control, manning and visibility for the complex and sensitive tasks required of Army SOF aviation units and organizations.
 - Enhancing the 160th SOAR's war-fighting role of providing rotary-wing aircraft to support SOF missions in all geographic combatant commands.
 - Providing aviation oversight as well as service and component interface to ensure system integration, fleet modernization, material readiness, training and doctrine development.
 - Facilitating greater integration between its headquarters at USASOC and the U.S. Special Operations Command and improve connectivity with the Army staff as well as aviation staffs of the sister services.
- USASOC Public Affairs Office



SHINING STAR Sergeant 1st Class Steve Kimsey (right) is congratulated by Major General Kurt Fuller, USASOC deputy commanding general. Kimsey was presented the Silver Star Medal for heroism in Afghanistan, where he had deployed with the 91st CA Battalion's Company A. *U.S. Army photo.*

Civil Affairs Soldier Receives Silver Star Medal

Sergeant 1st Class Steve Kimsey was awarded a Silver Star Medal during a ceremony March 17 at the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade's Annual Civil Affairs Week, held in Pinehurst, N.C.

Kimsey was awarded the medal for subduing a shooter on the morning of Jan. 29, 2010, while at a Special Forces base camp in Afghanistan.

Kimsey and his CA team were planning a medical outreach mission with their U.S. and Afghan partners when an interpreter opened fire in the operations center.

"We thought the first shots were an accidental discharge," Kimsey recalled. "Our partnered-forces team leader and chief ran for the door. The team leader and chief were going out of the door as the interpreter was coming in. The team leader turned to try to get back in, to get out of the way. That's when I heard the second set of rounds being fired and saw the interpreter enter the

building," he explained.

Kimsey drew his pistol and began to fire, killing the shooter. After determining that the threat was neutralized, Kimsey secured the room and called for medics to treat the wounded.

"It happened very quickly, from the first burst to the second burst, to the time he came in probably 10 to 15 seconds," Kimsey said. "Muscle memory, training and experience definitely played a part."

The shooter killed two U.S. Soldiers and seriously wounded another.

Kimsey said, "No one expected the shooting. Captain David Thompson and Specialist Mark Decoteau were among the best Soldiers I had ever worked with."

Kimsey helped coordinate the triage of the wounded, directed the ensuing medical evacuation and helped locate and search all of the Afghani base employees.

To ensure the incident was not more than an act of a single individual, the rest of the interpreters were kept in the camp's small TV lounge for several days while their rooms were searched and the incident was investigated.

Kimsey made sure the interpreters were treated fairly, bringing them some mattresses, blankets, food and water.

In presenting Kimsey with the Silver Star Medal, Major General Kurt Fuller, USASOC deputy commanding general, noted, "He [Kimsey] knew that he was the only thing standing between his teammates and either death or serious injury. This is the kind of thing that makes all of us proud and want to recommit ourselves both to each other as Soldiers and to the mission at hand. ... He changed the outcome by his personal heroism." — USASOC Public Affairs Office



Night Stalkers receive Distinguished Flying Cross

Eight 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment Soldiers received the Distinguished Flying Cross during a ceremony April 11.

The award was presented for individual acts of heroism while flying and crewing Chinook helicopters during a single time-sensitive, high-priority mission in Afghanistan in 2009.

The nighttime mission demanded that the Soldiers fly special-operations forces directly to a known enemy location at low levels and high speeds to infiltrate and exfiltrate the operators while completely exposing themselves to direct enemy fire.

The Soldiers are:

- CW4 Bernard Litaker Jr.
- CW3 Maciek Mankowski
- CW3 Todd Peterson
- SSG Benjamin Tate
- SSG Stanley Yeadon
- SGT Jason Brown
- SGT Jeremy Gribble
- SPC Matthew Jones

The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded to any person who distinguishes himself by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.

Soldiers of the 160th SOAR are known as Night Stalkers, a nickname derived from their unparalleled nighttime special-operations-aviation capabilities. They are entrusted with providing helicopter support to our nation's most elite special-operations forces around the world. 160th crews and support personnel have been continuously deployed in support of overseas contingency operations since October 2001.



MEDAL OF HONOR Sergeant First Class Leroy Arthur Petry received the Medal of Honor for actions in Afghanistan. Petry is the second living Medal of Honor recipient from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. U.S. Army photo.

Wounded Soldier to receive Medal of Honor

An Army Ranger who lost his right hand and suffered shrapnel wounds after throwing an armed grenade away from his fellow Soldiers will be the second living Medal of Honor recipient from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Sergeant First Class Leroy Arthur Petry will receive the Medal of Honor for his courageous actions during combat operations against an armed enemy in Paktya, Afghanistan, May 26, 2008. At the time of his actions, Petry was assigned to Company D, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Petry, now serving with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Fort Benning, Ga., is scheduled to receive the Medal of Honor during a White House ceremony July 12.

Petry's actions came during a rare daylight raid to capture a high-value target. During the raid, Petry was to locate himself with the platoon headquarters in the target building once it had been secured, to serve as the senior noncommissioned officer at the site for the remainder of the operation.

Recognizing that one of the assault squads needed his assistance, Petry told the platoon leader that he was moving to assist that squad. Once the building had been cleared, Petry and a squad member, Private First Class Lucas Robinson, went to clear the building's outer courtyard, which contained at least three enemy fighters. As the two Soldiers entered the courtyard, they found an open area and a chicken coop to their front. As they crossed the open area, they drew fire from an enemy fighter. Petry was wounded by a round that went through both his legs, and Robinson was hit in his side plate by a separate round.

As enemy fire continued, Petry, as the senior Soldier, led Robinson to the cover of the chicken coop and reported that contact had been made and that there were two wounded Rangers in the courtyard of the target building. Upon hearing Petry's report, Sergeant Daniel Higgins, a team leader, moved to the outer courtyard. As Higgins moved to Petry and Robinson's position, Petry threw a thermobaric grenade toward the enemy position to create a lull in the enemy fire. Higgins arrived at the chicken coop, and as he evaluated the wounds of the two Soldiers, an insurgent threw a grenade over the chicken coop. The grenade exploded about 10 meters from the three Rangers, knocking them to the ground and wounding Higgins and Robinson. Shortly after the explosion, Staff Sergeant James Roberts and Specialist Christopher Gathercole entered the courtyard and moved toward the chicken coop.

As the three wounded Soldiers took cover in the chicken coop, an enemy fighter threw another grenade, which landed only a few feet from Higgins and Robinson. Petry, despite his own wounds and with complete disregard for his personal safety, moved to secure the live grenade and throw it away from his fellow Rangers. As Petry released the grenade, it detonated, amputating his right hand. After placing a tourniquet on his right arm, Petry reported that he was still in contact with the enemy and had been wounded again.

After the grenade detonated, Roberts suppressed the enemy fire by engaging them with small-arms fire and a grenade. Shortly afterward, another enemy soldier began firing, fatally wounding Gathercole before being killed by return fire from Higgins and Robinson.

Moments later, Sergeant First Class Jerod Staidle, the platoon sergeant, and Specialist Gary Depriest, the platoon medic, arrived in the outer courtyard. After directing Depriest to treat Gathercole, Staidle moved to Petry's position, where he and Higgins assisted Petry as he moved to the casualty collection point. Higgins later wrote in a statement, "If not for Staff Sergeant Petry's actions, we would have been seriously wounded or killed." — *Army News Service*



Robin Sage POI Changes to Enhance UW Training

Robin Sage, for more than 40 years the world's best collective training event for preparing Soldiers for unconventional warfare, or UW, has trained every Soldier currently in Special Forces. But changes made to keep pace with current operations have produced a Robin Sage unlike the one many of its alumni remember.

The 14-day exercise, taught by the cadre of Company D, 1st Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, is the culmination exercise of Phase V of the Special Forces Qualification Course, or SFQC. Although Robin Sage continues to represent each

entry-level SF Soldier's formative UW experience before he joins an SF group, Co. D. has made significant advances in the methods used to provide the training.

One of the things to change has been Phase V's program of instruction, or POI. The POI has been changed to increase small-group instruction, provide entry-level education on the fundamentals of insurgency and UW, and enhance or add contemporary UW topics. Examples include a 100-percent increase in training in subversion and sabotage and a new entry-level class on targeting in UW.

Led by the cadre, students conduct a case study of the fundamentals of insurgency, culminating with a discussion of key points of insurgencies in China, Algeria and Cuba. Co. D also ties all the small-group instruction and practical exercises together into a UW case study that includes viewing and discussing the movie "Defiance," which depicts resistance to Nazi occupation of Belarus during World War II. The movie provides a real-world example that captures students' attention and serves as a springboard for discussion and interaction prior to the students' receipt of their warning order for the UW operation in Pineland. The training in the fundamentals of insurgency, the UW case study and the leveraging of students' language skills allow the cadre to introduce more complex scenarios with a better balance of lethal and nonlethal operations across urban and rural environments.

By this fall, other changes will be implemented to expand students' knowledge of UW. Before students begin the SFQC, they will take five UW classes (fundamentals of UW, underground, auxiliary, guerrilla tactics and operations) via distance learning. That basic instruction will be reinforced throughout the course by the cadre and the instructors of the student SF detachments. At the end of Phase IV, students will take a comprehensive exam to test their UW knowledge. Those who fail will not enter Phase V, because they will not have the basic UW knowledge that will be necessary for success.

Throughout Phase V, the cadre team sergeant, or CTS, and his student SF detachment remain the focal point of training. The CTS is responsible for the development of his civilian hosted area — the physical and human infrastructure necessary for simulating UW operations in denied territory. Most importantly, the CTS serves as the small-group instructor for his student detachment, providing the appropriate blend of coaching, teaching, training and mentoring through face-to-face interaction with students and through "in-role" feedback during the Pineland scenario. Each CTS brings the experience, knowledge and familiarity with current tactics, techniques and procedures that allow him to make subtle changes in the scenarios in order to provide realistic training that is crucial to each student's success. CTSs are selected for their UW operational experience, and their combined experience gives Co. D one of the highest concentrations of real-world UW experience in the SF Regiment.

While the fundamentals of UW haven't changed much over the last 40 years, UW training has evolved in order to remain relevant. Even though the dominant features of Robin Sage and Pineland remain rucksacks, muddy boots and a focus on UW in denied territory, Co. D has made significant changes in what and how students are trained, based on the experience of the cadre team sergeants and the needs of the SF groups and the 21st-century operating environment.



Maintaining the Relevance of SERE

To better meet the demands of the current operating environment, Company C, 1st Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, has implemented significant changes to resistance training in the Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape Course, or SERE, to increase the intellectual quality of training and to replicate the complexities of the contemporary operating environment, or COE.

Since the end of Desert Storm in 1991, there have been 164 incidents in which United States service members, government employees or contractors have been held captive; 12 of those captives have been considered prisoners of war. Sixty-four of those incidents — 28 of peacetime governmental detention and 36 of hostage detention — have occurred in the short time since the defeat of the Iraqi army during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Both the 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review* and the 2010 *National Security Strategy* predict that the future threats and operating environment make the possibility of captivity more likely.

In the future, detention is likely to be of two types: governmental, in which diplomatic relations will be either limited or nonexistent; and nongovernmental, which can be carried out by a host of potential irregular adversaries. To better replicate the COE, SERE's resistance training lab, or RTL, now includes governmental and nongovernmental detention scenarios across the spectrum of captivity. SERE's Pineland scenario, which serves as the vehicle for resistance training, has been rewritten to include peacetime governmental and nongovernmental hostage detention.

To address the intellectual quality of training, SERE has fully implemented a single-skill-set resistance model, the directed communications model, or DCM, into resistance academics and the RTL evaluation. Soldiers now receive 110 hours of training in negotiation and dilemmas that requires them to apply the DCM's experience-based technique of problem-solving and learning. The goal is to help the student find a practical solution, not necessarily a perfect one. That adaptive approach to ill-structured problem environments allows instructors to tailor the training to the students' capabilities. The training develops skills that will transfer not only to other phases of training but also into the Soldier's career — the skills required to negotiate a hostage-detention scenario are essentially the same as those needed to influence a tribal elder in Afghanistan.

Graduates of SERE can apply their survival skills either during evasion or in captivity. They can produce and execute a plan that applies evasion techniques and incorporates the doctrine of personnel recovery. Soldiers can also assess their captivity environment not only to identify the opportunity and means of escape but also to create a POW/detainee/hostage action plan for resisting exploitation and surviving to return with honor.

SFQC Phase IV 18A MOS Training

Over the past year, Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, or 1st SWTG, has made changes to its instruction that are larger and more significant than any in its history. Dedicated to teaching critical skill sets and developing leadership capacities in future SF officers (18A), Co. A continues to refine its ability to train SF officer candidates to operate effectively in complex, dynamic environments and to become adaptive problem solvers.

During the officers' military occupational specialty, or MOS, training phase (Phase IV), the company's small-group instructors, or SGIs, and field team work together to give students 14 weeks of training in tasks identified by the most recent critical task selection board. Focusing on skill sets related to unconventional warfare, or UW, Phase IV training modules include SF doctrine; special-operations mission planning; cross-cultural communication and negotiations; MOS cross-training; and UW, counterinsurgency and foreign internal defense, or FID. Instruction also includes tactical airborne operations and three field-training exercises that focus on developing the students' ability to conduct SF missions across the spectrum of conflict. To complete Phase IV, students must demonstrate the level of proficiency required for them to perform successfully as SF detachment commanders.

Recent changes to the Special Forces Qualification Course, or SFQC, have enhanced the training environment and increased the 18A students' understanding of SF missions. The SFQC's 18A training exercises are now entirely nested within the "Pineland" strategic training scenario. The current training environment allows 18A students to plan and conduct FID missions in a permissive environment and UW operations in an uncertain or hostile environment. The company has also designed and implemented a FID training exercise, conducted as part of the FID module of instruction, which replicates a joint combined exchange training mission in the Republic of Pineland and develops students' understanding and ability to conduct combined operations with partner-nation forces.

Whether students are working with partner-nation forces from the Republic of Pineland or resistance forces in the People's Republic of Pineland, they learn and apply skill sets that are critical for success in the SFQC's "Robin Sage" culmination exercise and as an SF detachment commander. Throughout Phase IV, the 18A students gain knowledge, understanding and proficiency of SF leader skills through the instruction and mentoring from their SGIs. The SGIs dedicate countless hours of coaching, teaching

and mentoring to every aspiring SF captain, and the quality of training is unparalleled.

In addition to providing SF-qualification training, Co. A also teaches the Detachment Leaders Course, a new initiative designed to provide follow-on, advanced resident training to newly qualified SF captains as they transition from the 1st SWTG to the operational SF groups. The Detachment Leaders Course, which taught its first iteration in January, is designed to expand students' base of knowledge and give them exposure to the contemporary operational environment.

The course delivers focused training on SF-specific topics from SGIs, guest speakers and Army special-operations personnel, using operational vignettes from SF detachments and video teleconferences with forward-deployed units. Students also gain a better understanding of the joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational environment; SF persistent-engagement missions; and combat operations of joint special operations. Although the initial iterations of the course were focused on recent SF officer graduates, the course is now listed in the Army Training Requirements and Resources System and is open to SF warrant officers and SF NCOs who have been selected to serve as detachment operations sergeants.

National Defense University awards diplomas to inaugural class of ARSOF master's degree candidates

Twenty special-operations Soldiers clad in academic regalia and jump boots crossed the John F. Kennedy Auditorium stage June 3 to receive diplomas from the National Defense University's College of International Security Affairs.

These individuals made up the first class to be awarded fully accredited Master of Arts degrees in strategic-security studies through CISA's Fort Bragg campus at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

"We're gathered to recognize the academic accomplishments of 20 special operators who have answered the call for service time and again," said Garry Reid, the ceremony's guest speaker and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Combating Terrorism. "What we have here are people with a thirst for challenge and a thirst for adventure."

In their next assignment, these Special Forces, Infantry, Military Information Support Operations and Civil Affairs Soldiers will report to one of the Army's operational units armed with the ability to think critically, reason academically and challenge assumptions, Reid said.

For 10 months, these students — 13 commissioned and seven noncommissioned officers — have participated in a demanding schedule of seminars and graduate-level courses.

"We educate operators, war-fighters and combat service support professionals in the life of the mind, and then turn them back to their environment," said Vice. Adm. Ann E. Rondeau, NDU President.

"You have to do the true Special Forces thing, which is to blend in and adopt the culture of an indigenous force," Reid said. "In this case, your new indigenous force is the large world of policy and academia. If you want to be relevant and you want to influence your leaders' decisions, then you have to speak the language."



Maj. Gen. Bennet S. Sacolick, the SWCS Commanding General, challenged all special-operations Soldiers to pursue advanced degrees.

"If you are sitting in this auditorium and you do not have a plan to get advanced civilian education, then shame on you," Sacolick said. "If you don't have an associate's degree, you need to get one, and then you need to get a bachelor's and then a master's degree, if you're going to function, as I need you to, as a member of our regiments."

SWCS conducts initial qualification and advanced skills training, as well as regional culture and language education, for special-operations Soldiers. The command's Department of Education led the effort to coordinate the master's degree program with NDU. — *SWCS Public Affairs Office*



THE GREEN BERET VOLCKMANN PROGRAM

MAXIMIZING THE PREVENT STRATEGY

BY COLONEL ERIC P. WENDT



At the outset of World War II, Army Captain Russell W. Volckmann was serving as a full-time embed in the Philippine army (the executive officer of the 11th Infantry Regiment, 11th Division of the Philippine Army). Volckmann fought alongside his unit when



the Japanese invaded the Philippines, and later, rather than surrender, Volckmann disappeared into the jungles of North Luzon and raised a guerrilla army of more than 22,000 men. For the next three years, he led his guerrillas against the Japanese, and they killed more than 50,000 enemy soldiers. When the Japanese commander of the Philippine occupation force, General Tomiyuki Yamashita, finally surrendered, he made the initial surrender overtures not to MacArthur but to Volckmann.¹ Volckmann went on after the war to help design and create the Green Berets of the U.S. Army Special Forces.

The Problem (See Figure 1, page 12)

Throughout the world, al-Qaeda, or AQ, and its affiliates are conducting a multiregion insurgency designed to establish the Caliphate. The United States does not have the capability, measured in either blood or dollars, to lead a fight throughout multiple regions of the world against AQ and its affiliates. If we attempt to conduct the large number of U.S. unilateral operations needed to defeat this AQ assault, we quickly play into AQ's hands, exhausting ourselves and, in the process, negatively affecting long-term, global perceptions of the U.S.

The question then crystallizes — how do we break the current operational paradigm and stop this multiregion insurgency without an overwhelming loss of life, expenditure of funds and loss of international favor because of large, unilateral U.S. actions or unfocused security-assistance efforts? If we attempt to use large-scale security-assistance efforts and funding to build entire host-country militaries and security forces around the world and let them address this AQ

***Editors Note:** Colonel Wendt originally distributed the Volckmann Program concept via mass e-mail in 2002 under the moniker “Global Scouts,” and again mass-distributed the concept via e-mail throughout 2009-2010 under the moniker “Lawrence.” The Volckmann Program discussed in this article contains the same general concept.*

Figure 1:**Problem Solving Sequence**

1. Identify the problem.
2. Identify the solution.
3. Organize, train, equip and deploy for the solution.²
4. Re-assess.

Figure 2:**Title X and Title XXII**

The Volckmann program leverages authorities already available in Title X and Title XXII.

Figure 3:**The Primacy of the Prevention Strategy****PREVENT >****PRE-EMPT >****DEFEAT****Figure 4:****The Primacy of Host Country-Led Efforts****HOST COUNTRY-LED EFFORT >****EQUAL EFFORTS >****U.S.-LED EFFORTS**

problem in their own countries, can we be assured that we are wisely spending U.S. taxpayer dollars funding the most critical host-country units in the fight properly? Are we unintentionally squandering our national treasure on units or organizations that are not key contributors in the fight against AQ? Are we using centralized drive-by assessments of the needs of key host-country units in the fight against AQ? Is there a way to remove what may currently be a myopic view of the requirements of these critical host-country units? Is there a way to synergize the capabilities inherent in Title X and Title XXII authorities? *See Figure 2.*

This article will discuss two items: first, the adoption of a strategy that helps host-country security forces prevent (as opposed to pre-empt or defeat) the enemy, and second, the creation of the Volckmann Program, which would be composed of a small number of culturally savvy Green Berets who would serve repeated rotations to a single country within their region of expertise while embedding inside critical host-country units. With the unique “behind-the-curtain” perspective offered by service as a host-unit embed, the Volckmann operators would not only train and operate against AQ alongside their host units, but direct with focused precision the U.S. security-assistance efforts that address the real needs of these critical host units, with the net result of fewer U.S. taxpayer dollars being spent and a greater operational effect against AQ.

The Solution. The Prevent Strategy, Using Host Country Led Efforts and Minimal U.S. Footprint

Prevent > pre-empt > defeat - *See Figure 3.* As we anticipate the battle with AQ and its affiliates — block by block, town by town, country by country and region by region — the first hypothesis is that it is better to help host-country forces prevent a widespread AQ problem than to deal with it after it blossoms. Prevention limits the cost in U.S. blood and treasure.

If we fail in the prevention phase, and AQ and its affiliates begin to build a substantial capability in a country, then it is better to pre-empt the problem through the use of U.S. raids on high-value targets and a continuous, fairly significant U.S. presence in the countries. If we fail at pre-emption, and the problem grows into a full-fledged war, then we will have to fight to defeat it, using massive numbers of U.S. forces and treasure in large-scale combat.

We can liken this prevent strategy to restricting the spread of cancer. As in fighting cancer, it is better to take relatively cheap, proactive measures with diet, exercise, sun-screen, etc., to prevent the cancer rather than to neglect the matter and have the cancer grow. If prevention fails and a small cancer begins to develop, it is better to pre-empt the cancer with early treatment or removal than to wait until it spreads and requires more invasive surgery, coupled with radiation or chemotherapy, to defeat it.

How do we best posture ourselves to prevent AQ and its affiliates from establishing significant footholds? If we fail in our efforts to help the hosts prevent the AQ problem, can we at least position ourselves during the prevent effort so that we would be more capable if we have to move to the pre-empt or defeat options? Being forced to use U.S. resources to pre-empt represents the failure of proactive prevention, and the use of U.S. resources for large-scale defeat operations represents the failure of both prevention and pre-emption. As unattractive as pre-empt and defeat operations are, that does not change the fact that we must wisely use prevention efforts that can be leveraged, if necessary, to facilitate pre-empt and defeat missions. The bottom line is that we must strive to use prevention as the most effective strategy.

Host country-led efforts for the prevent strategy - *See Figure 4.* Given that prevention is the most effective strategy for confronting widespread insurgency, we must grapple with the question of who provides the bulk of the effort and resources to implement a proactive, anti-AQ prevention approach. Should we attack the problem with U.S.-led effort and minimal host-country effort, or with equal involvement, effort and resourcing between the two countries? Or should we attack the problem with host-country led effort and minimal U.S. resourcing?

Attempting to use primarily U.S.-led and resourced efforts or to working in an even split of efforts and resourcing with host countries around the globe is problematic. Using

these approaches will exhaust the U.S. supply of blood, treasure, political will and public support, as well as weaken its international standing. We must strive to maximize the usage of host-country resources to fuel the prevention strategy. The smaller U.S. footprint that results will also yield a more positive world perception of the United States.

Organize, Train, Equip and Deploy Volckmann Operators to Execute the Solution

Role of the numbered SF groups. During his presidency, John F. Kennedy confronted what he believed to be a multiregion problem by creating the Peace Corps and the U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as expanding the U.S. Army Special Forces and creating the Navy SEALs — all separate and critical tools in a multiregion fight.

While the solution to the anti-AQ multi-region problem obviously involves the comprehensive efforts of the entire combined, joint, interagency, international and private sectors, a detailed discussion of all these areas is beyond the scope of this essay. Just as they were when Kennedy expanded the Green Berets to help wage what he saw as a multiregion fight, the Green Berets of the numbered Special Forces groups are ideally suited and capable of being organized, trained, equipped and deployed so that they can optimally assist host-country militaries, key security agencies and other select host-country units to prevent AQ and its affiliates from establishing (or increasing) footholds in host countries with a minimal U.S. footprint. These members of the Volckmann Program would work “with, through and by”³ foreign forces.

Green Beret Volckmann Program. The proposed Volckmann Program would stress the need for a few Green Berets from each numbered Special Forces group to be thoroughly steeped in select languages and cultures, and would produce Soldiers who are experts in individual countries and select key units (unlike foreign-area officers, who are regional experts) in support of a persistent-presence approach. Volckmann operators would embed in key host-country units using the authorities of the Title X Partnership Exchange Program, or PEP, and while operating as a part of those units would enjoy an insider perspective that would allow them to identify units’ shortfalls in equipment, schooling, training and operational capability. A portion of the Volckmann operator training would include attendance at the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management Course, or DISAM, so that the Volckmann operators, with their embedded insights, could correctly identify key host-unit requirements to the U.S. embassy’s security cooperation office, or SCO, for proper attention and fielding. The Volckmann program offers a synergistic approach, using Title XXII security-assistance authorities along with the Title X PEP embed status of the SF Volckmann operators.

It must be clearly understood that to holistically address the special-operations portion of the multiregion insurgency problem would require multiple elements of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and joint SOF elements. To correctly cater to the localized terrain and problem set of each host country requires a joint SOF approach, but the design and discussion of the numerous and distinct programs required by each service to bring this joint SOF goal to fruition is simply beyond the scope of this essay. Instead, this essay focuses on the Volckmann Program, which specifically focuses on the Green Berets of the numbered SF groups, who have been de-

signed from their inception to be force multipliers and are therefore a natural fit for this effort.

Organize, train, equip. Using one Army SF Soldier to illustrate the Volckmann Program, the Green Beret would serve at least three years on an A-detachment (officers would serve two years on an A-detachment and a third year in another assignment within the SF group). At the end of that three-year apprenticeship in the regionally focused SF group, the Soldier would be eligible to apply for a three-year Volckmann position in his SF group’s area of responsibility, or AOR.

After a Green Beret has been assigned a target country, he and his family (if he has one) attend a one- to two-week course that prepares him for living and working overseas alongside other members of the U.S. embassy’s country team.

At that point, the Soldier and his family could still choose to opt out of the Volckmann Program, or the instructors of the orientation course could recommend his removal. If a Green Beret is approved at the end of the orientation course, he would attend the full-length language-training course for his target language, achieving at least a 2/2/2 language rating. His spouse would also be eligible to attend language training at that time, which would pay enormous dividends for the U.S. as the complete family builds rapport in the target country with repeated tours of duty.

Finally, after graduation from language school, the Soldier would attend the DISAM course, followed by a one- to two-week primer that presents the absolute latest tactics, techniques and procedures, or TTPs, for special-operations forces, or SOF, and counterinsurgency, or COIN, that can be taught to the host-country security forces.⁴ With those qualifications, he would deploy to his target country with his family (whenever possible) and be administratively assigned to the SCO at the U.S. embassy for a three-year, nonextendable assignment. As a full-fledged, permanent member of the SCO, the Volckmann operator and his family would live in the same type of quarters as other embassy employees. The Volckmann operator’s children would be eligible to attend the same high-quality international schools that children of other U.S. embassy personnel attend. Once the SF Soldier completed the three-year tour at the SCO, he would receive the Volckmann skill identifier and return to his regionally focused SF group or theater special operations command, or TSOC, for another three-year tour of duty.

The Volckmann operator would provide experience and knowledge of the latest COIN and SOF TTPs, coupled with his security assistance DISAM qualification and embed-level understanding of his key host-unit’s security-assistance needs. That powerful combination of attributes would result in the targeted, streamlined and effective usage of the U.S. security-assistance system on behalf of these vital host-country units. Forcing departure and return to the regionally focused SF group after three years in country would keep the individual Soldier current with TTPs, prevent an overly long overseas tour for his family, and bring his wealth of knowledge from the in-country Volckmann tour back to his SF group, where it could be fully leveraged.

After three years back in his SF group or TSOC, the Green Beret would be eligible for a second three-year Volckmann assignment in the same country (not just the same region). The Volckmann operator would have to maintain assignments to the same country if he is to achieve deep relationships, knowledge and expertise. The cycle of

alternating three-year assignments between the same regionally focused SF group or TSOC and the in-country Volckmann tours would be repeated throughout the operator's career.

Some Volckmann operators might marry host-country spouses while on their in-country tours, and many of those spouses would likely welcome multiple return tours to their home country. Those repeated assignments would further deepen the relationships and interoperability with the target country and its key security leaders. For the Volckmann operators married to non-host-country spouses, the three-year tour length would still provide a manageable assignment.

Over the course of their careers, Soldiers who had the Volckmann identifier would perform numerous in-country Volckmann tours. They would garner incredibly detailed knowledge of the target country, its issues, its politics and personalities, as well as gaining superb language capabilities (growing to 3/3/3 language capability), local knowledge, contacts and insights. Most importantly,

Volckmann operators can serve repeated tours of duty in-country and remain competitive for command-sergeant-major, CW5 or battalion/group/TSOC-command positions.

they would build tremendous relationships with the leaders, families and members of the host-country military and security units they worked with. As the Volckmann operators assessed, trained and deployed with the host-country security units, they could add significantly to the anti-AQ proactive prevention strategy with the small U.S. footprint that we desire.

SF NCOs who have completed an initial tour of duty on an A-detachment, as well as SF officers from CW2 to O6, should be encouraged to serve in the Volckmann program. Volckmann service would come at some expense to other SOF headquarters' staffs, but the forward presence and increased capabilities and effects for the U.S. would be well worth the reduction to other SOF staff headquarters elements.

To establish SF Volckmann PEP participation at all levels in key host units, we would initially fill these positions with senior and junior SF officers and NCOs who have some level of country and language expertise. Eventually, young SF officers working as Volckmann operators would grow into the battalion, group and TSOC commanders of the future.⁵ Promotion boards would have to be instructed to promote and select (not inhibit) Volckmann operators for key billets in the SF groups and TSOCs at rates commensurate with their peers. The presence of the Volckmann operators in-country and in the SF groups and TSOCs would provide a quantum leap forward in the fight against AQ. Volckmann operators would be true force multipliers.

New headquarters not required. The Volckmann program does not require a new headquarters. Volckmann operators would be administratively assigned on permanent change of station, or PCS, orders to the SCOs that exist around the globe (joint U.S. military assistance and advisory groups, military groups, etc.) in target countries. Once Volckmann operators have been assigned to these target-country SCOs, they would be further assigned to Title X PEP embed

positions within key host-country security units. There are many countries that would accept and immediately place PEP Volckmann operators of all ranks into their key host-country units.

The U.S. country teams would embrace Volckmann operators because they would not be perceived as "rogue" temporary SOF elements or individuals within the country. Instead, Volckmann operators, as PCS members of SCO and the country team, would avoid any perceived issues with National Security Decision Directive 38, or NSDD 38.

The number and paygrades of Volckmann operators in each country would vary based on an analysis of the country's key military and security units needed to conduct the anti-AQ fight. In many countries, there would be only a few Volckmann operators. They would train and operate daily with the key host-country units with whom they embedded. Volckmann operators would deploy with their host-country units if the hosts deployed to conduct operations against AQ or its affiliates, either within or outside their country's borders.

Volckmann operators assigned to embassy SCOs. The U.S. embassies worldwide are the only practical hubs for these prevention efforts. Volckmann operators must join the embassy SCO on a full-time PCS basis, not during episodic SOF engagements in a host country or as temporary embassy squatters. The correct office of assignment for Volckmann operators in this full-time effort would be the SCO rather than the defense-attaché offices, or DAOs. DAOs perform a highly valuable mission with information gathering, but the DAO (and its known status as an information-gatherer), is anathema for Volckmann entrance into U.S. country teams, where building long-term relationships and trust within host units is required. Assigning Volckmann operators within the SCO, where they can immediately use their DISAM training to inject needed security assistance into the critical units in each host country, would also help develop the trust and relationships that we desire with the host country.

The baseline is that Volckmann operators should be assigned in PCS status as overt, nonclandestine, non-attaché, SCO personnel. The Volckmann operators must be fully accepted by the country team and fully accepted as "non-spies" by the host-country units in which they embed.

Where to deploy Volckmann operators. First, we look at the world and define those places where AQ and its affiliates either thrive, could likely thrive or gather key support in the future. Second, we look at countries that would likely volunteer to export their own forces to assist in the anti-AQ fight of a different country (should a selected host-country fight develop into pre-empt or defeat status). The countries identified with these criteria are now "target countries" for the Volckmann Program.

Once target countries have been identified, relevant host-country units will be identified, along with key PEP-embed positions for the Volckmann operators.

Command relationships. Volckmann operators must be PCS-assigned to the U.S. embassy SCOs to avoid all real or perceived NSDD 38 issues and to be fully accepted by all members of the country team.

The SCO chief in each country would have administrative control of the Volckmann operators, and with it the constant visibility of the whereabouts of Volckmann operators and their families. Volckmann operators would constantly interface with the SCO chief as they submit the security-assistance needs of the key host-country units to the SCO. The rating chain and operational control of the Volckmann operators would both run directly from the Volckmann operator to the TSOC. That rating chain would keep the Volckmann operator competitive for promotion, while the line of operational control to the TSOC gives the commander of the geographic combatant command, or GCC, the ability to nest the effects of the Volckmann operators with other tools used by the GCC commander, and allows the TSOC (which is receiving reports from multiple Volckmann operators in multiple target countries⁶) to help network that critical information. Since it takes a network to fight a network,⁷ the decentralized network of Volckmann operators would increase with compounded interest the effects the United States desires against AQ.

The TSOC would provide frequent executive summary reports on the plans and actions of Volckmann operators to each respective chief of mission, or COM, thereby ensuring that COMs are fully aware of and comfortable with all Volckmann activities in their country.

In sum, the Volckmann operators' PCS status would facilitate optimal anti-AQ effects while simultaneously ensuring full COM oversight and country-team acceptance of the Volckmann operators and their families.

How many Volckmann operators are needed? Manning key units in up to 60 host countries with Volckmann operators of all ranks and maintaining a continuous cycle of three years in-country, three years back at the SF group or TSOC, and the Volckmann-operator training pipeline might eventually consume one to two SF battalions' worth of manpower. We should therefore measure twice and cut once as we prioritize, scale and pace our movement into selected host-unit PEP billets and countries. We must prioritize countries and units and begin manning a few pilot countries with Volckmann operators immediately.

With the nickel-on-the-dollar investment that we make today to establish the network of proactive, preventive, decentralized Volckmann operators in host countries and key units around the globe, we can leverage prevention effects and synergize the capabilities inherent in Title X and Title XXII authorities to facilitate victory in the fight against AQ and its affiliates. We can save large sums of U.S. taxpayer dollars by effectively targeting our security-assistance efforts on relevant host-country units that are key in the anti-AQ fight, and with the help of the PEP-embed Volckmann operators, scratch the needed security-assistance itch with precision while increasing the operational capability of key anti-AQ host units with the daily training and assistance that only an embed can provide. Our Volckmann operators and families will operate with purity of motive and purity of effort from the SCOs around the globe and will build goodwill internationally for the U.S. If these prevention strategy efforts should fail, the deep relationships, access, knowledge of host-country geography, personalities, and language and cultural understanding harvested by these forward-stationed Volckmann operators will ideally position us for U.S. pre-emption events, or in the worst case, for actions in a large-scale U.S. general-purpose-forces war against AQ and its affiliates.

It is all about relationships. Green Beret Volckmann operators would develop those relationships, and the U.S. would be the ultimate benefactor for decades to come. With the support of senior leaders in DoD, SOF, the GCCs and the U.S. Army, a quick implementation of the Volckmann Program is possible. The fight is on, and the implementation of the Volckmann Program offers our country a powerful and continuous series of blows to AQ for a minimal price in U.S. blood and treasure. **SW**

Colonel Eric P. Wendt serves as the principal military assistant to the Secretary of Defense. A Special Forces officer, he has commanded in the numbered SF groups at the detachment, company, battalion and group levels. He has served on multiple combat and operational tours of duty throughout the Middle East and Asia, both with general-purpose forces and with SF. Colonel Wendt is one of the earliest holders of a master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School's special-operations and low-intensity conflict program.

Notes:

1. Mike Guardia, *American Guerrilla* (Havertown, Penn.: Casemate Publishers, 2010), 7.

2. The correct problem-solving sequence is shown in diagram 1. Often problems are incorrectly addressed by starting analysis with an organization that already exists (step 3), then trying to develop a solution the current organization is capable of executing (step 2). This backward problem-solving process often yields solutions that may or may not have any relation to the actual problem (step 1), thereby yielding disjointed, sub-optimal results. The correct problem solving order shown in diagram 1 will yield better results.

3. The terms "with, through and by" have been codified in order and meaning in the definitive Department of Defense Instruction 5000.68, dated 27 October 2010. Per the new DoD Instruction definition: *with, through and by* describes the process of interaction with foreign security forces that initially involves training and assisting (interacting "with" the forces). The next step in the process is advising, which may include advising in combat situations (acting "through" the forces). The final phase is achieved when foreign security forces operate independently (act "by" themselves).

4. The models discussed in the article, "Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling" (Eric P. Wendt, *Special Warfare*; September 2005; 2-13), should be taught as a part of the final preparation course for Volckmann candidates prior to deployment so that they, in turn, can then teach these models to key leaders in their target countries. Many of the models contained in the article (including Dr. Gordon McCormick's brilliant diamond model, which has been successfully operationalized since 9/11) were created, developed and continue to be taught by Dr. Gordon McCormick of the Naval Postgraduate School's SOLIC program (now called the Defense Analysis Program).

5. Some forward-leaning TSOC commanders (SOCCENT and others) have developed TSOC forward, regional SOF C2 nodes within their theaters in addition to single country JSOTFs. When not serving an in-country three-year Volckmann tour, Volckmann operators will be ideal candidates to serve within these TSOC forward, regional C2 nodes, as well as within JSOTFs located within their target country.

6. Volckmann operators in different units and different countries should be encouraged to communicate directly with each other on a frequent basis (as well to periodically meet face-to-face at selected TSOC sponsored venues) to enhance the networking effects of this concept.

7. Dr. John Arquilla, *Worst Enemy* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Publishing, 2008).

Q&A COLONEL ERIC P. WENDT

SW: How have your in-country experiences helped develop or reinforce your ideas for the Volckmann Program?

Wendt: Ever since I joined Special Forces, I have both experienced and witnessed firsthand the power of personal relationships between Green Berets and habitual host-country counterparts. Over and over, we have all seen the amazing leverage afforded on a deployment when we have had the good fortune to draw a Green Beret who speaks the local language fluently and has previous experience deploying to the same location and unit, where he reunites with his host-country counterparts.

I believe we should remove chance from the equation and make this leverage a systemic part of our engagement around the world ... a systemic approach to creating and maintaining those relationships instead of chance creation and usage. The Green Berets from the numbered groups are the perfect tool for this global effort, and if implemented, the Volckmann Program will create a powerful, systemic approach to creating, maintaining and leveraging those relationships around the globe.

SW: Would the Volckmann Program be part of any other operations, e.g., village-stability operations?

Wendt: Volckmann operators would provide unmatched relationships with local key leaders, SF expertise operating with key host-country units, and high levels of language and cultural expertise. VSO, or any other operational effort in any country would be greatly enhanced with the addition of Volckmann operators.

SW: You discuss using the Volckmann Program against al-Qaeda and its affiliates. Could it be used against other groups, or to combat problems other than insurgency? Would there be regions of the world where the program would not work as well as in others?

Wendt: The enhanced capabilities and leverage Volckmann operators would bring can be used against whichever security, humanitarian or other problem sets the operators are given.

As far as the effect of different areas of the world on program implementation, some countries will certainly be more attractive than others in which to live for half of your future SF ca-

reer. That said, the Volckmann operators would spend their multiple in-country assignments operating as key-unit embeds, vital players with a great deal of freedom and independence as they problem-solve without anyone standing and looking over their shoulders. I believe many Green Berets and SF families would be drawn to this sort of duty. Target countries would have a U.S. embassy (and the commensurate infrastructure of an embassy). I believe the Volckmann Program, if enacted, would draw numerous volunteers from the SF groups.

SW: If the Volckmann Program were to become a reality, how would you see it changing by the year 2020?

Wendt: Like any sound program, we should continually re-assess the number, make-up and location of Volckmann embeds, as well as which units they embed with around the globe. The theater special-operations commands would be instrumental in ensuring that we continually adapt and maintain, grow, contract or change the Volckmann footprint in each target country to ensure that we maintain maximum effect.

SW: How would budget restrictions or reductions affect the likelihood of ARSOF developing the Volckmann Program?

Wendt: I believe the future will present significant budget challenges for the entire DoD. With those challenges emerge multiple opportunities for programs that can demonstrate they will punch above their weight. The Volckmann Program would provide maximum leverage and effect for the United States for minimal cost, and would compete nicely against other programs as the DoD belt tightens.

SW: Special Forces Soldiers are already selected for their ability to innovate and to work with people. Would there be additional selection criteria for the Soldiers in the Volckmann Program? Would there be a need for any selection process other than the orientation program? Would failure to attain a 2/2/2 language rating render a Soldier ineligible?

Wendt: A volunteer Green Beret (as well as a volunteer family, if he has one) with successful SF-detachment experience, chain-of-command and orientation-course-cadre recommenda-

tions, full-length language instruction and the latest instruction in counterinsurgency tactics, techniques and procedures, will have undergone sufficient selection criteria and preparation for the program.

As far as language qualification, 2/2 in speaking and listening must be an unwaiverable requirement. That standard goes right to the heart of rapport-building. The reading portion of language qualification could be waived.

SW: What would the advantages and disadvantages be regarding promotion and career advancement for Soldiers who participated in the Volckmann Program?

Wendt: The timelines for SF NCOs, warrant officers and commissioned officers have been studied after being populated with all Volckmann schooling and in-country assignments, as well as all required professional schooling and key/developmental position requirements, etc., at each pay grade. The bottom line is that once accepted into the Volckmann Program, the Volckmann operator could meet all career gates to eventually become a command sergeant major, a chief warrant officer 5, or a battalion or group commander or higher, while simultaneously participating in the Volckmann Program. Volckmann operators would have every opportunity for assignment to command and key positions at the groups and the theater special operations commands.

SW: Are there any other points you would like to make about the program?

Wendt: The program will eventually grow to require a fairly robust number of Volckmann operators for simultaneous assignment around the globe, to undergo preparation in a training base, and to provide operators for service in regionally focused groups and TSOCs. That said, the only SOF element with the depth and breadth of regionally focused personnel who have been created from their inception to perform as force multipliers are the Green Berets of the numbered SF groups. All things considered, the Green Berets of the numbered groups are the ideal choice for continuously manning and operating Volckmann embed positions around the globe.

As the article says, to fully answer the problem presented by al-Qaeda will require a comprehensive and continuous effort, and within the SOF piece of that pie, it will require all elements of ARSOF and joint SOF to be successful. The Green Beret Volckmann Program would be but one slice of the overall effort — albeit a slice that wields extreme leverage and provides a tremendous, continuous series of punches for such a comparatively low personnel and monetary cost. **SW**

4TH AND LONG

THE ROLE OF CIVIL AFFAIRS IN VSO

BY CAPTAIN NEIMAN C. YOUNG



Upon arriving in Afghanistan to conduct their 2010 rotation, the team leaders and team sergeants of Company A, 91st Civil Affairs Battalion, were unaware of the pressures on their mission until they attended a briefing by Colonel Donald Bolduc, incoming commander of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force–Afghanistan, or CJSOTF-A.

“Our nation is at a crucial point where our actions this summer will directly impact the collective perception of the Afghan people, the enemies of Afghanistan, the international audience, and the U.S. homeland. These critical audiences will begin to make their mind up as to whether or not to continue this fight. ... Pick your sport: ‘fourth and long,’ ‘bottom of the ninth,’ ‘overtime’ ... all appropriately convey where the CJSOTF-A is in assisting the local populace and fighting insurgents. The context we are operating under is one of urgency.”¹ — *Colonel Donald Bolduc*

VSO

To deal with the urgency, CJSOTF-A was adopting a new strategy of village stability operations, or VSO, a bottom-up plan focused on delivering security, stability and governance to the rural villages of Afghanistan. VSO is founded upon a range of programs designed to stabilize a region and establish a link between targeted villages and the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, or GIRoA. Like every other component of CJSOTF-A, the Civil Affairs teams, or CATs, were going to have to figure out where Civil Affairs operations fit into VSO, and they were going to have to do it quickly.

The unit on the ground for VSO is the village stability platform, or VSP, the embedded security apparatus that works through and with Afghan leaders both formal (GIRoA representatives) and informal (village elders) to establish that link. According to Master Sergeant Dennis Pease, NCOIC of Co. A’s civil-military operations center, or CMOC, “The majority of the insurgents don’t live and operate in urban areas — they live and operate in the rural Afghan countryside. It is in these areas where the insurgency thrives. The rural population is under-secured and under-served by a government that is under-represented and under-resourced. In this gap lies a large Afghan citizenship with grievances that are both resolved and exploited by the insurgents on a daily basis. The CJSOTF-A emphasized this gap was going to have to be closed by coalition forces rather than our enemies.”



HOUSE CALL A Civil Affairs team meets with local leaders to sign a Voice of Peace Council agreement established by the local jirga. *U.S. Army photo.*

To close the gap, VSO called for the CATs and Special Forces operational detachment-alphas, or ODAs, to move from their forward operating bases, or FOBs, into safe houses among the populace. Because the safe houses were not yet established, the CATs and ODAs would have to negotiate for them with the elders of villages that were known to be insurgent safe havens. “They were returning to basic special-operations doctrine: Get off of the (forward operating bases) and out there among the local populace,” Pease said. Major Matthew Ziglar, commander of Co. A, stressed that the focus on a direct link to the population plays into the strengths of CA forces. He also noted, “The CJSOTF-

A commander’s policy and guidance for village stability falls directly into the very tenets of Civil Affairs doctrine. Therefore, Colonel Bolduc asked for us to think of new and unique ways to create this capability at each VSO location.”

Tied into the CJSOTF-A commander’s vision was a robust support network able to push assets and information across the battlefield to leverage the CJSOTF-A’s unique capabilities. Key subcomponents that the CJSOTF-A commander and subordinate commanders of the Special Operations Task Force, or SOTF, have at their disposal include the SOTF S9s and the civil-military operations center, or CMOC. Both provide direct support to VSO loca-

tions across the battlefield, including those that have no CA representation.

The SOTF S9s plug into the SOTF staff to provide situational awareness to the SOTF commanders for all things related to civil-military operations, or CMO. One the SOTF S9’s primary responsibilities is accountability for the expenditure of funds under the Commander’s Emergency Response Program, or CERP. CERP funds allow operational units to tap into a monetary resource for immediate effects. Some best practices of CERP are low-cost, high-impact projects to demonstrate to local communities that SOF bring needed resources to local villages. Always wary of creating a dependency, units using CERP will transition those types of activities to the host nation as soon as the local government can continue them.

The CMOC serves as the clearing house for information received from teams on the ground. Working with the CJSOTF-A staff, the CMOC provides details for operations at VSO locations. While CATS generate the majority of the CMOC’s reports, the CMOC can pull information from other organizations and units. Some of those reports include key-leader-engagement worksheets, nonlethal-targeting packets and storyboards. Once processed and checked for accuracy, those reports are uploaded in the Afghanistan database of record, CIDNE, where they can provide all units with situational awareness, analysis and historical documentation of reports and projects.

The CATs were partnered with their peer SOF elements: SF ODAs and military information-support teams, or MISTs. Those SOF elements combine with various support elements to form VSPs, where each element is responsible for certain portions of the VSO strategy. The CATs, when present, were held accountable for the governance-and-development portion of operations. It is important to note that while each element carried traditional responsibilities, the responsibilities often blended. That ultimately required each element to perform nontraditional duties to meet mission requirements. Without the actions of each SOF element, the VSP would not have been successful. In most instances, ODAs, because they have the greatest battlefield presence and are uniquely suited to VSO, have been called upon to provide the lion’s share of the operational requirements.

After learning about the locations in which they were to operate, the VSPs relocated to their areas of responsibility, or AORs, and began developing tactics, techniques and procedures, or TTPs, to accommodate the four phases of VSO: shape, hold, build, and expand and transition.²

VSO phases

Shape. Shaping, the first phase of VSO, begins with an assessment of the VSP's region. The VSP must first determine from established benchmarks whether the area is suitable for VSO:

- Are village elders willing to stand up against the insurgency?
- What is the terrain's value to the insurgency?
- What is the terrain's value to the GIRoA?
- Can the region sustain a VSP logistically and operationally?³

The success of shaping depends upon human-terrain mapping — an essential task of the CATs. The seven CATs were equipped with tools to quickly engage, document and analyze the local populace. Included in that specialized skill set are training in advanced negotiations and civil-information management, and certification on the Asymmetric Software Kit. These tools allowed the CATs to assess local citizens, identify their amount of influence, and establish relationship links between these individuals and people of interest. With that information, the VSPs were able to pursue CJSOTF-A's directive to gain entry into the area and obtain the trust of the village elders and residents.

The VSPs quickly learned that the village elders' commitment did not come without costs. CAT 115 conducted a pre-deployment site survey, or PDSS, to gain local leader buy-in for the VSP and to persuade the village residents to provide the VSP a location in which to live and operate. The team sergeant for CAT 115 explained, "During our first meeting with the elders, we were informed of a coalition-force operation conducted six months earlier. When the coalition forces arrived in our targeted region, they confiscated all of the fertilizer the locals had on hand and destroyed the stock to mitigate the use of fertilizer in the construction of improvised explosive devices." As a result, when the farming season arrived six months later, the local farmers did not have enough

fertilizer or seed to sow crops. CAT 115 identified this need as a project that could be used to give the VSP access into the area.

Redeploying to the FOB, the CAT purchased the seed and fertilizer approved for agricultural use in the region. Three weeks later, the CAT returned to the village and hosted a shura to allow local elders to decide how the seed and fertilizer should be allocated. The goods were distributed equitably, and the VSP was granted favor. "The elders gave us access to an abandoned school. From there we began our village stability operations," states the team sergeant. "Four months later, we came upon a group of farmers while conducting a presence patrol. The farmers invited us to sit down to a meal of vegetables that were reaped from the seed and fertilizer distributed during the initial shura. This was an act of appreciation for the supplies we had provided them earlier that winter."

Following CAT 115's success, the other six CATs, identifying the formal leaders of their regions, began to recognize another element whose containment would be critical to completing the shaping phase. Sergeant 1st Class Scott Smullen, team sergeant for CAT 113, explains, "We began to realize that there were powerbrokers who managed the decision-making process behind the scenes. These individuals acquired influence from sources outside of the formal channels of GIRoA — personal wealth, family lineages and, sometimes, just plain popularity amongst the citizenship. The powerbrokers in the region often held more sway with the people than the village elders. ... Establishing a relationship with the powerbrokers not only helped us achieve our objective of establishing ourselves in the village, but also [helped] with gaining critical information later throughout the operation."

With the safe houses obtained and permission granted to operate in their targeted regions, the CATs were able to complete the shaping phase and move forward to assisting the VSP with stabilizing the region.

Hold. After the VSP has secured access and placement in the region, it initiates VSO's hold phase, whose primary focus is security. The hold phase is perhaps the deciding point for the strategy's success or failure in the targeted region, as the VSP's relationship with local nationals is in its infancy, and credibility has not been established. During

this period, the insurgents ramped up their acts of violence against coalition forces and the local nationals cooperating with the VSP.

CAT 114's team leader explained, "Initially, the village residents were apprehensive, as we were foreigners requesting them to stand up against insurgents who are often their own brothers, uncles and cousins. In response, the local residents would remind us of their suspicions that the Americans would abandon them after the coalition forces grew weary of the war. According to the elders, the mujahedeen were betrayed by the Americans after the Soviet War in Afghanistan, and they did not intend for that happenstance to reoccur on their watch."

To overcome the credibility obstacles, CAT 114 began investing heavily across its region, giving it strong points for arguing questions about the VSP's intent. "I asked the skeptical elders if they had done any recent traveling in the region," the team leader said. "Immediately, I highlighted the repairs we made to the Chutu Bridge. I pointed out the road improvements we made from Deh Rawood to Tarin Kowt. I asked them if they noticed the refurbishment of the Deh Rawood Bazaar. After the locals began to realize the VSP and GIRoA were providing them large services the Taliban couldn't match, the locals quickly began accepting the VSP presence and the idea of a GIRoA governed Afghanistan free of the Taliban."

Capitalizing on its success, the team began using the information gathered from human-terrain mapping to identify citizens' needs across the district that could be met using CERP projects. In addition to resolving local concerns in a timely manner, properly targeted projects served other purposes, including:

- Legitimizing the credibility of GIRoA and its ability to quickly service its constituents.
- Providing low-cost/high-impact opportunities for validating the VSP's presence.
- Providing opportunities for coalition forces to show respect for Islam and the Afghan culture.
- Boosting the local employment and economy.

CAT 114's team leader explained that the heartbeat provided to the GIRoA representation via bulk CERP funding played a critical role in gaining constituents' loyalty.

Shuras were organized to begin accepting requests for development projects from constituents. The district governor approved each project and funded them with CERP money provided by the VSP. With a GIROA representative publicly managing each phase of the region's development process, the GIROA gained credibility, and the VSP's relationship with local nationals flourished into one of trust.

With those feelings of trust and confidence, VSP objectives became more palatable to local citizens, and the village security "bubble" took form. Individuals once cool to the VSP presence began to request assistance from the coalition forces. The VSP began receiving daily reports of insurgent activities by the locals, and the identification of IEDs by local citizens increased by 20 percent. These reports translated into lives saved and restrictions on the insurgents' freedom of movement in the district.

Build. During the build phase, the VSP begins establishing the legitimate link between the village and GIROA. According to the CJSOTF-A VSO directive, the build phase does not end until there is a clear connection between the village and the district in regard to security, development, governance and reintegration. "When we first arrived, there was dissension between the GIROA representatives and village elders," said CAT 112's team leader. "The village elders accused the district leaders of corruption and opaque financial transactions. Issues like these degraded the confidence of the local residents in their government officials."

To resolve those suspicions, CAT 112, working with the ODA, developed the Sub-Governors' Pilot Program, a strategy designed to make all the district leadership's financial transactions transparent. The program's rules included:

- All labor on projects was to be performed by local contractors.
- Project budgets and statements of work were enforced and made public.
- Before-and-after pictures were filed with the district center and made available upon any constituent's request.
- Project sites were subject to inspections by representatives of the district governor's office.

The program is unique because of its indigenous nature. "Every aspect of the Sub-Governor's Pilot Program is Afghan

led," CAT 112's team leader said. "During previous development efforts, there was always an American face somewhere along the process. With the new program, the responsibility of development efforts was handed over to the district government. Therefore, whenever a local resident had a need, they went to see their GIROA representatives rather than knocking on the doors of the VSP safe house."

After witnessing the stability delivered by the VSP, the region's powerbrokers approached SOF. "The local elders and ex-mujahadeen commanders felt that it was time to develop a way ahead for their district. They felt that it was time to write peace resolutions and call upon their brothers in the insurgency to assimilate into the new Afghan society," CAT 112's team leader said. In response, the ODA in the area assisted the powerbrokers with hosting the Voice of Peace Jirga in Paktia, a provincial conference that focused on solidifying the peaceful resolutions envisioned by the powerbrokers.

To assist in promoting the jirga resolutions, the leaders of the Voice of Peace Jirga established the Peace Shura Member's Council, which began traveling throughout the province to villages that were nonpermissive to coalition forces. That resulted in Afghans, rather than coalition forces, assuming the responsibility for diplomatic efforts with the enemies of Afghanistan.

Expand and transition. During the expand-and-transition phase, the VSP begins expanding its influence and transitioning the responsibilities of governance, security and development from coalition forces to GIROA representatives. According to the CJSOTF-A VSO directive, "This critical step of expansion usually begins when your village achieves a clear connection with the district center and ends when the entire district is considered stable and is being led and administered by GIROA."⁴

After seven months of working through the previous three VSO phases, CAT 113 was able to implement the fourth phase in the Nagahan district of Kandahar Province. The region stabilized and soon was heavily targeted by international developmental agencies and nongovernment organizations. GIROA established a competent governing body to service the residents. More importantly, the residents denounced the insurgency and stood up an independent force

of Afghan Local Police, or ALP, to retain security in their villages. The new force is a legitimate arm of the central government. A recent *Army Times* article on CJSOTF-A operations states, "Unlike the first village protection forces, which U.S. officials often referred to as 'community watch' forces, the local police forces will not be independent, but will report to the district police chief and receive pay, uniforms and ammunition from the Afghan Interior Ministry."⁵

The ALP assumed the responsibility for securing their own villages. To establish a link with GIROA, the ALP began reporting to the Afghan National Police, or ANP, for accounting and training. The CAT 113 team sergeant explained, "On any given day, a village resident is now likely to be approached by a patrol consisting of ALP and ANP rather than coalition forces. The residents appreciate the fact that they are being policed by their own rather than by outsiders. This made our jobs easier and the region more stable. Tying the VSP in with the ALP was a difficult task, but it was well worth the effort. The only role the VSP plays in the district's security piece now is one of advising and limited support."

While the ALP has been well-received by the local residents of the Nagahan district, it has seen its fair share of challenges. Two months after the ALP stood up, its resolve was tested by a suicide bomber's attack on the wedding of an ANP officer. "The insurgents specifically targeted ANP checkpoint commanders," CAT 113's team sergeant said, "however, they utilized a young and hesitant proxy to conduct the attack." The attacker wore a vest loaded with explosives that would be ignited by a grenade time-delay fuse. Failing to account for the five-second delay between the activation of the fuse and detonation of the explosives, the bomber was startled by the apparent failure of the bomb and ran away from his intended victims.

While the attack failed to kill any ANP members, it dealt a serious blow to the ALP. Standing in a group near the exit, members of the ALP inadvertently blocked the bomber's intended escape. Thirteen ALP members and 21 civilians died when the vest exploded. However, the ALP immediately responded to the attack by securing the site and notifying the VSP, possibly thwarting any follow-on attacks.



STRAIGHT TALK Civil Affairs teams conduct a planning meeting with members of the Afghan local police. U.S. Army photo.

In the aftermath of the Nagahan wedding attack, the ALP thrives, and its influence continues to expand. CAT 113's team sergeant explained, "Prior to our redeployment, we began seeing villagers from other districts coming to our local shuras asking for similar programs in their area. They saw the success and prosperity in Nagahan and wanted that stability in their region. In the future, we are considering making recommendations to the CJSOTF-A to expand VSPs out to those areas."

CA way forward

Co. A has since returned from its mission in Afghanistan, and the mission to provide CA support to CJSOTF-A has fallen to another company in the 91st CA Battalion. The new company remains on course to leverage all of the positive aspects of VSO.

VSO do not lend themselves to a template. Every location is unique, and the phases cannot be pinned to a calendar. In some instances, progress is incremental; in

others, it occurs rapidly in each phase. Because the VSO concept is relatively new, it is still difficult to fully analyze its effectiveness. But from the comments of the members of CATs who have completed a rotation at a VSP site, they firmly believe that it works.

It will take time to build on SOF's VSO successes. There is a realistic expectation that as we demonstrate success, we can emulate the SOF VSO concept on a larger scale. Applying SOF's best practices to the operations of conventional forces working in similar environments could multiply the VSO effects. But accomplishing that would require deliberate planning and training to ensure that conventional forces have abilities similar to SOF's. Ideally, we could foster the development of a VSO training plan to build the understanding and ability of Afghan forces. The long-term goal would be to ultimately transition the entire endeavor of achieving village stability to the people of Afghanistan. **SW**

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Notes:

1. CJSOTF-A VSO Directive (Version 2), August 2010, 2.
2. CJSOTF-A VSO Directive (Version 2), August 2010, 2.
3. CJSOTF-A VSO Directive (Version 2), August 2010, 3.
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VSO = MORE THAN VILLAGE DEFENSE

BY COLONEL TY CONNETT AND COLONEL BOB CASSIDY

“Pashtunwali, the Pashtun code of behavior, shapes daily life through obligations of honor, hospitality, revenge and providing sanctuary. Jirgas and shuras — which are decision-making councils — remain instrumental at the local level, where state legal institutions are virtually nonexistent.”



**COVER
STORY**

Village Stability Operations in Afghanistan

The purpose of this article is to explain village-stability operations, or VSO, and their role within the overall campaign in Afghanistan. Joint and combined special-operations forces, or SOF, elements of the Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command and the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan are the proponents for VSO. The information in this article is derived from the operational concept that the joint/combined SOF command designed as a critical and effective corollary to the demanding and diverse operational environment in Afghanistan.

“Pashtunwali, the Pashtun code of behavior, shapes daily life through obligations of honor, hospitality, revenge and providing sanctuary. Jirgas and shuras — which are decision-making councils — remain instrumental at the local level, where state legal institutions are virtually nonexistent.”¹

VSO: More than village defense

VSO are one of several national priority efforts currently conducted by joint/combined SOF teams in rural village areas across Afghanistan in support of the International Security Assistance Force’s, or ISAF’s, comprehensive campaign of counterinsurgency, or COIN. The ultimate goal of the COIN campaign is to foster an enduring stability for the people of Afghanistan. Performing what are commonly described as “bottom-up” stability efforts, SOF teams contribute significantly to that strategy by conducting VSO in strategically important rural areas, in villages and in village clusters, along the lines of security, governance and development, to undermine insurgent influence and control. VSO are specifically oriented toward insurgent-controlled or -contested rural areas where there exist limited or no military or police elements of the Afghan National Security Forces, or ANSF. VSO enable local security and re-establish or re-empower traditional local governance mechanisms that represent the populations, such as shuras and jirgas (decision-making councils), and that promote critical local development to improve the quality of life within village communities and districts. In theory and practice, SOF efforts at the village level expand to connect village clusters upward to local district centers, while national-level governance efforts connect downward to provincial centers and then to district-level centers.

“Top-down reconstruction strategies may have been appropriate for countries such as Japan after World War II and Iraq after 2003, both of which had historically been characterized by strong centralized state institutions. But they do not work as well in countries such as Afghanistan, where power is diffuse.”²

Through concurrent bottom-up and top-down efforts, re-empowered traditional, local-level governance, with the consent of the people, becomes a critical part of the effort to improve local security and governance in Afghanistan. In general terms, the insurgency in Afghanistan is rural and, by design, the VSO approach aims to project stability to those insurgent-controlled or -contested rural areas by focusing on the center of gravity — the population. VSO are the embodiment of comprehensive COIN, conducted in partnership with the populace — in other words, through and with the population and local security forces. VSO, where conducted, are creating isolating and delegitimizing effects that undermine insur-

gent influence with the population and simultaneously improve the people’s perceptions of the government’s legitimacy.

How SOF conduct VSO

Joint/combined SOF teams apply a methodology that provides a versatile, pragmatic, conditions-based model for VSO. The methodology comprises four phases: *shape, hold, build, and expand and transition*. In addition to providing a standard for measuring the progress and status of the various village-stability-platform, or VSP, missions of the SOF teams, the model provides common terminology for reporting the effects of VSO to senior decision-makers. It is worth noting here that VSO take a “conditions-based” approach, and the methodology must be adaptable to the varying and sometimes unique conditions faced by the VSPs. In other words, the methodology may not always follow a linear progression or adhere strictly to a predetermined timeline. For example, a village or village cluster may have progressed from the shape to hold phases as desired, but subsequent changes in the local situation, resulting from insurgent action or other variables, may require a reassessment that dictates additional shaping.

Shape. While shape is the first phase, it may also be the most critical. During this phase, operational elements assess threat conditions; develop a clear understanding of the human terrain, local history and other critical details related to the village/area; and begin engagement to prepare for long-term success. The goal of the shape phase is to gain local consent and invitation for the SOF team to embed within the village. SOF elements can achieve that only by earning the trust of the villagers and village elders. Entering a village without the elders’ consent would, in all likelihood, not lead to long-term success. Areas with potential for VSP embeds are areas in which elders have asked for coalition forces’ assistance or have previously demonstrated a willingness or capacity to defend themselves against insurgent violence. To be considered for VSO, the village or area must offer operational or strategic value to the Afghan government and ISAF, because of limited SOF resources. Moreover, even though SOF are ideally suited, organized and trained for operating in remote areas, leaders and planners must be circumspect about a potential VSO site’s operational and logistical sustainability.

Many factors contribute to the success of the shaping effort. As previously stated, the SOF team must understand the potential VSP location’s history and human terrain. Tribal dispositions, power brokers and insurgent shadow leaders can affect the success of shaping efforts and the selection of embed locations. It is important that the populace not perceive the embedded VSP as partial to one tribe or group at the expense of the others. To be successful, the VSP should endeavor not only to engage all power brokers effectively but also to mitigate any potential negative influence.

In many instances, particularly when SOF elements have identified areas of insurgent influence or strategic importance, ANSF and coalition forces may need to conduct clearing operations as part of shaping efforts to create conditions conducive to progress. SOF best accomplish these clearing efforts through coordinated efforts with ANSF and coalition forces. SOF-partnered Afghan commandos are the principal forces for those operations. The commandos have proven to be extremely effective in creating the requisite security

conditions, given their inherent capabilities for communicating with the population, identifying threats and directly engaging local elders.

Before engaging a village or its elders, SOF teams must be aware that once they begin shaping efforts, they and the combined team incur a moral obligation to protect the village and its people. The village elders must perceive the team's commitment as genuine, not only to gain their consent for embedding, but also to help galvanize the village's commitment to self-defense that will be required at some point. The village must be willing to contribute to its own defense and to resist insurgent control with some help. We must reinforce that willingness, and the consequent village-defense efforts, because they represent an Afghan-initiated effort to solve Afghan challenges at the local level. Village elders fully understand that allowing SOF or other coalition elements to embed within the village is a clear sign to the insurgents that the village has made a decision to resist. Assuming that the SOF analysis and area assessments are accurate, we can expect that embedding efforts will precipitate increased insurgent violence against the population. It would be unreasonable to expect any village to make that decision without complete confidence in the commitment of SOF, the coalition and the Afghan government.

Hold. VSO have drawn the attention and concern of the Taliban and have created what General David Petraeus has called "tactical effects with strategic implications."³ Successful shaping efforts create some security "white space" by decreasing direct physical threats to the village or area, but that may be only temporary, given insurgents' intentions to reassert some form of control and influence. The embedded SOF team, with the support of the coalition, the Afghan government support and the ANSF when available, must focus its efforts during the hold phase on accruing security effects and building the village's capacity to protect its population. It is critically important that the SOF team view the village as its own and seek to protect it 24/7. The village and elders must also view the SOF team as an important, contributing member of the community. The absence of insurgent efforts to intimidate leaders and members of the population is a key indicator of positive security. Consistent and durable security effects will ultimately promote the governance



SHAPING The first phase of VSO, shape, is critical time in which SOF teams access the environment and develop relationships with area locals to set the stage for long-term success. U.S. Army photo.

and development components of stability.

Afghan Local Police, or ALP. "Everything ultimately has to be turned over to the Afghans."⁴ VSO from the outset, have sought to enable Afghan unilateral capabilities to create Afghan stability at local levels. Initially, SOF elements are looking for villagers and elders who will provide information to the SOF team or to the ANSF on activities (or persons) that are threatening their security. In fact, a small-rewards program exists to encourage that behavior. However, at some point during the hold phase, SOF teams will encourage village elders to initiate and incorporate a temporary locally partnered security force to defend the village from insurgents and other threats.

The ALP program, officially sanctioned as an Afghan government program in August 2010, is part of the overall VSO effort. SOF teams conducting VSO support those local government efforts under the direction and administration of the Ministry of the Interior, or MOI. Answering to the chief of police for their district, ALP members are vetted by the local shura and enrolled biometrically before they are trained and equipped. The vetting process includes the village elders, who recommend candidates they believe have a vested interest in protecting the village in which they live. SOF



EXPAND AND TRANSITION In the final phase of VSO, expand and transition, villages are able to achieve stability through an empowered government and security forces while expanding the efforts throughout the surrounding area. U.S. Army photo.

teams provide training focused on the Afghan constitution, the rule of law, police ethics and morals, basic rifle marksmanship and first aid. According to Fred Kagan, a student of the war in Afghanistan:

*The emergence of a functional and credible local security program in 2010 is perhaps the most striking and unexpected development — and potentially one of the most important. The Afghan Local Police (ALP) program is designed to extend the reach of the Afghan and coalition forces to rural areas rather than to replace them. ... This program offers a promising view of what at least part of the ultimate political solution to this conflict might look like.*⁵

The ALP program represents a mobilization of the communities in which it is implemented, and it has the effect of separating the insurgents from the populace. Through the MOI's sponsorship and provision of equipment for the ALP, the program also provides tangible evidence of the government's interest in the well-being of the population.

In keeping with the moral requirement to protect resisting villages, VSO must remain responsive to emerging security threats that outmatch local capabilities. In the absence of other coalition or Afghan military or police elements, the most responsive forces for those in-extremis purposes are the SOF-partnered Afghan com-

mandos. The same capabilities that the Afghan commandos bring to bear during shaping operations are also of value for disrupting ongoing or anticipated insurgent actions against the villages.

Build. The build phase of VSO involves the challenging but critical steps of establishing bottom-up links that will promote durable stability. Seth Jones, an expert on Afghanistan and local defense forces, has observed:

Although creating a strong centralized state, assuming it ever happens, may help ensure long-term stability, it is not sufficient in Afghanistan. The current top-down state-building and counterinsurgency efforts must take place alongside bottom-up programs, such as reaching out to legitimate local leaders to enlist them in providing security and services at the village and district levels. Otherwise, the Afghan government will lose the war. Experts on state building and counterinsurgency in Afghanistan fall into two competing camps. ... The first believes that Afghanistan will never be stable and

*secure without a powerful central government capable of providing services to Afghans in all corners of the country. The other insists that Afghanistan is, and always has been, a quintessentially decentralized society, making it necessary to build local institutions to create security and stability.*⁶

The capabilities of Civil Affairs, or CA, support the bottom-up efforts. While VSO simultaneously re-empower traditional means of local governance, the full range of CA-coordinated development efforts can strengthen the connection at the district level. Development involves a host of efforts, including small cash-for-work projects under the auspices of the Commander's Emergency Response Program; medical projects, veterinary and agricultural seminars; major contract projects made possible by the United States Agency for International Development; and contributions from other partners within the international community.

The Afghan government and the international community can rely on those governance-and-development links throughout the district to understand bottom-up needs. The links assist the Afghan government in providing critical infrastructure needs and delivering essential services at local levels. Success in the build phase can yield exponentially positive effects on the quality of life for local

populations and, at the same time, cultivate some confidence between the local and national levels of government. From the village-level perspective, VSO can provide a viable alternative to oppression and a compelling incentive for the insurgents to reintegrate.

Expand and transition. This phase of VSO should begin once a VSP has fostered a successful connection between the village and the district level of governance and development. The overarching VSO program has as its objective the creation of operational and strategic effects in support of the ISAF counterinsurgency campaign. Those effects ideally accrue as a consequence of expanding VSO efforts to other villages, until the entire district achieves enduring stability through empowered Afghan government leadership and administrative efforts. Historical examples of counterinsurgency, as well as the demonstrated propensity of the Afghan culture for raising local security forces, lend weight to the argument that, over time, VSO can achieve significant positive effects in Afghanistan. Fred Kagan has noted:

The premise of local defense initiatives is twofold: Counterinsurgency works best when local communities not only reject the insurgents but also agree to fight to keep them away; this principle seems especially applicable in a localized, rural and tribal society like Afghanistan where warrior spirit, independence and communal self-defense are prized traditions.⁷

SOF's organic capabilities of military information support operations, or MISO, can enhance the effects of VSO during the expansion phase. In addition to disseminating effective narratives to counter insurgent propaganda, MISO efforts also amplify narratives specific to the VSO sites' efforts and propagate messages integral to the information-operations campaign. VSO/MISO complementary communications, via established radio stations and disseminated radios in a box provide the population access to "tip lines," preferred entertainment, religious broadcasting and topic call-in opportunities.

Throughout all phases of VSO, the VSPs have recently begun incorporating effective cultural support teams, or CSTs, composed of female military personnel. Those specially trained female Soldiers are establishing people-to-people contacts with local Afghan females, which would be perceived as inappropriate if established by men. Furthermore, the CSTs provide direct-support activities that range from civic-action programs, to searches, to humanitarian assistance.

Village stability coordination

The development of VSO and its corollary ALP program has highlighted the requirement for a national-level network to synchronize and reinforce local-to-regional successes, to manage existing civil-military complexity and to promote the efficient expansion of VSO when feasible. The district-to-national-level network assists in leveraging all available civil-military expertise and capacity to address urgent needs in rural areas, needs which the VSP identify. The collaborative network extends from a national-level cell directly to regional-level cells. Regional-level collaborative cells comprise the existing VSPs and the supporting district and provincial advisory teams within the region.

To enable Afghan stability, SOF work to leverage numerous Afghan ministries, agencies and directorates, from VSPs to the national level. Key among the many entities with which SOF

collaborate in VSO are the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, or IDLG, and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, or MRRD. The MRRD, established to develop and implement programs that promote responsible social and financial growth, aims to reduce poverty among the approximately 80 percent of Afghans who live in rural areas. Established by presidential decree to improve governance and achieve stability, the IDLG is responsible for supervising provincial and district governors and respective subnational councils. The IDLG has established many policies and programs, including the Afghan Social Outreach Program, which has assisted local populations in establishing dozens of councils in critical provinces, connecting local traditional institutions to the central government.

Conclusion

Joint SOF teams are dispersed in remote, austere and often hostile areas of Afghanistan to execute VSO in a sustained way. To be sure, VSO are not without significant challenges and potential setbacks, as one would reasonably foresee under those circumstances, nor have they been without cost to our units and individual SOF Soldiers, Airmen and Marines. The effort is worthwhile, and it helps create real and potentially long-term positive effects. One expert on the region has observed:

Six in 10 Afghans today have a favorable opinion of the U.S. military presence in their country. They understand that the U.S. is a guarantor of a future that is somewhat better than the Afghan past. They are not, of course, expecting Afghanistan to be turned into a central Asian nirvana, but they are hoping for more security and prosperity.⁸

VSO are a crucial but corollary component of the overall comprehensive COIN campaign that seeks to bring security and stability to the Afghan people. In the end, our SOF units and personnel undertaking VSO in the most austere areas are contributing immeasurably to those efforts in effective ways and continue to do so through presence, patience and persistence to help build a hopeful future for Afghanistan and its people. **SW**

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THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF VILLAGE STABILITY OPERATIONS

BY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 STEPHEN N. RUST

Village-stability operations encompass a variety of activities intended to stabilize a village and link it to healthy formal governance. The lack of government presence in many rural areas of Afghanistan makes them susceptible to control by the Taliban. Without VSO, Operation Enduring Freedom will likely fall short of success.

Control of villages ebbs and flows with the flavor of the day, and the population's allegiance lies with whomever provides for and protects it. A key component of VSO is building the capability and capacity of village- and district-level officials to support the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, or GIRoA. Those officials are the crucial link between the people from an assortment of tribes and the formal government controlling the country.

Because of the internal strife between neighboring tribes, there has to be a link that will pull the country together to form a unified nation without fear of reprisal from previous rivalries or squabbles. VSO have been put into play to promote GIRoA officials' engagement with the populace. Personnel in special-operations forces, or SOF, hold and participate in key leader engagements between village elders and GIRoA officials on a regular basis to discuss issues affecting governance, security and development. SOF employ small, well-trained detachments of Soldiers from the coalition forces, or CF, who live and operate in remote villages.

Within those villages, small security elements have been formed as local police. Those elements are leveraged by SOF to work with elders and district officials to promote governance, security and development

across an expanded network of surrounding villages. An argument from the VSO sites and the areas where shaping operations are taking place is that GIRoA lacks the capacity to effectively govern and is not in touch with the local elders. Mentoring the district and provincial officials will permit them to become self-reliant and provide good governance and development, ensuring long-term viability and success at the local, district and provincial levels.

Principles for stability operations

Several principles are common to VSO in any environment:

- Engagement of the community is paramount with respect to the tribes in the area.
- Care needs to be taken to avoid empowering one tribe over another.





- Understanding tribal and ethnic dynamics is vital. Engagements with local tribal elders may take time to build trust and participation, but engagements pay dividends in the long run.
- VSO success depends profoundly on the local populations' acceptance. Without the support of the people, VSO are doomed before they start.
- An effective operation diminishes insurgent influence in the village and provides security to the area.
- Villagers are easily persuaded by Taliban propaganda when there are no representatives of the GIROA in the area with a constant presence.
- VSO empower local representative governance through shuras utilizing the most locally-appropriate form of representatives; these may be village

elders, maliks or members of community-development councils.

- GIROA-sponsored small-scale development projects led by the community act as a medium for effective governance.
- More often than not, VSO are about community action and confidence-building.
- A reward for successful operations and repelling insurgent influence should be developmental projects that will allow the villages to flourish and create unity of the populace.
- Empower traditional structures within the Afghan culture, making sure elders or others are accountable to the villages and districts they represent.
- VSO should be used as an enabler for reintegration but not as an incentive for it.
- Improvements in security, local gover-

nance and development will bring increasing opportunities for reintegrating former insurgents into the community.

- VSO and the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program are separate but mutually supporting programs.

Afghan face on protection

There is no message more powerful than Afghans standing up to defend their homes against the insurgency, participating in legitimate governance activities and creating local stability in hopes of a brighter future. VSO seek to coordinate the actions of coalition forces, GIROA and nongovernment organizations in order to best promote security, governance and development initiatives from the village to the district level.

Living in the village is the surest way to earn villagers' trust and gain an advanced knowledge of the local human terrain. But



COHESION Village defense forces keep Afghan National Security Forces informed of potential security threats, by working together they are able to defeat insurgent forces. *U.S. Army photo.*

the choice of a specific location for VSO is one of the most far-reaching decisions made by a SOF team. Villages across Afghanistan vary greatly; each site will look different and will have different requirements, and the VSO implementation techniques may be different for each VSO site.

In one area, SOF may choose to embed near a minority tribe's village but not in it. That would allow them to provide over-watch that would ensure that the village is treated fairly, without aggravating existing prejudices against the tribe. At the same time, having a physical link with the dominant subtribe would allow the team to exert greater influence over the direction of that population. In another area, a team may choose to embed at a district center because it considers the district governor to be a competent individual and will work through him to stabilize the district. That would also allow the team to address a major cause of tribal dispute in the area: the over-representation of a dominant tribe at the district level.

Areas such as Shah Wali Kot pose a greater challenge because they have historically been ruled by the Taliban. The criteria being used to determine a location includes: safeguarding of forces, logistics, the population's desire, population density, tribal compositions, security and economic effects and the likelihood of being able to expand influence beyond the initial site.

Credible authorities in charge of protection

There is a definite need to build a credible and honest unit of the Afghan Local Police, or ALP, within the villages. The ALP seeks to establish a security bubble in the villages that will shape conditions for initiatives related to development and governance. Members of the local police are nominated by the local shura council and vetted by coalition forces. They receive three weeks of training that focuses on the Afghan constitution and ethics, as well as security-specific training, then they are

monitored closely by units of the local coalition force and the community's elders.

The approaches to building these forces vary between sites. Presence patrols by coalition forces exhibit a continued commitment to village defense and support shaping operations by enhancing GIROA credibility. A properly trained and equipped village defense force can deter and weaken the insurgents' ability to influence the local population. Many villages desire to defend themselves but do not have the weapons required to engage the Taliban. Using arms from a neighboring country will aid in economic stability in the region and provide a sustainable logistics system for the future. Supplying Western arms and munitions could lead to logistics problems or cause the feeling that Western influence is being pushed upon the country.

Village defenders working hand in hand with Afghan National Security Forces and coalition forces have proven that they are capable of defeating insurgents. In one incident, the strategy was to be even-handed in approaching the tribes for a local guardian force. The CF members convinced elders to agree not to prevent young men from joining the force. It also identified a comparatively neutral businessman who could broker arrangements with influential men to bring their kin into the guardians. The result was relatively even tribal representation among the force.

In another area, the local embedded unit experienced initial trouble convincing village elders to nominate members of the local police. The unit remained patient and continued to engage village shuras. Eventually, the local elders realized the value of the police to their community, nominated participants and played an active role in overseeing the unit.

Managing the power with tribal disparity

Powerbrokers can be impediments or facilitators to VSO success. Units need to identify key leaders and develop a plan for successfully managing powerbrokers. In some cases, a malign powerbroker may be balanced through fair-minded consideration of all senior individuals in the community; in others, they may need to be marginalized or opposed. In one village the powerbroker may not hold a formal posi-

tion of authority but instead exert influence from behind the scenes. He may eventually be marginalized but may be too powerful to be ignored in the short term. The best strategy may be to build an alternate center of village influence that will eventually rival the powerbroker. Elsewhere, the powerbroker may be a district chief of police with whom units must work. The short-term solution would be to keep him close, embedding at his location to promote his accountability to the population.

Tribal disputes need to be managed without aggravating disparities. VSO is a community-engagement program, but tribal power struggles are a monumental hurdle in Afghanistan. Tribal disputes occur in many areas and require management to achieve stability without aggravating existing rivalries. In one region, coalition forces separated the elders of the rival tribes and eventually unified the tribes by serving as an honest broker to help them work through their grievances. In another region, rival tribes had established separate territories. Coalition forces held shuras in neutral locations, such as the district center or firebase, to allow individuals to come together and work out tribal disputes.

Money to build a cohesive district

Funding for development projects is and will continue to be a highly contested part of VSO. Units must consider ways to harness the effects of money so that projects will build unity and not encourage corruption and power politics. Following through with promised developmental projects builds trust and faith in the GIRoA. Community development councils should be identified and linked to community projects whenever possible. An underused resource for providing an Afghan solution to Afghan development issue are the rapid-deployment teams from the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development.

In one village, projects of the Commander's Emergency Relief Program, or CERP, were used to build the credibility of newly established maliks. After a lengthy process of identifying representative maliks for its villages, the embedded unit used small projects to demonstrate the capability of these leaders. In another district, CERP funding was used to finance projects on which the shuras could begin working together. Shura leaders were responsible for all CERP programming,

from selecting the project to allocating work days and number of employees.

Balancing lethal operations

Lethal operations may be unavoidable when responding to Taliban or insurgent intimidation or attacks. Those operations must be handled carefully to reinforce, rather than disrupt, permanence. Most VSO sites have reported that lethal activities are necessary to demonstrate to the population that their security can be ensured. Living in the village constitutes a restraint on the overuse of lethal action: Teams must live with any mistakes they make, and villages have protracted memories. In one incident in southern Afghanistan, insurgents attacked members of the local populace and wounded several. The VSO team and partnered Afghan and border police led a counterattack and helped medevac the wounded. The event led to the discovery of 20 pressure-plate IEDs and a surge in the confidence of the local population and the partner force, both of whom continue to speak about the "victory" of GIRoA and SOF that day.

In the west, teams conducting a show of force against Taliban elements were escorted by local elders to demonstrate their support. When the embedded CF unit needed to move against an insurgent position, it avoided the breaching of doors at all costs. Instead, the elder would knock on the door in order to de-escalate the situation if at all possible. Bringing GIRoA officials (e.g., district subgovernor, provincial governor, Afghan National Police chief, Afghan National Army commander) helps dispel tales and affords an avenue for positive effects of information operations. That also applies to representatives of the U. S. Agency for International Development, Department of State and other outside agencies. Many tribes and villages do not trust GIRoA because of systemic corruption.

Expectations of the force

Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission, and DoD must be prepared to conduct them throughout all phases of conflict and across the range of military operations. They may be conducted to establish civil security and civil control, restore essential services, repair and protect critical infrastructure, or deliver humanitarian assistance until it is feasible to transition lead respon-

sibility to other U.S. government agencies, foreign governments and security forces, or international governmental organizations. In such circumstances, DoD will operate within U.S. government and, if appropriate, international structures for managing civil-military operations, and it will seek to enable the deployment and utilization of the appropriate civilian capabilities.

Since most stabilization operations occur in less-developed countries, there will always be a long list of needs and wants, such as schools, roads and health care, in an area of operations. Given the chronic shortage of U.S. government personnel and resources, effective stability operations require an ability to identify and prioritize local causes of instability. The focus should be on the perceptions of the populace and ways to influence those perceptions.

Stability operations require prioritization based on progress in diminishing the sources of instability or building on sources of stability. For example, if U.S. government personnel believe that access to information about Western culture will undercut insurgent recruiting and work to provide a village with an Internet café, despite the fact that village elders say they need more water, then the village is not being effectively stabilized.

By ignoring the village elders, U.S. personnel are undermining the legitimacy of the village elders and hindering their ability to maintain order, further contributing to the instability. Access to information about the West via the Internet café may create expectations that cannot be met by the village elders or the host-nation government. There may be disputes over access to the Internet café or excessive use of it by some villagers at the expense of others. Again, the U.S. government's desire to make things better and to share technology with others can lead to more, not less instability. Understanding the causal relationship between needs, wants and stability is crucial. **SW**

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TAKING A STAND

VILLAGE STABILITY OPERATIONS AND THE AFGHAN LOCAL POLICE

“My duties were simple; I was to encourage the local inhabitants to stand up for themselves.” – *Former British officer & diplomat Alec Kirkbride, 1971.*

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL BASIL CATANZARO AND MAJOR KIRK WINDMUELLER

Out of a population of more than 28 million, more than three-quarters (21 million) of the Afghan people live in rural areas.¹ The Taliban is a rural-based insurgency and uses remote towns and villages beyond government reach for sanctuary, freedom of movement and to launch attacks into the major population centers. Efforts by the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, or GIRoA, to secure the population can reach only so far. There are simply not enough Afghan National Security Forces, or ANSF, to secure the tens of thousands of remote towns that dot the Afghan landscape. Many of those fragmented communities are isolated and disconnected from any central governance, making them vulnerable to insurgents. Increasing the capacity of trained ANSF to expand central-government control continues to be a time-consuming process.

In an effort to help bolster the central government's authority in these vast uncontrolled and under-governed areas, the Coalition Forces Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan, or CFSOCC-A, initiated a pilot program beginning in the fall of 2009 to bring

stability to a network of villages in remote areas of the south, west and east. Village stability operations, or VSO, originally known as the local defense initiative, aims to bring special-operations forces, or SOF, into local villages and help them establish stability in the form of security, development and governance. These teams of Soldiers in Special Forces, or SF; Civil Affairs, or CA; and Military Information Support Operations, or MISO, actually live in the villages at the invitation of the village, tribal and district leaders who have chosen to stand up to the intimidation tactics of the insurgents. Critical to the VSO concept is teaming with lightly armed villagers to provide local security. This partnership force, known as the Afghan Local Police, or ALP, is helping to drive out the Taliban influence and set the conditions for political and economic improvement from the ground up.

Nature of the Insurgency

Since the fall of the Taliban government in 2001, the Taliban have transitioned from being ruling dictators to being insurgents and have

moved to many of the rural areas of Afghanistan. As has been the case in most every insurgency in history,² the insurgent Taliban have operated from those rural areas to execute a campaign to control the local population through fear and intimidation.

To date, the GIRoA, international community and coalition forces have focused their efforts on “top-down” approaches to bring stability to Afghanistan. These efforts have been predominantly aimed at securing major population centers. However, since the current population of Afghanistan is approximately 76 percent rural, these programs will have limited affect. In the near term, the Afghan government cannot project security across the country. As such, CFSOCC-A’s VSO “bottom-up” approach was developed to extend security across the insurgent-affected gaps and seams, which complement these centralized top-down initiatives and confront sources of instability where they have the strongest hold — in rural villages.

Current top-down strategies are able to extend their reach to provincial- and possibly district-government levels. The result is a security vacuum between the district government and the people at the village level. It is in this vacuum that the insurgents exploit the local populace, capitalizing on the drivers of instability, such as land grievances, lack of state services and monetary disputes. Often, when land or water disputes arise amongst local families or sub-tribes, the district and provincial level GIRoA representatives take a very long time to render justice and are often corrupt. However, the Taliban will very quickly and efficiently act as arbiter, determine an outcome, and then enforce judgment over that decision. Thus, in absence of the state’s capacity for justice, the Taliban is acting as a shadow government and conducting functions that ought to be conducted by GIRoA.

VSO and ALP: A Bottom-Up Approach

VSO’s goal is to work in the area between the district and the village and connect the villagers back to their district and provincial government. That concept is rooted in SF doctrine under what are called “remote area operations.” According FM 3-05.202, *Special Forces Foreign Internal Defense Operations*, “Remote area operations take place in insurgent-controlled or contested areas to establish islands of popular support for the host-nation, or HN, government and deny support to the insurgents.”³ That complementary approach to GIRoA top-down programs is not new and is, in fact, based on successful historical paradigms in Afghanistan.

A range of traditional local protective forces — such as *arbakai*, *chalweshtai*, *chagha*, and *mahali satoonkay* — have historically been used by Pashtun communities to police and defend themselves. They are not militias, as the term is often used in Afghanistan — large offensive forces under the command of individual warlords. Instead, they are defensive, village-level policing forces under the control of local shuras and jirgas (councils) developed out of necessity to protect themselves from outside forces and influences. These defensive forces were always temporary measures: When the threat subsided and the local defenders were no longer needed, they were stood down by their shuras. These local defense concepts were used successfully from 1929 to 1978 under the Musa Hiban dynasty, which was Afghanistan’s most recent stable period.⁴

Khakrez VSO: A Model of Local Stability

One of the best examples of the execution of VSO is in the district of Khakrez in Kandahar province, where the VSO team partnered with local leaders and ANSF to build a local defense force and address civil vulnerabilities. That has led to more secure villages, and the region as a whole is ushering in stability and development.

Khakrez district is a rural agrarian community with a population of more than 20,000 located in north-central Kandahar Province. It is the home to the Shah Agha Maqsood Shrine, one of the oldest historical Islamic sites in Afghanistan, which has been a destination for thousands of tourists. Being close to Kandahar City and having a significant tourist population, Khakrez’ economic center was once a booming hub of commerce.

With the rise of the Taliban insurgency, life in Khakrez altered dramatically. The Taliban quickly expanded into Khakrez and began exploiting the local population and using the town for sanctuary and staging operations and attacks on Kandahar City. The Taliban were easily able to move men, money, weapons and equipment to shape and strategically affect Kandahar City. Their tactics resulted in a population afraid and unable to stand up to the insurgents. Predictably, the result has been a lack of overt, visible support by the population for GIRoA. That was neither preference nor ideological support for the Taliban but merely a support coerced out of fear of Taliban reprisals and a sense of self-preservation on behalf of the locals.

However, since the 2009 establishment of the VSO in Khakrez, the local villages have been empowered to protect themselves, have begun to reverse the effects of the Taliban’s control and have transformed their area into a more secure environment. That has permitted development projects and strengthened ties to the district, provincial and national government.

The transformation began when SOF began organizing and empowering locals in a neighborhood-watch program to act as a “trip-wire” or early warning network in the event of Taliban activity. SOF partnerships with the ANSF (police and army), working in conjunction with the neighborhood watch, have helped the local population stand up and reject the insurgents in their villages.

Since the VSO team has moved in, they have conducted dozens of key-leader engagements, shuras, training of locals to defend themselves and training in spot-reporting and how to contact ANSF or coalition forces to aid them if threatened. The VSO team continues to leverage its relationship with the population and local leaders to establish a defense force of men from local villages. In only a few months there has been a significant reduction in insurgent attacks as well as a return to normalcy for the local populace.

Some visible signs of improvement in the security situation are displaced persons moving back to Khakrez, local shuras resolving conflicts, increases in tourism, an influx of projects and the increase of businesses and merchants at the bazaar. According to a recent survey, every week one or two families return to Khakrez from Kandahar City because of, in their own words, an increase in security.⁵ The surveys were conducted as part of the Tactical Conflict Assessment and Planning Framework, or TCAFP.⁶ TCAFP is a planning framework developed by the Office of Military Affairs, a division of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Additionally, on Feb. 28, 2010, a group of children from the local area approached SOF to inform them of Taliban messages on the radio.⁷ The open interaction of children with coalition

forces is often an indication that locals are free from intimidation to openly interact with CF.

Another example of how improved security has affected life in Khakrez is the increased tourism to the Shah Agha Maqsud Shrine. Thousands of tourists descended on this pilgrimage site during the recent new-year celebration. Pilgrims arrived from all over the country, and even international visitors attended the celebration. SOF estimated that there were more than 20,000 visitors present.

Six months ago, Khakrez was virtually a ghost town with no commerce. Through the hard work of the VSO team, in concert with the ALP and local ANSF, security has been the catalyst for prosperity. Today the local bazaar in Khakrez touts more than 40 shops and stores. That is a testimony to the local populace standing up for themselves and their rejection of the ideology of the Taliban.

With respect to local governance, the VSO team has seen an increase of conflicts being brought to local shuras, which are recognized as formal legal governing entities by GIRoA for conflict resolution. For example, locals were spreading accusations that an ANA commander was illegally selling land. The issue was brought to a shura, and the matter was settled and apologies rendered.⁸ By empowering the traditional Afghan subnational governance institutions at the local level from the bottom up, this acts to counter the Taliban's "shadow court."

While there are many reasons to be cautiously optimistic about the improvements in the security situation in Khakrez, the insurgents continue to test, target and intimidate the local population. The Taliban do not like losing control and influence over the area, and they will try desperately to regain power. For example, we have recently seen the insurgents conduct episodic acts of violence against the local populace and coalition forces in the area. In spite of those attacks, the local populace remains stalwart in its opposition to the insurgency and in the support for the GIRoA. With the advent of the fighting season, the spring and summer of 2011 will continue to test the VSO's enduring viability.

Future of VSO

The VSO program represents the best practices in foreign internal defense and counterinsurgency. The VSO concept also utilizes SF, CA and MISO in the capacity for which they were designed — to conduct operations at the grassroots level in villages in towns where the contest between the people and the insurgents is an everyday reality. The VSO teams focus first on bringing security to usher in development and a connection of local traditional governance to the formal governance at the district level and above.

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LOCAL SECURITY Special Operations Soldiers work to empower locals in a neighborhood-watch to help the local population stand up and reject the insurgents in their villages. U.S. Army photo.

Khakrez is but one example of the effectiveness of the VSO program. CFSOCC-A is currently implementing this program in 17 Afghan districts, and it includes more than 3,000 local defenders. VSO complements other programs currently being implemented by the GIRoA, coalition forces and the international community. VSO in Khakrez and other sites in the surrounding areas are proving to be invaluable in securing the countryside and helping to improve the everyday lives of the locals. If we are to be successful in defeating the Taliban, bottom-up programs in rural areas must be supported and spread throughout the country. **SW**

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REGIMENTAL TRAINING FACILITY BRINGS UNIQUE SOF RESOURCES TOGETHER

BY MAJOR DAVID S. CLUKEY

The United States Army Special Forces Command, or USASFC, established a regimental pre-mission training, or PMT, facility at Fort Bliss, Texas, in order to better accomplish its statutory obligations to train, equip and organize forces in support of the geographic combatant commands, or GCCs. During the last 11 months, the initiative has enabled seven special operations task forces, or SOTFs, to achieve their pre-deployment training objectives in preparation for overseas contingency operations. The unique combination of facilities and special-operations-unique resources allows SOTFs to focus on meeting their training requirements vs. dedicating the majority of their effort to creating an adequate training environment.

Background

Prior to USAFC's investment in a dedicated training facility, SOTF-level PMT was conducted at various locations throughout the continental United States. That presented problems in three areas. First, there was no continuity or uniformity in the development and execution of the PMT across the regiment. SOTFs would continually identify and coordinate new locations to accomplish PMT. That approach offered no opportunity for developing the training sites for future use or establishing enduring relationships within the different areas.

Second, each SOTF was spending too much time planning and developing those training venues, often reinventing what other units or previous rotations had already accomplished. Finally, it was a costly endeavor: Few training facilities in the U.S. are resourced to address the unique training requirements of SOF. In order to remedy the deficiency, SOTFs would negotiate contracts, rent and purchase supplies and equipment, and ship organic special-operations-unique

weapons, vehicles and equipment from home station. The average overall combined cost to the regiment for SOTF PMTs from 2002 to 2010 for contracts, travel, shipping, rentals and supplies was \$28 million.

In 2008, operational commitments and the demand for SF in support of GCCs, specifically in the U.S. Central Command operational theater, continued to increase. However, no dedicated training facility or mechanism was in place to account for SF PMT. SF required an exclusive training site resourced to permit SOTFs to train collectively and to receive proper validation by their parent groups before deploying to combat theaters. The solution was to create a USASFC-consolidated site dedicated to SOTF PMT. That would save the SF groups from spending too much time on resourcing, planning and developing the training venues, thus enabling SOTFs to focus their PMT efforts on the actual mission scenarios and training for the mission-essential task list. Consolidating resources for PMT as a recurring action at a particular site, rather than going to multiple venues, would dramatically reduce the overall cost of PMT for the regiment and gain significant efficiencies.

In 2009, the commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, or USASOC, identified training in support of named operations as his number-one priority.¹ The USASFC commander directed the research, identification and development of an SF regimental training facility in the western United States. The selection of the site was to be determined by the similarity of the site's environment to that of the area of responsibility, or AOR, of the U.S. Central Command, or CENTCOM; the ability of the site to accommodate training for a SOTF-sized element; and guaranteed priority of use of the site's SF-specific train-

ing facilities. After considerable analysis, the choices were narrowed to three sites: Fort Bliss, Texas; Dugway, Utah; and Guernsey, Wyo. Of the three, Fort Bliss presented the best environmental factors: it had a supportive garrison command and possessed existing infrastructure available to the regiment to support training-area development.

USASFC invested resources to develop a training capability at Fort Bliss and collaborated with USASOC and the Fort Bliss garrison command to develop formal support arrangements. The agreements formally established the PMT site. USASFC has manned and equipped the PMT site to support two SOTFs training simultaneously. USASFC has assigned a complement of special-operations vehicles,² tactical-support vehicles and associated vehicle-mounted weapon systems and communications equipment to Fort Bliss. USASFC manned the PMT site with a SOF cell that provides the institutional knowledge and professional subject-matter expertise needed to explain SF's unique training requirements to the Fort Bliss garrison command, tenant units and range supervisors.

The SOF cell provides SF commanders the collective training resources necessary to produce qualified and validated SOTFs that are fully prepared to deploy for combat in Iraq, Afghanistan and other locations throughout the world.³ The SOF cell serves as the principle liaison element between the USASFC headquarters at Fort Bragg, the seven SF groups and the Fort Bliss garrison command, tenant units and range supervisors. The cell deconflicts, coordinates and synchronizes all regimental training conducted at Fort Bliss and manages the maintenance and operational readiness of all USASFC vehicles and equipment assigned to Fort Bliss. The commander of the



IN ACTION Members of the 3rd Special Forces Group conduct pre-mission training at one of the many facilities utilized by the Special Forces Command prior to the organization of the permanent PMT site. U.S. Army photo.

SOF cell is a senior SF warrant officer. An SF master sergeant serves as the noncommissioned officer in charge. The remainder of SOF cell consists of two SF operations sergeants, a maintenance senior warrant officer, an engineer officer and a supply sergeant. The SOF cell is augmented with one civilian operations specialist, four logistics specialists and 10 maintenance technicians.

Fort Bliss opportunities, resources

The PMT site maximizes training space and allows SOTFs to execute collective training with a realistic dispersion of operational elements by employing a “hub-and-spoke” concept. SOTFs can exercise distributed command and control and a variety of SOF capabilities by assigning subordinate maneuver elements to geographically separated satellite training sites within the Fort Bliss area. Fort Bliss is the hub where SOTFs establish command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, or C4ISR, specifically, in Oro Grande, Dona Ana or the McGregor Range Complex. SF

B-detachments establish spokes on Fort Bliss ranges or in nearby New Mexico training areas, including: the Playas Training and Research Center, or PTRC; the Stallion Range complex; the White Sands Missile Range; and the Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center.

The PTRC, especially, offers SF Soldiers a unique opportunity to refine their nonlethal skills in support of PMT requirements. Located a three hours’ drive from Fort Bliss in southeastern New Mexico, it is owned and operated by New Mexico Tech University, which funds it as a training and research facility using Department of Homeland Security funds. The facility includes an Afghan urban marketplace; a large Afghan village; a combat outpost; and several housing areas converted for use in urban combat, drug-interdiction and border-security training programs. It has on-site billeting and established contracts to provide Afghan and Iraqi cultural and language role-players.

SOTFs have used the Playas site to support their training as an advanced operating base, or AOB. AOBs use the site’s

realistic training environment and cultural and language role players to develop immersive training scenarios that allow them to develop their skills in intercultural communications, problem-solving and political awareness. The training allows SF Soldiers to refine the interpersonal skills, nonverbal communication skills, language proficiency, and area and cultural orientation and understanding that are proving valuable in Afghanistan in missions such as village stability operations and the buildup of the Afghan local police.

Lessons learned

USASFC is working to improve training opportunities, capabilities and infrastructure available for SOTFs training at Fort Bliss. Feedback from operational groups and comments derived from unit after-action reports unanimously report good overall training experiences, but there are concerns in three areas:

Fort Bliss range restrictions: SF units training on Fort Bliss ranges must adhere to strict range regulations.⁴ Fort Bliss range regulations prescribe the limitations, requirements and general safety precautions established for training general-purpose forces and do not account for training in support of SOF. SOF training on Fort Bliss ranges requires command-endorsed exception-to-policy letters for the use and employment of nonstandard equipment, training methods and foreign weapons.

In November 2010, USASFC invited selected Fort Bliss range supervisors to attend a demonstration of SF training methods and tactics, techniques and procedures at Fort Bragg’s Range 37.⁵ The effort was well-received by the Fort Bliss range supervisors, and now Fort Bliss is soliciting input from the PMT SOF cell in drafting a SOF training addendum to the Fort Bliss range regulation.

Limited maneuver space: Because of ongoing range-enhancement projects, Fort Bliss’s ranges are congested and do not provide adequate space for mounted cross-country maneuver and mobility training. Fort Bliss has closed several ranges, creating congestion of existing facilities and competition among tenant units for their use. The pressure should be alleviated as the Base Realignment and Closure projects for Fort Bliss are completed and new range facilities open for use.

In March, the PMT SOF cell and representatives from the SF groups conducted site surveys of potential training locations in the Fort Bliss vicinity with an eye toward expanding training opportunities and maneuver space available for training units. USASFC will analyze the site-survey information to determine where resources could be provided to support development of additional training areas. To reduce the potential for disruption of PMT because of inadequate maneuver space, SOTFs should use outstation ranges instead of those on Fort Bliss whenever possible.

The way ahead

USASFC has identified three areas of focus for enhancing the training capacity of the PMT site. The first is to expand the training areas and infrastructure available for the regiment. The second is to expand interoperability and integration through PMT with joint units and interagency partners assigned to operational commands, specifically, combined joint special-operations task forces. The third is for SOTFs to integrate force modernization and the validation of capabilities of new equipment.

The hub-and-spoke model that USASFC is working to develop will help relieve the competition among SOTFs for limited Fort Bliss resources. Information obtained from the March site surveys and recommendations from the PMT SOF cell will help determine the best locations for future satellite training areas. The intent is to have two SOTF command-and-control and logistics-support hubs on Fort Bliss and up to three AOB sites in satellite training areas.

USASFC is completing coordination and obtaining administrative approval for breaking ground on a SOTF base camp at Oro Grande. The camp's design calls for an austere, secure facility with an operations center and billeting for SOTF headquarters personnel. SOTF headquarters will be able to deploy to Oro Grande to provide C4ISR and to exercise support-and-sustainment activities for their subordinate units and attachments. USASFC is working to identify a location for a second SOTF base camp in the Fort Bliss area. That would not only alleviate the necessity of coordinating the use of Fort Bliss billeting facilities but also provide SOTFs a location designed specifically for exercising SOF command-and-control and support.

In March, the 3rd SF Group, as the "framework group" responsible for providing the command headquarters for CJSOTF-Afghanistan, coordinated and hosted a PMT deconfliction conference that encompassed all participating units, enablers and individual augmentees assigned in support of Operating Enduring Freedom XVIII. USASFC embraced the initiative as a precedent for all future PMT planning, resourcing and deconfliction. In accordance with the FY 2011-2013 USASFC Command Training Guidance, the command encourages SF groups to participate in all upcoming SOTF rotations at the Fort Bliss PMT site.

The command has integrated and will continue to integrate force modernization evaluation and validation of new equipment at Fort Bliss. USASFC is committed to providing the regiment with the best resources available. USASFC has programmed Fort Bliss as a test bed for force-development and resource-integration processes to validate equipment designed to enhance the operational capabilities of the regiment. Units can expect to support this initiative by volunteering select elements to assess and validate new equipment during their PMT at Fort Bliss.

Conclusion

The PMT site at Fort Bliss provides the right combination of facilities and SOF-unique resources to facilitate realistic SF-specific training in unit collective and individual skills, while achieving efficiencies of regimental resources. Operational commitments and the high demand for SF have resulted in the establishment of a dedicated SF training location. Throughout FY 2010, the PMT site facilitated training for seven SOTFs, validating the proof of concept. However, comments on SOTF after-action reports indicate that Fort Bliss range restrictions and limited maneuver space have demonstrated weaknesses in the current PMT concept. USASFC acknowledges lessons learned and is investing in the expansion of training areas and infrastructure to support the development of a hub-and-spoke model to relieve existing competition among JSOTFs for limited Fort Bliss ranges and billeting.

As long as the high demand for trained and validated SF units remains constant within the CENTCOM AOR and around the

world, the PMT site at Fort Bliss will remain relevant and fully operational. USASFC will continue to refine the site based on feedback, analysis and after-action comments received from the operational groups. In conclusion, the regimental PMT site provides commanders the resources and training areas necessary to produce qualified and validated SOTFs, fully prepared to deploy for combat in Iraq, Afghanistan and other locations throughout the world. USASFC is committed to continually enhancing training opportunities and capabilities of the PMT site to maximize the regiment's ability to operate across the spectrum of military operations.⁶ **SW**

Major David S. Clukey is the chief of exercise in the U.S. Army Special Forces Command G3 training.

Notes:

1. Lieutenant General John F. Mulholland, USASOC *Remainder of FY 10 - FY 12 Command Training Guidance* (Fort Bragg, N.C., 24 May 2010).
2. The family of special-operations vehicles consists of SOF variants of the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected, or MRAP, and the All-Terrain Vehicle, or M-ATV. The M-ATV is the high-mobility, high-protection, medium tactical vehicle specifically engineered for treacherous environments. Derived from the Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement platform, the M-ATV is an MRAP vehicle that incorporates the TAK-4 independent suspension system. Oshkosh Defense website, 2011: <http://www.oshkoshdefense.com/products/5/m-atv> (accessed 2 April 2011).
3. Major General Edward Reeder, *USASFC(A) FY 11 - FY 13 Command Training Guidance* (Fort Bragg, N.C., 23 August 2010), 3.
4. Fort Bliss Regulation 385-63, *Fort Bliss Training Complex Range Operations* (Fort Bliss Texas: 10 February 2010).
5. Range 37 is managed by the JFK Special Warfare Center and School's Company D, 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group. It has live-fire training facilities, as well as training areas for advanced marksmanship; explosive, ballistic and mechanical breaching; and rappelling. It serves as the training site for the Special Forces Sniper Course and the Special Forces Advanced Reconnaissance Target Analysis Exploitation Techniques Course. Steven Hartov, "Forging Special Forces: The JFK Special Warfare Center and School," *Special Operations Report*, Spring 2009, www.stevenhartov.com/SOR/Feat-USSF.v5.pdf (accessed 5 April 2011).
6. Department of the Army, FM 3-05, *Special Operations Forces* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 2010).

EDUCATION Set Yourself Apart

Most Soldiers in Army special-operations forces, or ARSOF, have ample combat experience and a vast amount of the best training available. That should expedite their promotions, but for the fact that their peers are equally well-qualified. The best way Soldiers can set themselves apart from their peers is to advance their education.

Officers in all three ARSOF regiments should strive to attain a master's degree before they are in the primary zone of consideration for promotion to lieutenant colonel. Warrant officers and noncommissioned officers also need education to help set them apart — start with an associate's degree and work from there to develop intellectually and professionally.

For ARSOF Soldiers who already have a bachelor's degree, the JFK Special Warfare Center and School has three fully-funded, accredited master's-degree programs available that won't cost Soldiers any money out of pocket.

The National Defense University College of International Security Affairs Program is a

10-month program that provides a strategic perspective on the global threat environment; the rise of newly empowered and politicized ideological movements; the relationship between political objectives, strategy and all instruments of national power; and the roles of power and ideology.

The University of Kansas Interagency Studies Program is a 10-month program conducted by the University of Kansas that prepares officers for service in interagency assignments. Core and elective courses focus on U.S. government structure, interagency organizations and cultures, negotiation theory, conflict resolution and interagency legal considerations. The program is conducted in conjunction with Intermediate Level Education at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

The Naval Postgraduate School Special Operations Master's Degree Program is an 18-month program that provides Intermediate Level Education/Joint Professional Military Education 1 credit. The program provides a broad education in the art and science of

unconventional warfare at the tactical, operational and strategic levels.

Application for the programs is easy: All the information is available at the website of the Army Human Resources Command, or HRC (<https://www.hrc.army.mil>), or on the SWCS website under the Directorate of Special Operations Proponency (<https://arsocportal.soc.mil/swcs/dsop/pages/Default.aspx>). HRC assignments managers can answer specific questions and assist in determining the best time in terms of career development for Soldiers to attend.

Soldiers applying for either the University of Kansas or Naval Postgraduate School programs should apply for both and indicate their preference. A selection board will review the application and determine which program is the best fit for the Soldier and ARSOF; and if one program fills quickly, the Soldier may still be eligible for the other. Board dates and eligibility requirements are announced annually via MILPER message. Personnel in a non-ARSOF branch or military occupational specialty need a memorandum from their HRC assignments officer stating that if they complete the education program, their branch or MOS will allow them to serve 36 months in a position under the U.S. Army Special Operations Command.

Regardless of a Soldier's rank, more education will make them stronger, individually and professionally. The ARSOF qualification courses prepare Soldiers for tactical-level excellence. Furthering their education will not only develop them as an individual but also enhance the performance of their duties, preparing them to be a master SOF practitioner at the operational and strategic levels.

ACTIVE DUTY

SWCS updates guidance for ARSOF selection-board criteria

As the proponent for ARSOF enlisted military occupational specialties, SWCS has reframed the guidance submitted to the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command for the FY 2011 Sergeant Major and Sergeant Major Course Selection Board. The redesigned guidance provides board members with criteria for assessing candidates as best- and fully-qualified for career-management fields 38 (CA), 37 (MISO) and 18 (SF). The upcoming rewrite to DA Pam 600-25, *Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide*, will also provide the criteria for assessing Soldiers as best- and fully-qualified at each grade by CMF and further expand on their professional development.

ARSOF officer accession board

The FY 2011 ARSOF Officer Accession Board was held April 25-29. The board reviewed more than 850 files to select the best-qualified officer candidates from year group 2008 for service in Civil Affairs, Military Information Support Operations and Special Forces. This year's board selected officers who will provide quality and diverse Army experience from 14 basic branches (Air Defense, Adjutant General, Army Nurse, Armor, Aviation, Chemical, Engineer, Field Artillery, Infantry, Logistics, Military Intelligence, Military Police, Medical Service and Signal Corps).

Promotion/command selection boards

DATE	BOARD
Aug. 16-30	FY 2011 Colonel Maneuvers, Fires and Effects, Operational Support and Force Sustainment Promotion Selection Board
Sept. 20	Lieutenant Colonel Command Selection Board
Oct. 11	ARSOF Command Sergeant Major Sergeant Major Course Selection Board
Oct. 18	Army Major/Captain Selective Continuation Board

GIVE US YOUR INPUT!

Which parts of SW do you look forward to? What do you want to see more of, or less? Drop us a line and let us know what you really think. Better yet, submit an article, a book review or opinion piece. After all, it's your magazine.

steelman@ahqb.soc.mil

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES TACTICAL ASSURED CONNECTIVITY SYSTEM

The special-operations community has a long-standing requirement for sending and receiving large amounts of data, but its capability has been limited by the amount of data a tactical radio can send and receive. To address the issue, the United States Special Operations Command developed a family of systems under a program called the Special Operations Forces Tactical Assured Connectivity System, or SOFTACS.

SOFTACS is intended to provide large, medium and small systems that can support group-, battalion-, company- or team-level operators with a high-capacity terminal capable of sending and receiving traffic on secure and nonsecure networks. In the past, however, a terminal small enough for a team to use would not provide the required capability, and a terminal with sufficient throughput was too large for the team to deploy effectively. But during the past two years, technological advances have allowed SOFTACS to develop a relatively small, high-volume terminal that can be installed, operated and maintained by Soldiers in special-operations forces, or SOF.

Within the SOFTACS family, the SOF Deployable Node-Light, or SDN-L, is the primary system designed to support operators at the team level. SDN-L has

evolved through several stages in order to meet the operator's needs. The earliest versions, the SDN-L V1 and V2, used the INMARSAT worldwide satellite communications system and transmitted up to 64 kilobits per second, or Kbps. Next came the V3A, which also used INMARSAT and was capable of transmitting data at 492 Kbps. But while these versions were functional and easily deployable, their throughput was still small.

The next evolution was the SDN-L VX, currently in use in Afghanistan and Iraq, which has a terminal capable of communicating in the Ku microwave band. The VX has a much greater throughput than the V3A: it can transmit data at up to 2 Mbps and simultaneously receive up to 4 Mbps.

The VX is significantly larger than any of the previous SDN-L systems, however, requiring five carry-on-sized transit cases for deployment rather than the single case used by the earlier versions. VX is also limited to transmitting in the Ku band. Further development has produced a more versatile terminal that a team could easily deploy and carry around the battlefield.

The next generation of SDN-L is the V3b. Smaller than the VX, the V3b requires only two transit cases for deployment, yet it

provides performance nearly equal to that of the VX and in some cases exceeds the VX's capabilities. While the V3b's default configuration is for operation in the Ku band, it is capable of operating in the Ka and X microwave bands. Operating the V3b in the multiple-band capability requires additional cases for deployment, because each band requires a separate satellite dish.

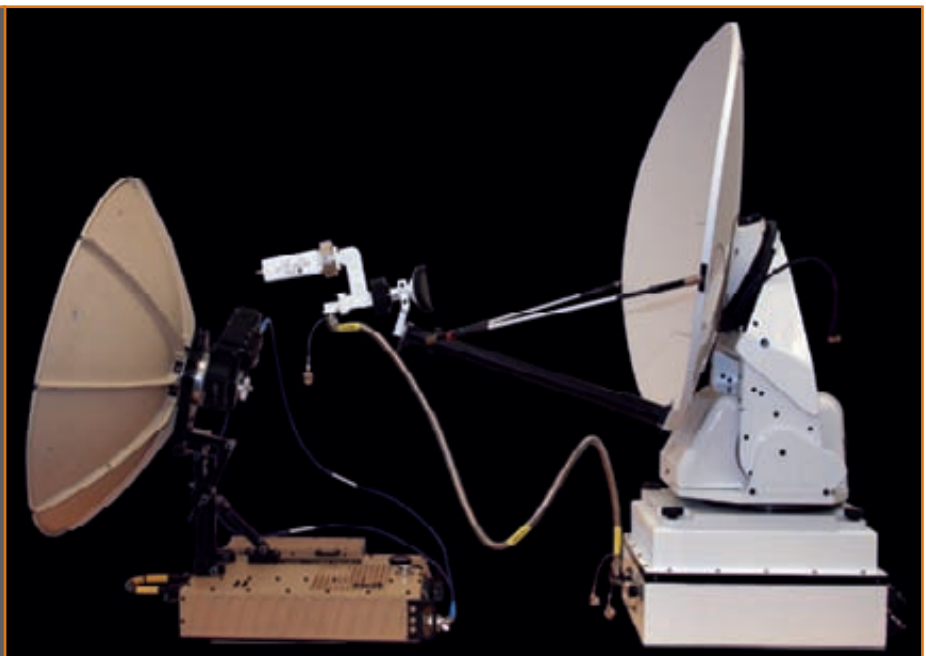
The V3b can send data at up to 1 Mbps and simultaneously receive at up to 4 Mbps in the Ku band. If equipped with an X-band satellite dish, it can send and receive at up to 4 Mbps. The V3b supports traffic on the Nonsecure Internet Protocol Network, Secure Internet Protocol Network and Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System, and it can support up to four users simultaneously. The V3b's cost is roughly two-thirds that of a VX terminal.

Less than five years ago, the ability to send and receive 1 Mbps or more of data in a man-packable system was not possible, but by the end of 2011 it will be a reality for SOF Soldiers. As technology progresses, the SDN-L V3b may be replaced by lighter, more capable systems, but for now, it is one of many cutting-edge systems that will enable SOF operators to perform their missions more effectively than ever before. **SW**

SPECS

The SDN-L V3b (left) provides more features and throughput comparable to that of the SDN-L VX (right), but is smaller, lighter, and less expensive.

SDN-L V3b	V.S.	SDN-L VX
Ku, Ka or X Microwave Bands		Ku Microwave Band
1 Mbps data transfer Ku-band 4 Mbps X-band		2 Mbps data transfer Ku-band
4 Mbps data receive Ku and X bands		4 Mbps data receive Ku-band
4 users - simultaneous send/receive		1 user - simultaneous send/receive
2 transit cases for Ku (additional case required for each band)		5 carry-on sized transit cases





WHAT IS THOR³?

As tactical athletes, Soldiers in Army special-operations forces, or ARSOF, have specialized performance needs that must be met if they are to overcome the myriad of mental, emotional and physical demands placed upon them. The JFK Special Warfare Center and School's Tactical Human Optimization, Rapid Rehabilitation and Reconditioning program, or THOR3, is part of a larger initiative by the U.S. Special Operations Command, or USSOCOM, to develop a human-performance program, or HPP. Mission-specific HPPs are also being implemented at two other USSOCOM component commands, the Naval Special Warfare Center and the Marine Special Operations Command.

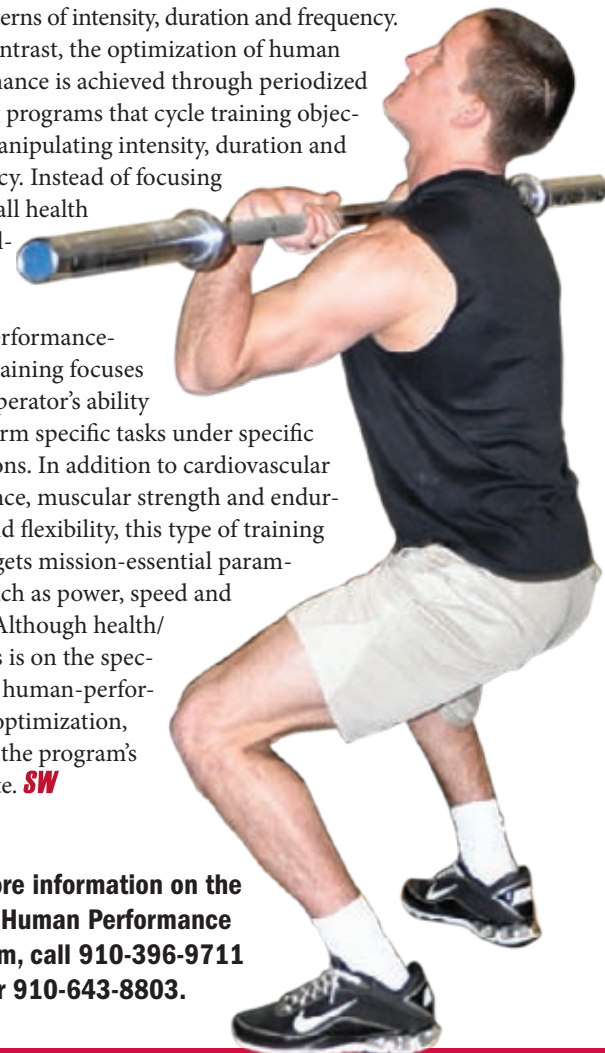
THOR3 is a proactive, SOF-specific training program that will enable SOF Soldiers to increase their combat performance and effectiveness, prevent injuries, improve health and longevity, and facilitate a rapid return to duty post-injury. These goals will be accomplished through services and education provided by human-performance-enhancement professionals. Each unit will have a team of hand-selected professionals composed of a human-performance program coordinator, or HPPC; a rehabilitation program coordinator; performance/sport dietitians; certified strength and conditioning specialists; and physical therapists. These professionals bring with them a wealth of academic knowledge and years of experience working with elite athletes.

Now that the THOR3 program has been launched command-wide, SOF personnel are seeking out the program and already reaping the benefits. Many SOF personnel want to know, "Is this a rehabilitation program?" A rapid return to duty is certainly a cornerstone of the program, but the optimization of human performance, not rehabilitation, is its primary focus. That optimization is achieved through a solid strength-and-conditioning program that is fully integrated into unit training. By integrating the THOR3 program with mission-specific training, units will reduce noncombat and training injuries, thereby minimizing the need for rehabilitation from those injuries. The unique skills of the HPPC and rehab coordinators will ensure an efficient bridging between return from injury and optimal performance.

Another common question for the THOR3 teams is, "Will there be enough professionals to train all ARSOF Warriors?" The collective expertise of these professionals will serve as a force multiplier. By instituting train-the-trainer programs within each unit, the professionals' knowledge will be within reach of every ARSOF warrior, down to the team/squad/crew level. That will also ensure Soldiers' continuation of the program while they are away from home station.

A final question is "How is this program different from the regular Army fitness programs?" As tactical athletes, in addition to maintaining general health and fitness, ARSOF warriors must maintain peak performance. There are major distinctions between programs designed for fitness and those designed for the optimization of human performance. Fitness is achieved through exercise, with nonspecific outcomes — such as overall health, wellness and quality of life — as the end-state. Fitness-focused exercise programs target limited parameters: cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. These programs are typically non-periodized, meaning they have relatively consistent patterns of intensity, duration and frequency.

In contrast, the optimization of human performance is achieved through periodized training programs that cycle training objectives, manipulating intensity, duration and frequency. Instead of focusing on overall health and wellness as an end-state, performance-based training focuses on an operator's ability to perform specific tasks under specific conditions. In addition to cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility, this type of training also targets mission-essential parameters, such as power, speed and agility. Although health/wellness is on the spectrum of human-performance optimization, it is not the program's end-state. **SW**



For more information on the Thor³ Human Performance Program, call 910-396-9711 or 910-643-8803.

THOR³ = Tactical Human Optimization, Rapid Rehabilitation and Reconditioning



ITALIAN ARMY SPECIAL FORCES

Italian army special forces, all members of the 9th Parachute Assault Regiment, trace their origins to a World War I unit, the 9th Reparto d'Assaulto (9th Assault Section), also known as the Arditi (the Brave). The unit gained a reputation for daring and courage during combat operations on the Austrian front, serving as an assault force in the mountainous border between Italy and modern-day Slovenia. Fighting in lightly armed assault sections, the 9th gained its modern name Col Moschin (Peak of the Flies) in an attack against the Austrian positions on Col Moschin in the Monte Grappa range.

Much like modern-day United States Army Special Forces, the Italian force also traces its lineage to units from World War II. The North African campaign saw the 10th Reggimento Arditi and the Brigata Paracadutisti "Folgore" in action against their allies from World War I, the British. The unit's tenacity in action was such that Winston Churchill stated they were "as fierce as lions."

Following World War II, the Brigata Paracadutisti was inactivated, but the organization was reactivated in 1954 as the Reparto Sabotatori Paracadutisti (Saboteur Parachute Section), and it became the Battaglione Sabotatori Paracadutisti (Sabo-

teur Parachute Battalion) in 1961. The ultimate step in the organization's evolution came in 1975, when it was linked to the 10th Reggimento Arditi to form the 9th Battaglione d'Assalto Paracadutisti Col Moschin. The 9th grew to regimental size in 1995 and was placed under the control of the Italian Operational Command for Special Operations Forces. The operational units of the modern 9th Regiment are divided between incursori (Raider) companies and a guastatori (Sapper) company.

Training for the 9th Regiment is split into two phases, with training restricted to long-service officers, NCOs and volunteers. The "basic" phase lasts 10 months and serves as a selection-and-training venue. Soldiers train and are tested in first-aid, shooting, patrolling, land-navigation and demolition while also undergoing static-line parachute training. The "advanced" phase lasts 14 months and is open only to those who have completed the basic phase. Soldiers in the advanced phase attend the Close Quarter Battle Course, HALO-HAHO Course, Amphibious Warfare Course, Reconnaissance Course, SERE Course, Mountaineering Course, Ski Course and Underwater Op-

erations Course, as well as taking English language training. Upon arrival at his unit, the Italian SF soldier will also attend additional refresher training, as well as training with NATO and allied forces.

The mission set of the 9th Regiment includes direct action, special reconnaissance and military assistance. Collateral missions include counterterrorist operations, combat search and rescue, and counterproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

A modern professional force with global reach, the 9th Regiment took part in U.N. peacekeeping operations in Lebanon in 1982, participated in humanitarian operations in northern Iraq in 1991, deployed to Somalia for Operation Restore Hope, rescued civilians in Rwanda and was pivotal in the success of the various U.N. efforts in Bosnia, Kosovo and Albania following the break-up of Yugoslavia. Living up to its nickname, Arditi (the Brave), the 9th Regiment continues its tradition of courage, fighting alongside its allies in both Iraq and Afghanistan. **SW**

Articles in this section are written by allied military officers at the International Special Training Center, Pfullendorf, Germany.

HERO: THE LIFE AND LEGEND OF LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

The name “Lawrence of Arabia” is bandied about in the Special Forces and military-adviser communities to evoke ideas of the consummate military adviser and unconventional warfare at its finest. But despite their frequent references to him, most military advisers have only a passing knowledge of Thomas Edward Lawrence and his impressive accomplishments. An adviser’s knowledge is typically an intimate familiarity with his “Twenty-Seven Articles,” one viewing of the movie and possibly a skimming of his book, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Considering the influence of his accomplishments, that is a pitifully small study of the idol of the profession. Thankfully, Michael Korda has written *Hero: The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia* so that the military adviser might catch up.

Korda set out to write an authoritative account of T.E. Lawrence’s entire life, and in 784 pages he succeeded. In the style of other good history writers, like John F. Ross, Korda made *Hero* read more like a story than a history textbook. He keeps the reader engaged, seamlessly transitioning from personal perspectives to concise historical explanations of the larger picture. The context that Korda provides makes this book interesting. The military adviser who is not a World War I historian could be overwhelmed by the many names and events in Lawrence’s life, but Korda makes the history comprehensible by clearly and succinctly relating Lawrence’s actions to world events.

Many of the challenges Lawrence faced during his war service continue to

plague the modern military adviser, and reading about his solutions is both entertaining and insightful. The Arab tribes were not obedient subjects to Britain. Instead, tribal allegiances were based upon self-interests and chests of British gold, and loyalty was adaptable to the circumstances. The Arab forces were decidedly an irregular force, yet it was Lawrence’s job to incorporate them into the British forces for conventional war. Learning as he went, Lawrence succeeded in harnessing the Arab tribes’ potential.

In addition to detailing Lawrence’s challenges and successes, Korda laces the book with details and descriptions that professional Soldiers will appreciate. During a failed dinner of diced innards in an Arab camp, Korda writes, the officers were “shocked and disgusted by ‘the absence of any sanitary precautions around the camp,’ and by the sight and smell everywhere of both human and camel feces drying in the blazing sun.” Such descriptions will resonate with the veteran military adviser and allow him to imagine himself alongside Lawrence.

Since the author seeks to describe Lawrence’s entire life, his extensive detail is not confined to a description of the war years. The book reached its substantial length by describing Lawrence’s life in full, and a reader seeking only military insight may save time by skimming the less applicable parts, such as the third chapter, which explores Lawrence’s relationship with his mother. While a subject of interest to Lawrence scholars, that examination holds little applicability for a student of war. Korda’s description



of Lawrence’s post-war experiences, however, proves to be an engaging narrative, and the recounting of the Paris Peace Conference will captivate anyone who has served in the Middle East.

With these considerations, a Soldier who advises foreign forces will find reading the book a valuable investment. The book will provide insights into the challenges of the military adviser, and readers can draw useful lessons by seeing how Lawrence overcame them. While every advisory mission is unique, some challenges, such as incorporating irregular forces of questionable loyalty, are perennial. Lawrence found Arab solutions for Arab problems, but some of the techniques that he discovered retain their utility and can inform advisers facing today’s challenges. **SW**

PERSISTENT ENGAGEMENT: WHY FOREIGN INTERNAL DEFENSE IS IMPORTANT

BY MAJOR GENERAL BENNET S. SACOLICK

Since the beginning of human history, people have been in a state of persistent conflict. This unfortunate aspect of human nature is unlikely to change. Individuals; tribes; nations; groups ranging from small to large; and people organized according to blood, ideology or convenience, continue to compete for power and control. The level of violence varies with the political or economic commitment of the participants.

For the last 10 years, the United States has been at war. The cost of that war in lives and treasure has tempered public appetite for the commitment of forces and resources. The federal budget deficit may limit our security options, and significant reductions in defense spending are unavoidable. Topics of Congressional debate have shifted from end states to troop reductions and exit strategies. The question is becoming not what kind of Army our country needs, but what kind of Army our country can afford.

Despite the need for budget reductions, we cannot expect a corresponding reduction of threats or competitors. Rather than continuing to rely on expensive, high-technology forces that react only after a threat has become manifest, we must meet future challenges by increasing employment of effective methods of prevention and deterrence.

Foreign internal defense, or FID, provides our country with a capability that is neither enemy-focused nor reactive in nature but is instead oriented on mutual security cooperation. The National Security Strategy, the National Military Strategy and the National Defense Strategy emphasize the need for an Army capable of preventing and deterring conflict. Yet the current direction of Army doctrine does not adequately address prevention and deterrence. Army special-operations forces, or ARSOF, provide a population-centric, intelligence-enabled, people-focused capability that works with our allies and partner nations to develop regional influence, enhance global security and facilitate future operations.

Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Military Information Support Operations are the only Department of Defense, or DoD, forces that are specifically trained and educated to work with indigenous forces. They possess a unique set of capabilities that enable both lethal and nonlethal missions specifically designed to *influence* enemy, neutral and friendly audiences. Those forces can *shape* foreign political and military environments by working with host nations, regional partners, indigenous populations and their respective institutions in order to *prevent* insurgencies or conflicts from destabilizing allies, partner nations and vital security relationships. Through those actions, they can ultimately *deter* conflict, prevail in war or succeed in a wide range of contingencies.

In greater detail and absent definitive Army doctrine, FID is specifically designed to accomplish *shaping* operations that are frequently conducted with joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational partners and often employ indigenous forces. Shaping operations include condition-setting activities designed

to facilitate combat operations, as well as a range of strategic stability missions, such as humanitarian assistance, counter-terrorism and genocide-prevention.

Prevention efforts are intended to preclude the creation of adversaries or the initiation of hostilities, promoting regional stability one country at a time. Paralleling the Department of State's "preventive diplomacy," prevention efforts include peacetime military-engagement activities in support of ongoing diplomatic and developmental programs, as well as specific actions intended to avoid or limit the scope of a predictable crisis.

Deterrence operations proactively employ nation-building capabilities to dissuade adversaries, including individual extremists, non-state entities and state-sponsored proxies, from their contemplated violence. Deterrence often involves development and training of credible and effective host-nation security forces, enabling the defeat of terrorists or insurgents in the host country before they threaten ours.

Influence efforts are intended to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behaviors favorable to our national-security strategies, global-security plans and foreign-policy objectives. Over the long term, we develop influence and exercise it through persistent engagement with host nations, regional partners and indigenous populations and institutions.

What is unique about our force is our skill at conducting people-centric operations. To achieve any credible measure of deterrence or conflict prevention, FID must engage the central feature of all ARSOF operations: the culture. To be successful, we must embrace a concept that enables us to organize and operate with the people. Operating on the margins ensures that we will never address what is central to the source of instability, and we will not adequately deter anything or anyone. We have to function within, not outside, the population.

In essence, FID offers our country's key decision-makers a new perspective — one that views the future not only as persistent conflict but also as persistent opportunity. The future is dynamic, presenting challenges that are complex and continually shifting. Our leaders should not accept that the constraints of the future operating environment are beyond our control. We must continue not only to adapt our forces but also to actively engage in order to shape the future. FID will build cumulative success, establish and foster relationships and enable us to effectively resolve crises and exploit opportunities.

Though remarkably cost-effective, FID still requires a dedicated investment in a force that is culturally astute, politically sensitive, trained and equipped for autonomous (vs. centralized) operations, language-capable, and comfortable with the joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational environment. We must be able to deploy globally and remain persistently engaged in locations that require a low operating signature, in order to develop the access and familiarity needed to effectively shape, prevent, deter and influence. **SW**

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