

# ***U.S. Army Asymmetric Warfare Group Operational Advisor Summary***

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## ADVISING FRAMEWORK

**“Advising host-nation units and institutions is key to the ultimate success of security force assistance. This benefits both the state and the supporting external organizations. To be effective, advising requires specially selected and trained personnel.”**

FM 3-07, Stability Operations

As the Army shifts from combat operations to a less combat-focused posture, units unaccustomed to advising will be required to conduct advisory missions. These missions may be Security Force Assistance (SFA), or they may be Foreign Internal Defense (FID). While there are some differences in the two missions, at the tactical level, they both end up requiring skilled advisors in order to achieve success. Commanders will have to select, train, and equip elements tailored to the advisory mission. Current doctrine provides guidance for selection and training of advisors. Principles and imperatives for SFA and FID can be found in FM 3-07, Stability Operations, FM 3-07.1, Security Force Assistance, FM 3-22, Army Support to Security Operations, and JP 3-22, Foreign Internal Defense.

Selection of advisors is a critical step in preparing to conduct Stability Operations. FM 3-07.1 lists 16 personality traits that “greatly enhance the advisor’s ability to adapt and thrive in a foreign culture.” The traits listed generally focus on flexibility, confidence, and tolerance. As commanders develop a selection process for their advisory teams, they can use these traits to assess personnel suited for the advisory mission. In addition to the traits listed, commanders should consider the following selection criteria: Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on the tasks to be trained; maturity to operate with minimal guidance; enough experience to handle complex and ambiguous situations; adaptability; and



the ability to deal with a changing situation and ambiguous endstate. Units should incorporate psychologists into selection processes in order to provide another optic on the candidates. It is important to note that an individual may be an effective combat leader and a star performer, but may be unsuited for the role of advisor to a foreign colleague. Higher headquarters in Afghanistan and Iraq often directed combat arms to “partner” with their indigenous counterparts. Many of the leaders and Soldiers at the tactical level struggled with this partnership and felt that they had not “signed up” for advising. Many felt that the Army had sent them to fight, not partner. This had a negative effect on the advising part of the mission and likely contributed to some of the insider threat attacks in Afghanistan.

FM 3-05.2 provides a framework for training that is derived from Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) institutional training for FID. The list of critical areas found in Chapter 4 gives conventional units preparing to conduct SFA or FID some of the areas for which they may not be prepared. Currently, training often focuses on catastrophic events such as IED strikes or complex attacks and does not provide an environment in which units can exercise the nuanced skills needed to successfully advise. Role playing exercises involving role players from the country or culture to be advised are a valuable tool in developing the skills necessary to conduct the advisory mission. Units should bring in speakers from target countries as well as experts from within their own organizations in order to prepare the advisor to take on a multi-function role. A good example of this type of training would be to bring in language instructors or interpreters from the target country to discuss culture and experiences or have the comptroller give a class on funding issues.



## ADVISING FRAMEWORK

Cross training Soldiers in several disciplines will be critical when Soldiers must operate in isolated situations and make decisions regarding unfamiliar subjects. In addition to cultural and mission specific training, all advisors should have a thorough understanding of how SFA and FID complement each other and how both are critical components of a successful Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) strategy.

As with any mission, Soldiers must be appropriately equipped. Operating in some countries may require Soldiers to wear civilian clothes due to sensitivities about US military involvement. Advisors not accustomed to operating around embassies should receive classes on appropriate civilian attire. If necessary, units should be prepared to provide clothing allowances to Soldiers in order to provide for mission required clothing and equipment. In many situations, Soldiers will not be permitted to bring weapons and equipment with which they are familiar. Units may require special consideration to use modified Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that reduces military signature as well. Close coordination with the Defense Attaché or senior military officer working with the embassy is necessary to determine special requirements regarding equipping Soldiers working in specific countries.



It is critical that the Army appropriately select, train, and equip Soldiers for success. Soldiers must recognize that FID and SFA doctrine are complementary and both provide extensive guidance for the conduct of the advisory mission. As the Regionally Aligned Force (RAF) mission evolves, non-SOF Soldiers will be required to conduct very SOF-like advisory missions. Embracing the history and lessons learned over years of stability operations will significantly increase the chance of mission success.

## POINT MAN

Militaries have used “point men” for centuries. The historic reason for point men is simple – in order to engage the enemy, you must find him. In early warfare, a point man was often a tracker whose primary purpose was to locate the enemy. In modern warfare, a point man detects enemy threats, such as ambush locations and IEDs. AWG has developed an information and awareness program, which focuses on understanding the complex operational environment, understanding enabler capabilities and their physical integration into small-unit formations, and increasing situation awareness through traditional “point man” skills. The point man concept presents fundamentals and then builds on them using observations AWG Operational Advisors’ gathered over the last eight years while providing advisory assistance to Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) and Special Operations Forces (SOF) throughout Afghanistan. This Graphic Training Aid (GTA) on the following page does not provide a comprehensive explanation of AWG’s program; rather, it highlights key points. For more information, please contact AWG.




POINT MAN

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# POINT MAN

CONSIDERATIONS FOR DISMOUNTED TACTICAL LEAD ELEMENTS



Center for Army Lessons Learned  
https://call2.army.mil/toc.aspx?document=6968

### Traditional Overview of Point Men

- The Point Man has typically been a Soldier assigned to a position some distance ahead of the patrol to navigate, detect, locate, and communicate to the rest of the formation.

### Updated Overview of Lead Elements

- Lead elements no longer consist of a single Soldier. Current lead elements may consist of a combination of one or more of the following: host nation partners, military working dogs, engineers, navigators, specialized equipment, and security elements.

### Note

- Enablers outlined in this reference are not mission critical, only mission enhancing. It is possible to achieve mission success with strictly organic resources.

### Purpose/Introduction

The purpose of this reference is to provide an overview of TTPs that will enable lead elements to maximize their capabilities. These principles do not guarantee 100% mission success. Principles outlined in this reference are strictly for consideration.

### Selection of Point Man/Lead Elements

- Lead element personnel should be experienced volunteers who are tactically sound and physically fit.
- Primary navigator should not be the patrol leader.
- Point man/lead element responsibility should be shared with alternate personnel in order to ensure continuity/redundancy/endurance/focus on movements.

### Lead Element Possible Enablers

CAPABILITY	APPLICATION
EOD	Explosive handling
Sapper/Engineers	Explosive detection
Canine Team	Explosive detection
Patrol briefs/debriefs/ColIST/after-action reviews	AAAs/trends/observable indicators/SIGACTs (TICs/EDS/IDF)
Imagery (GRG)	Terrain analysis
Local contacts/HUMINT	Information gathering
Thor-3	C RC-IED
AN/PSS-12	Metallic mine detector
AN/PSS-14	Low metallic mine detector
Goldie	Command wire detection
VMC-1	Metallic mine detector
VMC-2	Dual sensor mine detector
Man portable line charge (MPLC)	Clearance charge for mined or trip-wired environments
SWATs system	Individual gun shot detection

### Lead Element Pre-movement Checklist

Considerations for lead elements to incorporate into Troop Leading Procedures:

- Terrain Analysis:** Conduct threat analysis of known danger areas of primary and alternate routes using available imagery, historic, and ColIST resources, identification of known danger areas, and named areas of interest.
- Route Selection:** Often, the lead element will be provided a corridor of maneuver.
- Alternate Route Selection.**
- Communications plan:** Consider host nation enablers and hand and arm signals.
- Enabler Pre-movement:** Coordinate with all enablers in lead element. Ensure all understand command and control structure and procedures. Utilize a pre-mission checklist. Choose specialized equipment/enablers.
- Conduct rehearsals** of key activities and expected danger areas. Check all enabler weapons, equipment, specialized equipment, food, and water. Receive back-briefs and conduct rehearsals.
- Ensure fire support plan** is understood and incorporated.
- Ensure medical evacuation plan** is understood and incorporated.
- Identify in-route rally points** and actions upon reaching checkpoints.

**CAUTION:** Ensure lead element responsibilities are spread across lead element: navigation, pace, marking IEDs, etc.

### Danger Areas

- A danger area is any place where a moving element may establish a pattern and be vulnerable to enemy observation or fire.
- Many danger areas can be discovered through a thorough map recon. Others require a close inspection of imagery and a review of historic IED and troops in contact SIGACT information.
- Lead Element will need to communicate danger areas encountered, especially if not identified during initial route planning.
- Minimize time spent on and around danger areas. Avoid if possible. If decision is made to cross a danger area, rehearse actions to ensure fluid crossing.
- Several danger areas to consider:

WALLS	WADIS
AQUEDUCTS	ABANDONED STRUCTURES
ABANDONED EQUIPMENT	BRIDGES
CAVES	ROADS
MOUNTAIN TRAILS	OPEN FIELDS
ORCHARDS	GRAPE HOUSES

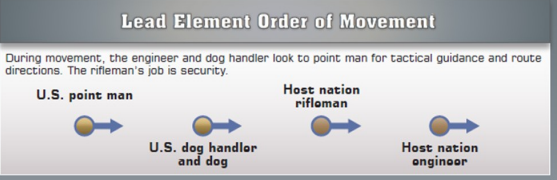
### Other Danger Area Considerations

- Cross danger areas at the point of most resistance or least likely avenue of approach.
- Consider using three ladders when crossing walls. Two ladders set up for security on each side of the main body, one ladder for movement of the main body.
- Minimize silhouetting when crossing walls.
- Lower dogs first to inspect far side of wall.
- Plan for moving casualties and heavy equipment over walls quickly.
- Plan for enemy contact while crossing danger areas.
- Ensure danger areas are surrounded with indirect fire coverage.

**Avoid Setting Patterns.** Dismounted movement TTPs are a constant evolution. Doing something three times makes a pattern.

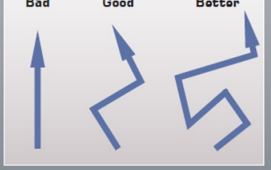
### Enemy TTPs

- Occupying rooftops
- Targeting locations where Soldiers take cover
- Targeting historic IED/POO/SAF sites
- Using harassing fires
- Exploiting choke points
- Exploiting Soldiers' patterns



### Lead Element Actions During Movement

- Navigation through approved corridor should not be straight-line but unpredictable and erratic.
- Diagram below applies to all actions of lead element - **KEEP THE ENEMY GUESSING!**
- Maintain lead element spacing considering terrain, day, night, communications.
- Avoid "tunnel vision" on enabler equipment - visual detection remains the most effective threat detector.



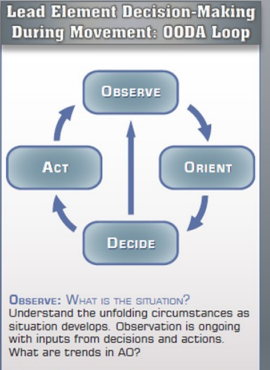
### Enemy Observable Indicators

- Absence of Locals
- Loose Mud in Walls
- Low Points in Walls
- Low Water Crossings
- Aiming Markers
- Lack of Foot/Vehicle Traffic Evidence

### Lead Element Enhancing Equipment

Should be included based on mission analysis and route characteristics.

- Magnifying optics
- Thermal or fusion goggles
- Ladders
- Powder or paint for marking IEDs
- IR Chem-lights for limited visibility marking of IEDs
- Flash bangs
- Smoke grenades



### Lead Element Post Movement Considerations

- IPB/PDE: Work with ColIST to identify patterns (including friendly patterns) and event relationships to add to predictive analysis tools for future movements. Ensure ColIST receives the five W's (who, what, when, where, and why) of each enemy contact.
- Annotate the types of IED triggers used in your specific AO (e.g., PP, RC, CW).
- SITEMP: ColIST tools can show patterns for activities (the "what"), incident maps (the "where"), time event charts and pattern wheel tables (the "when").
- Provide leadership with feedback regarding lead element concerns. Was the time allotted for movement adequate for lead element to thoroughly clear and move without setting patterns?
- Conduct debriefs to ensure follow-on missions do not repeat mistakes. Funnel debriefs through ColIST to ensure widest distribution. Continue to keep lessons learned files for follow on units. What information would you want as a lead element? Collect that information and feed into ColIST and beyond.

### References

- Ranger Handbook
- Operational Reference: Company Intelligence Support Teams (GTA 90-01-022), October, 2010
- JIEDDO Dismounted C-IED Smart Book



## ACHIEVING WIDE AREA SECURITY THROUGH PERSISTENT TARGETING

As Coalition Forces (CF) continue transition operations across Combined Joint Operating Area – Afghanistan (CJOA-A), Commanders focus on building capacity in the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), while executing retrograde operations, and in some areas, drastically reducing Operational Tempos (OPTEMPOs) and combat power. With minimal combat power and a reliance on the ANSF, Commanders' situational awareness and understanding dissipates. How then do Commanders protect the force during Security Force Assistance (SFA) and retrograde operations? The answer is that CF must conduct traditional targeting to achieve wide area security. This article underscores the need to persistently target insurgents' vulnerabilities through deliberate operations that are by, with, and through partner forces, but also the need to finish targets via unilateral force protection operations.

This calls for an effects-based targeting cycle that integrates key enablers, as well as ANSF counterparts from both the interior and defense ministries. This process generally occurs at the brigade level and below, with battalions increasingly serving as the focal point for combined targeting. As such, battalions need to run two simultaneous Lines of Operations (LOO) – enabling the ANSF through SFA and protecting the force via deliberate targeting operations. When units focus solely on SFA, are often able to limit the ANSF and CF's Freedom of Movement (FoM), restricting friendly units to fixed sites that are subject to Indirect Fire (IDF).

The Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG) recommends a one-week cyclical targeting process that incorporates desired effects for both lethal and non-lethal targets. The targeting process should be nested from brigade to the company level in order to merge all levels of targeting within a Common Operational Picture (COP). This allows units to layer available resources against the problem set in order to achieve desired effects and endstate.

Companies should define achievable effects for area and target priorities. Recently, AWG Operational Advisors observed a unit hold separate meetings for non-lethal and lethal targeting with different individuals attending each meeting. It is essential to execute one meeting with the same personnel, incorporating both non-lethal and lethal targets. This will ensure consistency, nest desired effects, create shared understanding of the Commander's intent, and enable the Commander to focus his limited resources on removing negative influencers and bolstering positive influencers, while buying space and time for the ANSF to fully assume security operations.



### **Deliberate Operations versus Time-based Presence Patrols**

Commanders, at all levels, in complex Operational Environments (OEs) must manage multiple Lines of Effort (LOE). The security LOE remains consistent through all phases of the campaign. Too often, leaders are generalizing their intent for the security LOE (mission, key tasks, and end state), which limits the full integration and effectiveness of horizontal and vertical enablers. For example, a timed-based presence patrol limits the designated patrol in collection of relative Information Requirements (IRs). Usually, these patrols are hasty reaction to negative influencers within the OE. A deliberate patrol armed with task, purpose and

## ACHIEVING WIDE AREA SECURITY THROUGH PERSISTENT TARGETING

effects will inform branches and sequels to the current tactical situation. Deliberate operations synchronize available horizontal and vertical assets. This nests designated task and purpose achieved the commander's desired effects.

### **Lessons Learned and Predictive Analysis**

It is a prevalent misconception that Special Operations Forces (SOF) will provide persistent force protection to facilitate retrograde operations. In fact, conventional forces should continue targeting operations to further assist SOF in illuminating the network and removing low to mid level targets. The synchronization of activities and nesting of desired effects will enable wide area security and assist in protecting a fixed force at enduring Forward Operating Bases (FOB).

As the CF loses touch points and assets, CF will rely on ANSF reporting to understand the current OE. As witnessed during the retrograde in Iraq, the delay in reporting, drawdown of forces, and lack of understanding allowed insurgents to employ tactics that limited Coalition FoM. If given the opportunity, Afghan insurgents could use these tactics to disrupt the CFs ability to facilitate retrograde operations. Through persistent targeting, CF can maintain a comprehensive understanding of the OE, both human and terrain, which will assist Commanders in prioritizing objectives based operations on INS vulnerabilities.

**ISR must have a consequence. Plan and allocate resources to action indicators:**  
**-Define the indicators of insurgent activity**  
**-Task operational personnel to monitor feeds for indicators**  
**-Implement unit-specific battle drill when indicator is observed**

## PREVENTING INSIDER ATTACKS

Insider Attacks, where an Afghan soldier, policeman or a contractor working for ISAF uses his position of trust to kill a Coalition Soldier, peaked in 2012 with 48 incidents for that year. The number of attacks in 2013 is considerably less (only 7 by the end of August), but the threat remains. The enemy knows that the Insider Threat targets the trust which is vital if we are to effectively train the ANSF, and it also erodes the confidence of the civilian population back home and their willingness to support our mission. For these reasons, insurgents continue to state publically its intent to conduct Insider Attacks whenever possible:

"This year's spring operation, in accordance with its combat nature, will consist of special military tactics quantity and quality wise **while successful insider attacks, to eliminate foreign invaders, will be carried out by infiltrating Mujahedeen inside enemy bases in a systematic and coordinated manner.**"

Leadership Council of Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Spring 2013 Offensive Statement

While casualties are down, we cannot become complacent. Coalition Forces (CF) will continue to work alongside ANSF as ISAF transitions security to GIROA and well into the future. Advising is inherently risky; it requires us to trust people we do not know and whose culture is strange to us. But, if we are going to be able to leave Afghanistan, we have to train our Afghan counterparts to provide for their own security. This means assuming a certain amount of risk, but it does not mean we have to let our guard down. We can minimize the amount of risk we face from the Insider Threat by understanding what causes these attacks, by taking some basic measures to maintain security and by doing the small things to make ourselves a hard target.

An Insider Attack is essentially an ambush conducted at close range by an Afghan we trust or at least are familiar with. We can no more stop every Insider Attack than we can eliminate ambushes or IED strikes, but we can make it harder for Afghans to conduct them. An Afghan who conducts an Insider Attack has **motive, capability** and **opportunity**. Some of the motivation to conduct an Insider Attack is beyond our control, such as the accidental burning of Korans by US Soldiers at Bagram Airfield in 2012; the increase in Insider Attacks that year may be attributed to events such as this. We should be aware of what matters to the Afghans we are working with and the how our actions affect them.



Afghan culture and Islamic traditions are a critical part of your operating environment; ensure you understand it. Afghan males value their honor and their standing within their unit, their tribe and among their friends. If you cause them to lose face in front of their peers, in order to remain part of that group, they have to be seen to take revenge. Sometimes this takes the form of an Insider Attack. Therefore, treat them with respect and as part of the team. Do not use profanity around them, even when you are kidding; Afghans cannot tell when we are joking and when we are serious. Do not discuss religious matters with them, but understand the five pillars of Islam and how central it is to their lives. Do not ask about their female relatives or interact with any Afghan females if you are a male. Religion and the place of women in society are subjects where our cultures are too far apart for us to find common ground, so it is better to leave them alone.

The ANSF knows that insurgents have tried to infiltrate into their ranks and, as such, the ANSF have taken active measures to identify the Insider Threat. If the enemy cannot successfully infiltrate an insurgent into the ANSF, then they will try to co-opt an Afghan who works with us to conduct an Insider Attack, either by bribing them, threatening them or their family, or by appealing to their loyalty to their tribe or religion. When the enemy approaches an Afghan who is not an insurgent and tries to force them to do their bidding for them, the Afghan soldier or policeman has to make a choice: do they betray their CF partners or do they do what the insurgents want them to do? If we have treated that Afghan poorly up until then, then why should he put himself or his family at risk to protect us? If, however, we have built some rapport with them over time, we will have shown that we can be trusted, and that we are worth standing with. If they trust us, they may tell us what the enemy is trying to do.

Another advantage of getting to know the Afghans you see regularly is that over time you will develop a baseline of normal behavior for them. If something changes in that behavior, for example because insurgents have tried to co-opt them or they have heard something which has offended them, you may be able to notice it before that individual feels the need to conduct an attack. Several of the recent Insider Attacks have been conducted by Afghans who acted erratically before they attacked CF personnel, but no-one took action.

It is counter-intuitive to us but, often one of the best assets we have to defeat Insider Attacks is our Afghan partners. If we can leverage their knowledge of the local environment and make them part of the solution, we can be more secure. An Afghan soldier or policeman will spot another Afghan who does not belong where we might miss it. They will notice if there is a problem with someone's ID card where most ISAF personnel can only match the individual to the picture. Afghan soldiers consistently tell us that they want to be accepted as part of the team and treated as equals. We can do that and still maintain security.

### PREVENTING INSIDER ATTACKS

ISAF has mandated the employment of Guardian Angels to ensure security when we are operating around ANSF. Guardian Angels are designated personnel whose sole purpose is to protect other CF personnel who are in proximity to ANSF. By assigning Guardian Angels to individuals who regularly work with ANSF they are able to develop a baseline for each KLE; when an Afghan deviates from it they can act to protect their fellow Soldiers. It is worth noting, however, that Guardian Angels are not a substitute for standard force protection measures but are instead one part of a layered, comprehensive defensive plan. When moving to an Afghan installation, Guardian Angels will protect the individual conducting the KLE but everybody on the patrol should be assigned a task to ensure security is maintained.

As long as ISAF is working alongside the ANSF, the Insider Threat will be a fact of life. We should remember that insurgents are trying to drive a wedge between us and the Afghans we are trying to develop so that they can assume responsibility for their own security. When we treat all Afghans as a potential threat, we are doing the enemy's job for them. Instead, get to know the Afghans you work with regularly, understand what offends them and treat them with respect. Never forget, however, that there is always risk involved when working with the ANSF. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own security and for the Soldiers with you.

"Sometimes, the more you protect your force, the less secure you may be."

FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency



**AWG TASK UNIT AFGHANISTAN CONTACT INFORMATION:**

- AWG AFG Troop CDR: [awg.troop.cdr@afghan.swa.army.smil.mil](mailto:awg.troop.cdr@afghan.swa.army.smil.mil)
- AWG AFG Troop SGM: [awgtroopsgm.org@afghan.swa.army.smil.mil](mailto:awgtroopsgm.org@afghan.swa.army.smil.mil)

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DO YOU HAVE A POTENTIAL SOLUTION TO DEFEAT A NEW OR EXISTING ENEMY  
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- Tactical Pocket Reference: Company Intelligence Support Team (CoIST)
- Tactical Pocket Reference: Counter-Indirect Fire
- Tactical Pocket Reference: Tactical Site Exploitation
- Tactical Pocket Reference: Tactical Questioning
- Tactical Pocket Reference: Capture Avoidance/Personnel Recovery Plan
- Handbook: Planning Considerations for Lightening the Soldiers' Load
- Handbook: Mountain Warfare

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