



## CALL Lesson of the Day



SUBJECT: Lessons Learned ANA RCC Symphony Systems.

Theater: Afghanistan

Date: July 25, 2012

1. Observation: Cultural issues impeded proper management of the Afghanistan National Army ANA and Afghanistan Uniformed Police AUP RC-IED device. The CREW device for ANSF is the Symphony system. The Symphony System is the program of record (US terminology) approved by GIRoA.
2. Discussion: The U.S. Navy awarded Lockheed Martin contract for Symphony Radio Controlled Improvised Explosive Device (RC-IED) Defeat jammer systems. The initial task order valued at \$40.8 million, the contract runs through September 2014 and has a ceiling value of \$940 million.

The system was engineered and built to provide continuous electronic force protection against RC-IEDs. Symphony is programmable and designed for easy installation, operation and maintenance on a diverse set of platforms. It is compatible and interoperable with other communications systems and jamming devices. Able to simultaneously jam select or multiple electronic signals used to trigger a RC-IED, the Symphony RC-IED Defeat system is the only jammer of its kind approved by the U.S. government for foreign military sale to allied, coalition and partner nations

In Afghanistan the NATO Training Mission Afghanistan NTMA and GIRoA work to fill equipment requirements for ANSF. The Tashkil (MTOE for ANSF) are decided on by Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior. The equipment selection and fielding is done in conjunction with NTMA. Both parties agreed to use the Symphony counter RCIED system for ANSF in Afghanistan. The systems cost \$100K per system. There are usually three systems per Route Clearance Company RCC. There are two batteries for each device. Each battery, if properly maintained, last six months. The batteries look like D Cell batteries but they are not. They are lithium batteries that are proprietary by the manufacturer.

The batteries are the Achilles heel of the system. It's not the batteries that are the problem. The problem is how the Afghans use the batteries. Proper care is essential. The ANSF is under fuel rationing restrictions. The ANSF will park a HUMVEE to conserve fuel for extended periods of time. The ANSF personnel will leave the on/off switch in the on position. After about three days the Symphony batteries drain down. When the Symphony system detects low voltage the system thinks that it being tampered with. The system then erases the frequency fills. In addition, if the HUMVEE

battery goes dead and the HUMVEE is jump started, if the on/off switch in the on position, the electrical surge will fry the mother board. What usually happens is they detect that the system is not working and call for FSR support. The FSR comes to location only to find that it's not a system problem but operator error. This is a very common problem. There are only 8 FSRs for Symphony in theater. There is 1 FSR in RC (E) that flies Space A to get to different Kandaks. This waste an asset to fly the FSR to fix an issue that could be easily remedied by simple checks. In fact many times the FSR will come to find that the ANSF members have taken the batteries out to play music or put them to some other use. This siphons off the FSR from troubleshooting real Symphony technical issues. The real issue is how do you get the Afghans to take RC IED CREW system seriously? The ANSF know that there is a RCIED treat because they are targeted primarily with RCIED. More FSRs are unlikely to make a difference or solve this problem. The Afghans make choices of what's important to them. It's a no win situation. If you give them new batteries you only reinforce that idea that batteries are free. If you don't give them batteries they get blown up and refuse to patrol. Some units are better than others. The Route Clearance Companies RCCs get strong mentoring from US personnel because they constantly check the ANA and AUP CREW systems before joint patrolling. The problem in the RCC is less compared to other ANSF units.

3. Lessons Learned:

- US mentors can only constantly reinforce the need to properly check the on/off switches of the Symphony system. Constant drilling has helped RCC reduce symphony battery problems.

4. Recommendation: None.

5. Related CALL publications: None

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