



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
U.S. ARMY TRAINING AND DOCTRINE COMMAND  
CENTER FOR ARMY LESSONS LEARNED  
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19 March 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Center for Army Lessons Learned interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in U.S Army Africa (USARAF).

1. Purpose: To provide CALL's initial observations of the employment of the RAF concept within USARAF.
2. Background: The Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) concept is designed to provide an Army force (via the Army Service Component Command (ASCC)) that is quickly available to the geographic combatant command (COCOM) to support certain military missions within the region. US Army Africa (USARAF) is the ASCC supporting US Africa Command (AFRICOM).

Previous AFRICOM commanders could never before commit a sourcing solution to a problem brought to them in a high-level meeting with African officials or the Department of State. They always had to come back to the Army and ask for forces. The Army could never provide a time-sensitive answer, as most requests were subject to the standard request for forces (RFF) procedure. This RFF was routed through and required the approval of multiple headquarters, a process that by its length often precluded the utility of an Army response.

In 2006 SETAF (later to transform into SETAF/USARAF in 2008) realized the need for a dedicated force that the ASCC could employ directly in support of the newest COCOM: AFRICOM. SETAF determined that a brigade combat team (BCT) was the best all around force for their needs. At the time, Forces Command (FORSCOM) denied SETAF's request, as the priority for brigades was to the operational requirements of Central Command (CENTCOM) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

Over the last two years, with the reduction in Army forces supporting CENTCOM operations OEF and Operation New Dawn (OND), the Army has made forces available to other ASCCs by the regional alignment of forces. For USARAF, the Army provided a regionally aligned force using a brigade combat team (BCT) from the 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kansas. Currently that brigade is the 2nd BCT/1st ID. The currently-proscribed length of time as allocated RAF is one (1) year. The next USARAF RAF brigade is 4<sup>th</sup> BCT/1<sup>st</sup> ID.

3. Observations:

3.1. Observation: Allocated RAF versus Aligned RAF

Discussion: The Army designates RAF in one of three relationships to the ASCC; assigned, allocated, or service-retained regionally aligned.

ATZL-MCK-L

SUBJ: CALL interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in USARAF

Having an allocated RAF force reduces the processing time required to get a force into Africa to execute certain types of missions. (This cuts the overall cost of AFRICA missions.) Having a RAF as a dedicated sourcing solution has been a very efficient for AFRICOM. From an USARAF perspective, it is cheaper to have a centralized force provider that does all the preparation (and absorbs the cost) before the force is engaged in theater.

The use of allocated RAF reduces the time required to provide forces in support of AFRICOM missions specified in the allocation language. The USARAF staff highlighted that for missions that are included in the ASCC annual task order, forces are turned in a few weeks for typical training missions and African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) missions (as long as the resource requested is organic to the allocated RAF brigade.) [ACOTA is a Department of State program.]

With the allocated RAF, the USARAF staff works directly with the unit and its headquarters. This eliminates the necessity for forces deploying to Africa to work through an intermediate headquarters. USARAF pointed to a recent example of the benefit of allocated RAF. Using the RAF required a General Administrative (GENADMIN) message and 1–2 weeks of email traffic between requesting command and Fort Riley, after which troops boarded an aircraft in Kansas and got off the airplane in Africa, no “enroute stops” for additional preparation or an orders process required.

Service-retained Regionally Aligned is not the same as allocated. With aligned forces the direct liaison authorization does not apply. When requesting support from Regionally Aligned RAF, USARAF must submit a Request for Forces (RFF) through FORSCOM for approval. The RFF (and funding authority) is subject to the means test of FOSCOM priorities, and can take up to 180 days or more to fill, or disapproved outright.

3.2. Observation Mission Command: The RAF concept in its first year has provided a readily available sourcing solution for USARAF in supporting AFRICOM’s theater security cooperation (TSC) missions.

Discussion: Non-TSC missions require USARAF to adhere to the RFF or GENADMIN process with RAF units the recommended sourcing solution depending on the type of mission needed. Once granted the authority, the ASCC can employ the RAF for non-TSC missions.

What the RAF provides to USARAF is a dedicated resource that they, the ASCC, can use directly to support missions from AFRICOM and the Department of State (DOS). The RAF unit is proving to be a very flexible sourcing solution that reduces the time needed to put forces in theater. The ready availability of the RAF makes the Army a viable player in support of the AFRICOM mission.

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ATZL-MCK-L

SUBJ: CALL interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in USARAF

The designation of an allocated RAF allows the USARAF staff to coordinate directly with the 1ID staff and the RAF brigade. This is the primary factor in reducing the time to get boots on the ground. Service-retained RAF fails to provide this benefit.

The 1ID RAF BDE LNO co-locates with the USARAF staff. This LNO facilitates communication with the brigade in preparing for missions. The brigade LNO monitors the ASCC for potential or planned missions and gives early warning to the brigade on the skill sets needed as well as the duration and any unique mission parameters.

This allows the RAF brigade to de-conflict home station requirements that compete with potential deployments in support of the ASCC. History has shown that emergent missions as well as planned missions can be turned “on” and “off” with little to no notice, so the LNO must exercise care when passing potential requirements and changes to the division. This way the brigades’ higher headquarters can judge or at least recognize subsequent changes may still occur.

3.3. Observation: Mission planning for RAF in the African theater requires a collaborative effort between USARAF, the division, AFRICOM, DOS, and the RAF brigade for mission success.

Discussion: USARAF develops a concept for each requirement identified, and these are placed on the ASCC annual task order. With regard to missions and tasks for the RAF, requirements may originate with the country team, AFRICOM, DOS, or the USARAF commander. Missions are planned a year out, but coordination through AFRICOM and then FORSCOM can compress this timeline.

Approval of the annual task order by the ASCC commander and FORSCOM validates these requirements. Any RAF requirements that are not on the task order are sent to AFRICOM for approval. In AFRICOM, the RAF mission list is dynamic with missions being dropped and new ones added. USARAF negotiates these changes with FORSCOM.

USARAF is responsible for the identifying mission parameters and communicating these to the RAF brigade. USARAF uses General Administrative (GENADMIN) message when: a) missions are added to the annual plan, b) significant changes to approved annual plan missions occur, or c), there are cancellations of planned missions.

The RAF brigade combat team provides most of what USARAF needs to support AFRICOM. However, the RAF lacks many of the unique enablers required for some AFRICOM mission. The RAF must be able to deploy and operate (often in small teams) in an austere environment. This often requires forces and or capabilities that are outside of the RAF brigade. USARAF uses an RFF to request forces either from the service retained, CCMD Aligned Forces or other non-allocated forces that FORSCOM designates.

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ATZL-MCK-L

SUBJ: CALL interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in USARAF

### Passports and Visas

Every deployable Soldier in the RAF needs an official passport. Planners must keep in mind that Soldiers supporting AFRICOM routinely travel in a TDY status to countries with which the US has no Status of Forces Agreement. They cannot move around Africa on a set of NATO orders and an identification card. Military ID cards will not supplant a country's requirement for a passport with a valid visa.

### Additional Planning Considerations for USARAF RAF

US Army Special Operations Forces (SOF) units are presently heavily engaged, so RAF units are picking up missions that only SOF teams filled before. In AFRICOM, this is a favorable alternative. For example, experienced maintenance NCOs from the brigade are just as capable of teaching basic maintenance operations to conventional partner nation mechanics as SOF maintenance personnel are.

Allocated RAF allows quick turn on certain TSC missions: Train and Equip, ACOTA (a DOS-funded (Title 22) program that supports TSC activities for certain African countries). All benefit from the responsiveness that having a RAF provides to the ASCC.

USARAF staff sees a practicality in keeping the RAF brigade rotation within the same Army division. They cite the upcoming Relief in Place (RIP)/Transfer of Authority (TOA) between 4/1 ABCT and 2/1 ABCT as functioning with greater efficiency because they are both located at Fort Riley and can readily pass information and experiences between sister brigades.

USARAF staff also stated the practicality of RAF Soldiers stabilized within the brigade for the length of time the brigade is allocated. Doing so allows for the same Soldiers to establish and maintain continuity throughout mission planning, preparation, and execution. Since many African cultures value the longevity of personal relationships, minimizing personnel changes in the RAF mission element enhances mission success and some theater objectives.

With that said, the USARAF staff understands the challenge this would be for the Army's human resource managers. In the future, it may be practical to tag soldiers and NCOs or young officers with a specific country experience.

USARAF would like to be able to reach into the institutional Army to obtain capabilities that do not exist in a RAF, particularly in a brigade or division. The example given was "developing logistic [sustainment] capabilities" for a [foreign] army is outside the mandate for a RAF brigade. USARAF staff planners rule-of-thumb is that when it is an operating force mission (e.g., multi-national company live fire training or basic rifle marksmanship training which is conducted by the operating units on an annual or semi-annual basis), they should tap the RAF for the mission. If the mission requires setting up a command and general staff college for example, then the institutional force should be tapped.

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ATZL-MCK-L

SUBJ: CALL interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in USARAF

Also, USARAF sees a need to expand the RAF to include higher-echelon enablers such as are found in the institutional Army (TRADOC, CASCOM, etc). These enablers provide some specialized capabilities not found elsewhere and provide their own staff to assist the ASCC with planning and execution (similar to the brigade staff).

3.4. Observation: USARAF is using the RAF division to fill some gaps in their intelligence capabilities.

Discussion: A brigade combat team does not have national-level intelligence training or systems. In the case of USARAF, the G2 also lacks that capability. USARAF has used an informal relationship with the IID to assist in filling the gaps in intelligence (HUMINT, IMINT, CI, etc.) USARAF and IID coordinate intelligence information via shared databases and weekly video teleconferences. USARAF has a good relationship, but some capabilities remain mismatched. The IID must balance this relationship with the division's other global commitments. USARAF would like the Service Retained Regionally Aligned Division (IID) formally tasked to provide intelligence reach back when required.

3.5. Observation: Movement and Maneuver (mission execution) is different in AFRICOM

Discussion: USARAF is quick to point out that operations on the African continent are very different from recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, where much is centered on the forward operating base (FOB) and all the support systems are inherent to the FOB. From their OEF and OIF/OND experience, RAF units had become accustomed to having a large support tail in place.

This is not the case in Africa which is four times larger than the continental United States (48 states), and has 54 separate countries with complicated political, cultural, and military relationships. Units deploying forces must plan for how these small teams will operate and be supported in an austere environment, often geographically isolated from any fixed Army infrastructure.

In some places in Africa, MEDEVAC could take 24 or more hours; a significant departure from the "Golden Hour" standard the SECDEF mandated for OEF and OND in 2009. Leaders uncomfortable with this difference must adjust their mindsets until the realities change. DOS has plans on how to treat and evacuate American Citizens through the embassy in every country. DOD checks with DOS and determine if their plan will meet DOD needs.

3.6. Observation: Signal support to the RAF mission is difficult and demands a significant amount of planning.

Discussion: USARAF provides only limited signal support to the many small units deployed by the RAF. The limited technical footprint (satellite (SATCOM), Iridium phone, cellular phone, etc.) on the continent affects the overall communication plan. The availability of services depends on the mission location and requirements. The overall size of Africa puts further strain

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ATZL-MCK-L

SUBJ: CALL interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in USARAF

on the communications infrastructure and there may not always be assets and coverage available due to the resource limitations.

The USARAF experience is there are additional challenges with certain types of missions. There were two examples discussed. One is when the RAF is working with other NATO countries (particularly the French) and must use a NATO specific network. The other is when the RAF is working with one of the African Union's regional organizations which require the use of another unique form of network.

Software in the RAF's C2 systems doesn't always match what USARAF is using. The brigade must choose between being in synch with USARAF systems or with its parent division headquarters. The USARAF G6 communicates bi-weekly with the BCT S6 and IID G6 to coordinate support and resolve C2 issues.

Regarding equipment, most of the brigade's communication equipment is not well adapted for use on the African continent. Once in a country, with only its organic signal equipment, the brigade element has difficulty executing mission command, and cannot reach across the continent. USARAF G-6 is working a Mission Essential Equipment List (MEEL) to support communication systems that would enable RAF units to talk in the AO.

The signal assets organic to the brigade are not the type needed to communicate with RAF mission elements operating in Africa. What is required is a "fly away" capability for communicating over long distances and between widely dispersed teams. Support can come from the host nation directly, or through the DOS/DOD. USARAF, in conjunction with Space Command, is exploring innovative communications options that may address some of the issues.

3.7. Observation: Proficiency in the brigade Mission Essential Task List (METL) and Army Decisive Action (DA) core competencies is the best preparation for USARAF RAF.

Discussion: Before a brigade assumes their role as the RAF, the soldiers and leaders must be proficient in their METL tasks and DA. Soldiers and units supporting AFRICOM must be well trained in their combat skills. (There are African partner nation soldiers that have as much combat experience as a typical US Army Soldier.) USARAF also feels that completing a standard Combat Training Center DA rotation prior to beginning RAF is the optimum preparatory training for the brigade.

3.8. Observation: Extensive Language, Regional Expertise, Culture (LREC) training for the brigade is not required, however this does not remove the need for some basics.

Discussion: USARAF did not see a significant requirement for extensive LREC training. The challenge arises from the fact that the African continent has so many languages and cultures that a unit can't learn the combined French, Arabic, Swahili, and hundreds of other languages. Additionally, teams deployed in support of USARAF are usually comprised of between five and

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ATZL-MCK-L

SUBJ: CALL interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in USARAF

12 Soldiers, and are in the country for an average of between three days and two weeks per engagement. Aspiring to high LREC proficiencies does not appear to be significantly impactful.

However; once the RAF mission element has a pinpoint assignment, they do require a modest amount of cultural training. A small amount of cultural awareness can go a long way toward building positive influence with locals and ignorance can do a lot of damage even in a short visit. The cultural training at a minimum must address how our Soldiers show respect to African partner nation military and civilian personnel.

USARAF believes the requirement for allocated RAF Soldiers to be trained in working with an interpreter is of great benefit. The interpreter training should focus on allowing the interpreter time to deliver the message to a wide range of audiences, including people that have little to no formal education. Soldiers should also learn to avoid slang and acronyms, which are generally untranslatable to the partner nation training audience.

USARAF staff members suggested that HRC consider aligning talent consistent with the RAF rotation schedule. In the future, HRC would look across their personnel pool, find Soldiers with language or life experience in a targeted region, and assign them to the appropriate RAF unit.

### 3.9. Observation: Theater Security Cooperation Management Information System (TSCMIS)

Discussion: Theater Security Cooperation Management Information System (TSCMIS) is the Department of Defense system of record, and the USARAF staff is pushing for all RAF TSC missions supporting AFRICOM to be entered in TSCMIS. TSCMIS provides information to the RAF units (who, what, where, when, why) and includes “concept sheets.” It is a repository of missions completed and provides a reference for planning of future missions. TSCMIS allows access to similar or previous missions conducted that can assist planners with planning the next event.

3.10. Observation: The level of sustainment USARAF can provide the RAF is limited, both in terms of enablers and in with regard to their capability for in depth planning.

Discussion: The RAF is a limited capability, and does not come with all the enablers that the USARAF requires in support to AFRICOM missions. (Signal and logistics were mentioned as two problem areas.) USARAF sees a need for a planning headquarters lower than the ASCC level that can assist with the planning and preparation of the enabler forces prior to deployment to the continent.

Medical support and evacuation in AFRICOM is heavily dependent on civilian organizations for their sustainment distribution system. USARAF relies on contract support for even minor items. A concept the USARAF staff may eventually explore is positioning one or two very competent medical personnel in a local facility with adequate communications for 90–120 days to provide medical support for RAF personnel.

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Maintenance of non-standard equipment is problematic. An example was given of maintaining Mercedes trucks, but this statement could be broadly applied to trucks, tanks, aircraft, or artillery pieces. Setting up a maintenance program is one thing, but some African partner armies have been unable to consistently perform maintenance on the equipment they currently own, and they need help. USARAF expressed concern that without appropriate enablers, it would be difficult to most effectively assist in the area of maintenance.

Above all the USARAF staff lacks the depth required to conduct the detailed planning to the level required when supporting multiple widely dispersed missions on the continent, or missions that require a higher level of headquarters beyond the RAF brigade and or division. USARAF recommends that in the future, an Expeditionary Support Command (ESC) or Theater Support Command level headquarters be allocated (or assigned) to provide a planning headquarters that provides the logistics reach back USARAF lacks. The designated support commands would directly support USARAF with the needed material, equipment, technical expertise and personnel for missions in the AFRICOM operational area. The USARAF G4 and G5 are working a formal request through Department of the Army and FORSCOM.

3.11. Observation: USARAF uses multiple authorities and funding programs to support RAF in AFRICOM.

Discussion: One staff member contrasted the OEF/OND funding practices with the USARAF realities, commenting, "Africa funding is nothing like Afghanistan or Iraq, where the availability of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) money presented no real fiscal constraint to operations." Still, there were no fully planned RAF activities that were curtailed due to the non-availability of funds.

USARAF, with a small organic budget (about \$40 million in FY 2012), answers the demand for Theater activities available under either Title 22 or NDAA (e.g. §1206) Theater Security Cooperation authorities and funding. These funds are less foreseeable (they are not programmed by USARAF) and not very fungible in their execution, as each case comes with a set of specific instructions on how funds may be used. The Title 22 dollar amounts, once approved by DOD, DOS, and the Congress, may not be augmented with Army Operation and Maintenance (OMA) funding.

From USARAF's perspective, the term "RAF Cost" is a misnomer. There are no material "RAF costs" to the ASCC, but because the significant increase in the level of Army activity in Africa corresponded with the introduction of the RAF as a sourcing solution, the total costs for activities in Africa were often wrongly attributed to the RAF itself. In fact, the allocated RAF concept reduces funding timelines because the authorities to obligate the funds are conveyed to the command along with the funds.



ATZL-MCK-L

SUBJ: CALL interim report on Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) in USARAF

For that reason, RAF is a dedicated, efficient sourcing solution that has driven USARAF costs down. USARAF Staff Comment: “We’ve stumbled upon the most efficient process.”

In AFRICOM, there are more events planned than get executed, but no mission has been cut due to lack of fund quantity. The prevailing challenge with these activities becomes the ASCCs ability to obligate the funds before they expire at the end of the fiscal year, when the funds often arrive within 30 days of that date.

3.11. Observation: Foreign weapons training presents a unique challenge for conventional forces.

Discussion: Some missions require the US Soldiers to train the host nation military audience on foreign weapons. It is difficult for conventional Army units to get access to foreign weapons and ammunition for self training prior to deploying. USARAF’s experience with training of foreign weapons has relied heavily on cooperation with the Special Forces community (they are the only military organization authorized to purchase foreign ammunition at this time). In the case of the brigade currently supporting USARAF, teams of Special Forces Soldiers from Fort Carson went to Fort Riley, bringing their own foreign weapons. USARAF stated that NGIC maintains foreign equipment and weapons as well as instructors that could train the trainer. While USARAF suggestion that USSOCOM and NGIC might be sources of foreign weapons and equipment training, those options have not yet been shown to be viable.

4. USARAF RAF Assessments Process: The USARAF staff acknowledged it does not yet have a fully workable measure of effectiveness (MOE) criteria. A prominent means used to evaluate a mission’s effectiveness has been the mission element’s AARs and trip reports. Annual assessments involved the fairly cumbersome task of analyzing many post-event narratives and making educated staff judgments about aggregate effectiveness across the spectrum of regions, countries, and goals. In the past, there was a problem aligning AFRICOM and USARAF objectives; an issue to which the staff has contributed significant attention. The USARAF staff is in the midst of developing more end state-driven assessments, with an eye toward generating more quantifiable results.

5. Point of contact is Mr. Milton Hileman, CALL RAF Working Group, DSN 312-552-7397, Milton.m.hileman.civ@mail.mil.

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