U.S. Army Asymmetric Warfare Group Operational Advisor Summary

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Foreign Force IPOE

"*It is foolish to assume technology will be the sole savior of your team in combat. In fact, the enemy is proving extremely adept at overcoming new technological advancements and changing tactics and techniques routinely. The best way to survive as a team, and train your FF [Foreign* Forces*] to survive, is through IPOE.*" (*FM 3-07.1– ADVISING*)

This article provides suggestions for those advising the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) how to conduct Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (IPOE). It is not intended to replace or refute existing doctrine, nor is it a comprehensive reference. Rather, the paper is based on those AWG observations that could serve as building blocks for a more sophisticated IPOE-related advisory effort.

Replicating exact U.S. or Western techniques and processes is not always achievable or necessary when advising Host Nation (HN) forces, including the ANSF. Intricate overlays and matrices often obscure the tasks that are fundamental to informing tactical-level operations. A good starting point for understanding the operational environment is to emphasize a commander's basic information needs and incorporate them into a cycle that is linked to action:

- Identify all Information Requirements (IRs) necessary to achieve the commander's desired endstate, and;
- Link each IR to decision points that prompt either additional analysis or collection or operational Courses of Action (COAs).

Answering these IRs demands an Afghan-sustainable method. The ANSF makes extensive use of Human Intelligence (HUMINT). This is their primary source of information on the operating environment, as is the case with most security forces throughout the world. However, advisors should not "…assume FF has a good grasp of HUMINT. Many FF may lack a basic understanding of how to analyze their operational environment despite being in the same culture and sharing a common language. Also, FF may not even live in the same operating area. Oftentimes, their deference for rumors will drive conclusions regarding enemy activity." (FM 3-07.1) Having a specific list of IRs will help focus collection efforts. Encourage the ANSF to relate each incoming report to an existing IR. Have them explain whether additional collection is warranted or an operational COA can be implemented.

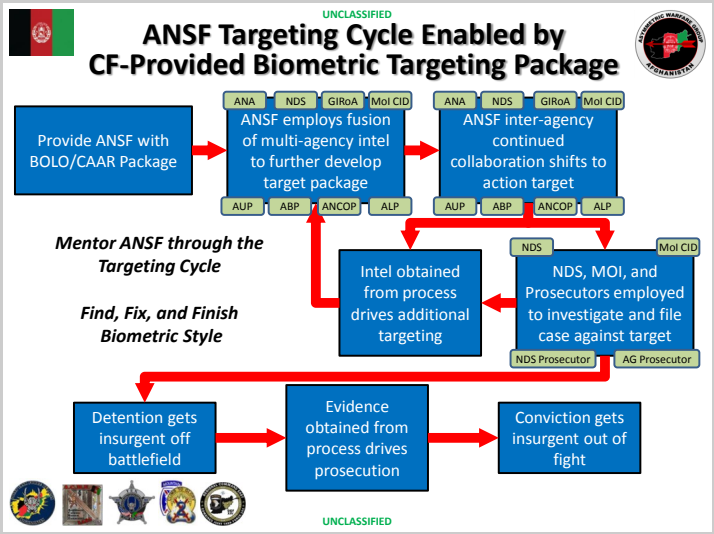
Also, not all human-derived information comes from informants. The use of patrol briefings and debriefings is another key source. The U.S. approach of using Company Intelligence Support Teams (CoISTs) was very effective in achieving this goal. With the ANSF in the lead for security, they are in an excellent position to supplement HUMINT with the observations of soldiers on the ground, especially since the most valuable information for counterinsurgency is found at the lowest levels. Advise the ANSF to provide every patrol with specific IRs and to debrief each as it returns.

Although these suggestions are basic, they are representative of the nature of the challenges the ANSF faces. Focusing on the fundamentals is a necessary first step.

Supporting Intel Driven ANSF Focused Operations

OBSERVATION: The Theater Explosives Exploitation (TEX) section within the Afghanistan Captured Material Exploitation (ACME) labs produce two documents—the Be on the Lookout (BOLO) and Criminal Activity Analysis Report (CAAR)— when combined, provide the foundation for an ANSF Biometric Targeting Package to support the capture and prosecution of insurgents.

BACKGROUND: The BOLO provides an "illiterate friendly" means for ANSF to identify or inquire about and detain insurgents. The CAAR provides additional information to support longer-term detention and prosecution of insurgents. Both of these documents can be translated into Dari and Pashtu. The BOLO and CAAR enable an Afghan targeting cycle that facilitates detention to remove an insurgent from the battlefield and potential conviction to remove the insurgent from the fight. Note that TEX now produces a CAAR with every BOLO.



RECOMMENDATION: Units can obtain Afghan-releasable BOLOs and CAARs to provide to their ANSF counterparts to facilitate Afghan-led targeting. The BOLOs and CAARs, which identify and confirm IED emplacers and makers through forensic evidence, can help support the C-IED fight through removal of these insurgents from the battlefield, thereby impacting IED activity by up to six months.

Dari version of BOLO

Pashtu version of BOLO

■ Search for a BOLO/CAAR: Go to the TEX website: http://paladin.coic-afghan.coic.smil.mil/tex/default.aspx. On the left side of the webpage, under "Documents", click on the links for existing BOLOs and CAARs to search.

■ Request a CAAR: Go the to TEX website: http://paladin.coic-afghan.coic.smil.mil/tex/default.aspx. On the left side of the webpage, under "Lists", click on the link for TEX CAAR request. Select "New" under TEX CAAR request at upper left. Click "New Item". Fill in the requested information and indicate your request is for ***Rel GIRoA CAARs***. Units should notify their Brigade LEP, RoL attorney, and/or Provost Marshal (PM) for situational awareness of their CAAR requests.

Dari version of CAAR

While the ACME labs can assist ANSF with evidence exploitation, units should make every effort to exercise Afghan capabilities. ISAF units should encourage their ANSF partners to submit evidence for fingerprint, cell phone, or document exploitation to the MoI Criminal Investigation Division's (CID) Criminal Technique Department at the Provincial level. These lab technicians can perform basic forensic exploitation or submit evidence to the MoI National Forensics Lab at Kabul. While a formal ANSF evidence submission process is in development, specifically to connect these labs to the district and village levels, AUP and ANA can still submit evidence, even if through MoI CID NDS, for exploitation.

Pashtu version of CAAR

For additional information, see TEX Green Hash, BOLO and CAAR Situational Awareness Report, 04 May 2013

Material solutions in Support of Retrograde

With US Forces currently conducting retrograde operations throughout theater, fewer newly developed material solutions are flowing into theater. Units must continue to execute missions with equipment currently on hand. During this time, the threat remains patient and vigilant. Commanders and leaders must continue focus on proven Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) as well as individual and team adaptability to mitigate the gap left by retrograded assets and equipment. During retrograde, Units and Commanders must work to optimize the equipment already on hand and these in country resources are available to assist; Rapid Equipping Force (REF), REF Mobile Labs Mobile Technology and Repair Complex, and RDECOM R-FAST-C.

The Rapid Equipping Force (REF) and REF Mobile Labs: The mission of the Rapid Equipping Force (REF) is to "harness current and emerging technologies to provide rapid solutions to the urgently required capabilities of the US Army forces employed globally". During retrograde operations, REF is still supporting Units by accepting and filling 10-Liner request. Units should continue to identify capability gaps and utilize the REF 10-Liner IAW unit SOPs. In addition, REF maintains a "Harvest List" of equipment that resides in theater and is available for immediate shipment. The Harvest List is dynamic and changes daily. However, weapon optics and C-IED equipment are frequently ready for intra-theater shipment.

REF Mobile Labs: REF also maintains two Mobile Labs in Afghanistan that bring solution development to the tactical level. Mobile Lab capabilities include metal and wood working, electronics, and 3d printing. The REF Lab's on-base location gives Soldiers better access to material developers. The engineers can work closely with those Soldiers to quickly develop the solutions for the problems. Units that have immediate needs for equipment that is not available off the shelf will benefit from the REF Mobile labs. Currently there are 2 labs in Afghanistan.

Two examples of REF Lab solutions to emerging problems: MRAP/MAXXPRO Valve Stem Covers and EW Aerial Emplacer.

1. MRAP/MAXXPRO Valve Stem Covers (below) addresses problem of rock damage to unprotected vehicle tire valve stems causing tire deflation and disabling the vehicle. Within five weeks of the request Lab Staff designed, machined, and installed metal guards that fit over the valve stems. After two months after install, there is no reporting of torn stems on trucks that have stem guards installed.

MRAP Valve Stem Cover (Left) and Valve Cover after protecting

EWD Aerial Emplacer

2. EWD Aerial Emplacer**:** Techniques for aerially deploying an Electronic Warfare Device (EWD) that worked in Iraq did not transfer effectively to Afghanistan operations. The previous technique destroyed the EWD when used in the mountains of Afghanistan. Within two weeks of the request, the Lab Staff designed, built, and flight tested a remotely operated "claw" to gently place the EWD on the ground from a helicopter. REF Lab Engineers demonstrated ability to reliably and accurately emplace the EWD from a helicopter without rendering EWD Non Mission Capable.

REF can be contacted to assist with 10-liner process, harvest list items, and request for support from REF Mobile Labs.

POC for REF Mobile Lab is LTC Matiskella
LTC Keith Matiskella
NIPR: Keith.matiskella@afghan.swa.army.mil
COM: 703-254-0428

Mobile Technology and Repair Complex (MTRC): MTRC primary services SOF units with highly mobile technicians and engineers to work with units to find engineered solutions for operational needs. MTRC is willing to work with any US unit if MRTC capacity allows. MTRC two to four man teams are set up for prototyping and limited production. MTRC's capabilities include tool construction, LTATV modifications weapons mounts, vehicle modifications, trailer modifications, facilities equipment, kydex fabrication, and a myriad of other welding, construction, and engineering tasks.

An example of MTRC effort is shown to the left. An Alice Pack Frame was modified to enable 60mm Mortar Carrier w/four rounds. Design allows base plate to remain attached to tube during carry-reducing the time required to employ.

MTRC POC: Gus Taylor, Operations Manager
USSCOM Mobile Technology and Repair Complex
Gus.taylor@us.army.mil
DSN: 700-787-3275

RDECOM RFAST-C: Research, Development, and Engineering Command (RDECOM) Field Assistance in Science and Technology Center (RFAST-C) is located at Bagram Airbase, RFAST-C offers rapid fabrication and development of solutions in theater-similar to the REF labs and MTRC, but on a much larger scale. RFAST-C is able to work with units and develop conceptual designs and produce rapid material solutions on site. The Prototyping Integration Facility (PIF) located at Bagram Airbase is a fully operational integration facility staffed with engineers, technicians, and CNC machining equipment capable of designing and fabricating nearly any mechanical component. Several capabilities include computer-aided design, build to print prototyping, precision milling, waterjet cutting of all types of sheet metal, and welding capability of ferrous and non ferrous materials.

An example of an RFAST-C effort is the IRobot IED "Batwing". "Batwing" attachment also allows for additional tools to be incorporated such as rake for breaking up soil and spade for moving and digging up items. Batwing was prototyped in twenty minutes from receipt of request. Within seven days, ten units fielded. RFAST-C can produce ten per day with four hundred and fifty assembled units completed to date.
RDECOM RFAST-C POC:
Mark Schlein
mark.s.schlein@afghan.swa.army.mil

(U) Considerations: If any risks exist to the end user of fabricated products, the Ground Force Commander must sign off on a Risk Assessment, thus assuming liability. Each organization above is trained in risk assessments and will work with Commanders to ensure risks are communicated and support informed decision making. Finally, units should be prepared to supply fabricators with class 4 and 9 items in order to achieve desired effects.

(U) Final Note: AWG serves as the operational link at the beginning of this process. AWG Operational Advisors will assist units with identifying equipment that has potential to be optimized and connecting units with developers. AWG also assists in incorporating innovative ideas that work into the institutional DOTMLP-F. AWG values Soldier ideas; submit your field expedient improvements or recommend solutions that benefits Soldiers and Units. Asymmetric Warfare Group: usarmy.meade.tradoc.mbx.usarmy-ft-meade-tradoc-list-awg-opcen@mail.mil .

Information Operations Transition Plan—By, With, and Through
Words, Deeds, and Images

The transition of a high profile forward operating base (FOB) should be accompanied by a detailed and multifaceted inform and influence campaign that starts well in advance of the transition notice. The campaign should describe the rationale for the transition and support the establishment of host-nation institutions and agencies as legitimate, credible entities. Effective communication will help shape the environment and demonstrate the host-nation government's improving capacity and competence to provide security and govern the people. Management of expectations is an important aspect of the overall transition plan. The transition should be announced in a ceremony that includes speeches illustrating the achievements of the U.S. mission and demonstrating how it has helped Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) prepare for a successful transition. (Note: This transition event is strictly ceremonial and is not tied to the official date of departure of U.S. forces from the FOB. The ceremony can occur weeks or months before the official transfer of authority.)

Stage 1: Form a Transition Assistance Team (TAT) consisting of the Information Operations Officer (lead), Brigade Military Information Support Operations Officer (assistant), elements from Military Information Support Operations (MISO) teams, Legal, the Public Affairs Office (PAO), the base defense operations center, intelligence operations, logistics, and civil affairs.

- Gather the following information
    1. How long the FOB has existed?
    2. Number of local nationals employed.
    3. How many vendors were able to maintain businesses through FOB assistance?
    4. How many contracts were successfully completed?
    5. FOB effects on the community.
    6. Number of local residents served by veterinarian assistance and medical civilian assistance visits (MEDVAV/MEDCAV) (if applicable).
    7. Total number of ANSF recruited, trained, and serving as part of the command.
    8. The total value and capability of ANSF equipment.
- Obtain funds.
- Plan a culturally authentic ceremony incorporating a symbolic exchange of authority.
- Engage the ANSF *kandak* commander during the planning and implementation process.

Stage 2: 30 days before transition

- Conduct key leader engagement with elders and area officials to inform and shape the narrative through dialogue.
- Survey the ceremony site with ANSF partners.

- Engage local media.
- Invite a Voices of Moderate Islam representative as a guest speaker.

Stage 3: One week before transition.

- Send official invitations to key regional and local leaders and officials.
- Conduct a dress rehearsal with the *kandak.*
    1. Display military hardware.
- Confirm speakers (include recipients of MEDVAV/MEDCAV, local vendors, and key community leaders).
- Plan the FOB commander's speech.
    1. Illuminate the effectiveness of the FOB.
    2. Emphasize that the role of the coalition partners was to provide security and engage in partnership.

Stage 4: During the ceremony.

- Words
    1. FOB leadership: highlight how U.S. forces assisted leaders to create a sustainable, secure environment.
    2. *Kandak* commander: emphasize the community support for the ANSF.
    3. Area leaders: pledge to sustain the peace and prosperity of the community.
- Deeds
    1. Cite specific examples of actions that reflect the benefits of the FOB.
- Images
    1. Ensure that all U.S. and Afghan military participants are in full dress uniform (as appropriate), all military hardware is on display, and that Afghan and U.S. flags are flown together to reflect the importance of the event, the successful transfer of the base, and the partnership between the two nations.

People respond positively to messages that are consistent with their belief systems. It is imperative that the Information Operations Officer understand the importance of words, deeds, and images. If we do not carefully plan the transition, we may leave the local populace with the erroneous impression that the transfer is coming from a position of weakness, thus giving our adversaries a strong recruiting tool and a victory narrative for years to come. This is not about winning hearts and minds. It is about convincing the population through the marriage of words, deeds, and images.

The AWG Inform and Influence team is ready to advise and assist deployed forces upon request.

Point of contact is MSG Shaikh, Sohail A.
Project Manager
Inform and Influence Activities
Asymmetric Warfare Group
NIPR: sohail.a.shaikh.mil@mail.mil
SIPR: sohail.a.shaikh.mil@smail.mail.mil

AWG Task Unit Afghanistan Contact Information:

- AWG AFG Troop CDR: awg.troop.cdr@afghan.swa.army.smil.mil
- AWG AFG Troop SGM: awgtroopsgm.org@afghan.swa.army.smil.mil

AWG Portals:

- AWG NIPR: http://newportal.awg.army.mil
- AWG SIPR: https://portal.awg.army.smil.mil/SitePages/Home.aspx
- ISAF SIPR: http://ijcportal.ijhq.ms.isaf.nato.int/sites/exchoffcft/Pages/default.aspx

AWG Recruiting:

- Website: http://www.awg.army.mil
- NIPR e-mail: awg.recruiter@us.army.mil

Do you have a TTP that should be shared with other units?
Do you have a potential solution to defeat a new or existing enemy threat?
If so, please share your ideas with AWG for distribution throughout theater

Find Previous Issues of the AWG Operational Advisor Summary at the AWG ISAF SIPR Portal or at SFANet on ISAF SIPR:
http://us-fora.oneteam.centcom.cmil.mil/sites/sfa_net/SitePages/Home.aspx

Check out these and other AWG products on the Joint Lessons Learned Info System

- 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

Go to https://www.jllis.mil; choose "Army" and "Asymmetric Warfare Group" in the drop-down menus in the top-left; choose "View Document Library" in the center; and choose "Search CDRs" in the center

Are you interested in helping your fellow Soldiers to defeat new and emerging enemy threats?
Do you want to influence the Army at the tactical and operational levels?
If so, contact AWG Recruiting at www.awg.army.mil