

CIVCAS Consequence Management Steps

Apply consequence management procedures if a CIVCAS incident occurs:

- Immediately report any CIVCAS incident (actual or possible) to your higher headquarters.
- Prepare: Understand process on how to deal with collateral CIVCAS.
- Seriously regard Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and local national complaints or allegations.
- Notify ANSF of ISAF investigation and obtain ANSF evidence.
- Conduct joint ISAF/ANSF assessment.
- Share findings of investigation through Shura or other means; ISAF leaders must meet with Afghan leaders and encourage them to tell locals what happened.
- Make amends if necessary through apology, compensation, referral to other agencies, or assistance.
- Provide an explanation in the local language to Afghan media with ANSF information operation message out front.
- CIVCAS mitigation should emphasize ISAF actions and what ANSF can do to reduce CIVCAS.
- Conduct ground-level BDA/sensitive site exploitation (i.e., take photographs, collect forensic evidence, etc.) to verify the occurrence of a CIVCAS event.

Best practices in reducing CIVCAS

- Communication. Use clear, precise, and unbiased language to describe what you are seeing. Keep it simple.
- Beware of group think. If you disagree with the description you are hearing, or feel that there is an alternative explanation for what you are seeing, then say so.
- Tactical patience. The longer you wait and observe the more you will know about what is going on and be better prepared to make a decision to employ lethal or non-lethal means.
- PID. Until proven otherwise, every Afghan must be considered a civilian and every compound a friendly structure.
- POL. This is linked to PID. Understand what is considered "normal" activity of the inhabitants of your area of responsibility.
- ROE. It is imperative that all coalition personnel have a thorough understanding of ROE and understand when the application of force is authorized.

Afghanistan Civilian Casualty Prevention

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Ask yourself three questions to reduce future civilian casualty (CIVCAS) incidents

Must I engage? Under self-defense, if friendly forces are taking fire and there is no other way to withdraw then yes, you should engage.

Can I engage? Does the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) permit engagement? Do I have appropriate rules of engagement (ROE)? Have I properly considered positive identification (PID), pattern of life (POL), ROE, and potential collateral damage?

Should I engage? What if I am wrong? Is the tactical gain I might achieve worth the strategic risk of being wrong?

Center for Army Lessons Learned

<https://call2.army.mil/toc.aspx?document=6953>



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Principles for reducing CIVCAS and its impact

- *Consider tactical alternatives.* Determine the best means of achieving the desired effects with minimum CIVCAS.
- *Partner with Afghans to the fullest extent possible.* Leverage relationships with Afghans before, during, and after operations to share responsibility.
- *Learn what is "normal."* Know and understand what is normal local Afghan behavior and POL.
- *Improve shared situational awareness.* Clearly and objectively share details with other forces and higher headquarters.
- *Conduct battle damage assessment (BDA) whenever possible.*
- *Know where civilian groups are operating in your area.*
- *Ethical leadership matters.*
- *Be fast, but not wrong.* Communicate information as soon as possible. However, to avoid damaging our credibility, do not report details that are speculative.

Tactical Alternatives

- *Shaping.* Understand your environment and set the conditions to minimize use of force in the presence of civilians.
- *Alternate tactics, techniques, and procedures.* Consider options to achieve desired effects in view of potential second-order effects.
- *Tactical patience.* When the situation allows, take additional time to verify intentions and PID before using lethal force.

Non-Lethal Weapons (NLWs)

- Provide troops with a means to warn, deter, discourage, and determine intent of suspect individuals prior to applying lethal force.
- Help de-escalate potentially volatile, lethal situations during military operations.
- Provide more reaction time for troops to assess the tactical situation to reduce CIVCAS.

Predeployment and Reinforcement Training

- Train in accordance with current International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) standing operating procedures 307/373.
- Improve coordination with air assets and indirect fire.
- Attain a better understanding of what PID means – confirm before making a decision to shoot or not.
- Force the practice of ground BDA and reporting.
- Partnering is the key; understand how to partner with coalition forces.
- POL must be understood; study the Afghanistan operational environment and your designated area of responsibility prior to deploying.
- Train with vignettes from the Afghan theater of operations.
- Resource and train with NLW equipment to increase reaction time, reduce unnecessary escalation of force (EOF) incidents, and reduce CIVCAS.
- Soldiers at every level must understand EOF procedures; continually train and rehearse EOF before, during, and after an EOF event.

Air-to-Ground Considerations

- Both ground and air elements must understand how the current tactical directive impacts air-to-ground fires.
- Ground force commanders should expect increased dialogue with air crews; if an air crew sees something that does not make sense, they should raise that issue with the ground force.
- Ground force commanders and joint tactical air controllers/joint fires observers need to work together for PID, and to ensure that no civilians are in the area of operations.
- Avoid communication breakdowns caused by the use of leading language, such as “non-agricultural digging.” Do not omit important details from combat observations and reports.
- Understand weapon effects; apply precision munitions against lethal targets to limit CIVCAS and collateral damage.

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