



**COMISAF ADVISORY AND ASSISTANCE TEAM**

**CAAT SPECIAL REPORT**

**Their Knife, Their Soup:  
Assessing the Requirement for a Comprehensive  
Security Force Assistance Construct in Afghanistan**

**OCTOBER 2012**

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## **Their Knife, Their Soup: Assessing the Requirement for a Comprehensive Security Force Assistance Construct in Afghanistan**

### **(NIU) Executive Summary**

**(NIU) The Issue.** Transition to an Afghan lead requires ISAF to support the ANSF in the delivery of security. It must be the ANSF with ISAF support that counters the effects of the insurgency and provides room for political dialogue. This paradigm shift from ISAF led to ISAF supporting is set against transition, a politically imposed time line, declining resources and the insurgent threat.

**(NIU) Aim.** This paper seeks to inform the ANSF development debate. It will explore the requirement for a comprehensive security force assistance construct in support of the ANSF; one that is flexible enough to cope with the shifting sands of Afghanistan.

**(NIU) Definition.** Security force assistance (SFA) is defined as: unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host nation or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority<sup>1</sup>. SFA is a US term, which has no doctrinal basis within NATO; however, it is a flexible concept that relates to the broad spectrum of activity that already exists in Afghanistan.

**(NIU) Conclusions and recommendations.** ISAF cannot win the campaign for the Afghans. ISAF cannot kill its way to success. Instead, ISAF must support the Afghans in countering the insurgency their way. The main conclusion of this paper is the need for mindset change. ISAF must assist the Afghans to eat their soup with their knife. This conclusion is based on the following rationale:

- a. The changing nature of the campaign will force ISAF to do more, or at a minimum continue to deliver the same with less. This can only be achieved by shifting the current paradigm to supporting the ANSF; rather than ISAF trying to win the campaign.
- b. ISAF must understand what “Afghan secure” is. In other words, how the Afghans plan to use force in support of GIRoA priorities.
  - 1) ISAF must understand how the Afghans will employ their forces; this may differ from ISAF’s pre-conceived ideas.
  - 2) Before devising a SFA construct, ISAF must understand how the Afghans will deploy the ANSF, in support of their objectives, as Afghan objectives may not align with those of ISAF.
  - 3) Therefore, ISAF must concentrate on the needs of the ANSF as employed and deployed by GIRoA, in order to determine what assistance is required and then build a SFA model aligned to these needs.
- c. The threat to the ANSF and/or ISAF will alter relative to time and location. In addition, transition will produce new dynamics and Afghan reality may differ from

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<sup>1</sup> FM 3-07.1.

the current Afghan political intent. Shifting allegiances will produce opportunities and risks, which ISAF must anticipate.

- 1) ISAF must be either configured, or possess a sufficiently resourced reserve, to mitigate these risks, or to exploit opportunities.
- 2) The deployment of any reserve or overwatch force will require accurate and timely information and close coordination with ANSF. This highlights the importance of ANSF intelligence (primary HUMINT) fused with ISAF technical ISR and the need for collocated HQs.

d. Due to force generation time lines and the impact of surge recovery, the implementation of a SFA construct will require evolution not revolution. However, the change in mindset required to deliver the SFA construct must occur now.

e. Over time the myriad of current assistance models should morph into the new SFA construct. The aim is to deliver a construct that is coherent (across the ISAF command), comprehensive (in terms of Afghan needs), and sustainable over time (during and post transition).

f. Due to the provincial nature of the campaign (including the varying multinational contributions), a greater unity of effort, particularly at the RC level, is required in order for ISAF to deliver a coherent construct.

g. The SFA construct must deliver a force that mirrors the ANSF chain of command and provides a parallel reporting system. Both elements are vital to building institutional capacity, as they allow ISAF to monitor ANSF's intelligence, plans, operations and logistics. Only when ISAF fully understands the needs of the ANSF can they assist in rectifying their shortcomings.

h. In summary, ISAF must not only develop a flexible force structure that can deliver appropriate assistance to the ANSF, during the process of transition, but it must also redefine the criteria under which its force elements are employed in support of GIRoA. To do this, ISAF must understand which way the winds of war are blowing.

## **(NIU) BACKGROUND**

**(NIU) Methodology and definition.** This paper seeks to define the factors that influence current decisions in Afghanistan. It examines how the forces have historically conducted COIN while simultaneously developing and assisting fledgling indigenous security forces, and how ISAF is currently delivering support to the ANSF in order to ensure that historical lessons are applied to any future construct. It introduces a simple assessment tool, which could assist ISAF's understanding of the requirement for ANSF assistance, and a possible SFA model. As a conclusion, it explains how ISAF might deliver a comprehensive SFA construct during transition and beyond. Security force assistance is defined as: unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host nation or regional security forces in support of a

legitimate authority<sup>2</sup>. SFA is a US term, which has no doctrinal basis within NATO; however, it is a flexible concept that relates to the broad spectrum of activity that already exists in Afghanistan.

**(NIU) Argument.** This paper will argue that surge recovery offers an opportunity. ISAF has overwhelming superiority compared to the insurgents, which should be used to mitigate the risks associated with transition by assisting the ANSF to conduct their counterinsurgency their way. In order to do this, ISAF will conduct three separate but complimentary activities. First, increase the development of the ANSF, by building capability and increasing its institutional capacity. Second, degrade the insurgency by providing enablers to conduct operations in concert with the ANSF, thereby, increasing their confidence and effectiveness, and finally, in support of both GIRoA and national objectives, conduct counterterrorist operations to disrupt the insurgency in depth. The balance of effort between these activities will alter over time. However, this paper will state the requirement for a comprehensive SFA construct and argue that ISAF should adopt the current force to create an assistance force, based on Afghan needs, rather than bolt assistance forces onto existing force structures. It will also introduce a simple model and assessment tool that could assist in the development of the assistance force.

### **(NIU) FACTORS AFFECTING DECISION MAKING**

**(NIU) Transition.** Transition is based on ISAF assessments and advice, but it is ultimately an Afghan decision. Therefore, ISAF cannot plan with certainty and must have force structures that are responsive, agile and flexible enough to cope with the changing political landscape. ISAF must understand Afghan politics and anticipate how power might shift during the process<sup>3</sup> by identifying opportunities and threats accordingly, in order to develop contingency plans for re-engagement. These plans must be cognizant of the political dynamics at all levels and be aligned with Afghan reality, which may differ from political intent. Conclusion: ISAF must not only develop a flexible force structure that can deliver appropriate assistance to the ANSF, during the process of transition, but it must also redefine the criteria under which its force elements are employed in support of GIRoA<sup>4</sup>.

**(NIU) Afghan secure.** The International Community must enable and support Afghan institutions during the process of transition. For ISAF, this is primarily about assisting the ANSF in the provision of security. Security enables and sustains transition in support of the GIRoA political narrative and counters the effects of the insurgency, which provides space for political dialogue. The ANSF, with ISAF support, does not have to win, but must be perceived as capable of winning in areas the *Afghans* deem politically necessary<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, security must be an *Afghan*

<sup>2</sup> FM 3-07.1.

<sup>3</sup> "In the case of Afghanistan, moreover, the problem is still state-formation more than state-building." Empires of Mud by Antonio Giustozzi.

<sup>4</sup> "Invaders must calculate where to draw the decisive line between killing and conciliation, for too much of either means interminable conflict." Into the Land of Bones: Alexander the Great in Afghanistan by Frank Holt.

<sup>5</sup> "Winning is not about tactical military advances, but support in the villages and, always the most important thing in Afghanistan, the perception of victory – which way the wind of war was blowing." Butcher and Bolt by David Loyn.

solution on which ISAF should not impose its own solutions. The ANA is at its core an Army of national defense and not configured to conduct COIN. ISAF must understand what “Afghan secure<sup>6</sup>” is, and how they intend to deliver it by understanding how the various security apparatus will be employed and deployed. ISAF must be prepared to sacrifice some of its objectives in support of an Afghan lead, less those that pertain to the national security of ISAF nations.

Conclusion: ISAF must consider how the Afghans are going to secure their country before devising any SFA construct, as Afghan objectives may not align with those of ISAF. The ANSF may not employ their forces as envisaged by ISAF and may not deploy their forces in concert with ISAF’s desires.

**(NIU) ANSF support.** Supporting the ANSF will necessitate a paradigm shift; from ISAF-led to ISAF supporting. A move to this construct means that ISAF must concentrate on the needs of the ANSF, to determine what the ANSF require and then build an SFA model that meets their needs. ISAF must not build a COIN force and then bolt on an assistance force; the two elements must be carefully integrated and balanced. There will be a difference between Afghan and ISAF priorities. Afghanistan has distinct provinces and districts, which produce unique political and security dynamics. These two facts necessitate a flexible approach that precludes a ‘one size fits all approach’. Current assistance models in Afghanistan deliver assistance to varying degrees but the issue is a matter of coherence. Currently the assistance arena is not clearly defined which leads to ambiguity, which means it is open to differing interpretations by the constituent elements. ISAF should unify its efforts in support of the ANSF. Currently IJC and the RCs take the lead and conduct COIN as they understand the problem. NTM-A generates the forces they believe are required and currently there is a disconnect between the Force Generator and the Operator, particularly at the tactical level (where COIN operations are, or are not being conducted) which is further exacerbated by a lack of Afghan ownership.

Conclusion: ISAF must concentrate on the needs of the ANSF to determine what they require and then build an SFA model aligned to those needs. There is a requirement for greater unity of effort, particularly at the RC level due to the differing regional nature of the campaign, which includes varying national contributions.

**(NIU) Time.** Planning for post 2014 should drive the overall shape and structure of ISAF’s SFA construct. However, the construct must be flexible enough to provide sufficient redundancy so as to allow ISAF to re-engage, to deliver force in support of GIRoA as required; be it tactical to strategic overwatch, or direct intervention. Transition is based on the political timeline with the added accelerant of surge recovery. Therefore, any SFA construct must be built and delivered in tandem with these timelines. Consequently, troop-contributing nations must start delivering units under the SFA construct no later than October 2012. Ultimately, this force will morph into the NATO Support Mission Afghanistan and this should be seamless. ISAF must grow the assistance force over time, while at the same time reducing the

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<sup>6</sup> Historically “stability was maintained through a series of agreements and discussions between parliament, regional power brokers and central government”. Realizing the extent of our errors and forging the road ahead by Dr Daniel Marston. A collection of essays entitled COIN in Modern Warfare.

COIN-focused force. This requires an evolution of force structures, not a revolution or at worst, a series of force reductions and a constantly changing mission. While the actual force will change over time, the mindset must change now.

Conclusion: Changing to an SFA construct will require evolution not revolution, due to force generation time lines and multinational contributions. This should see the current myriad of models morph into the new construct in tandem with surge recovery. The aim is to deliver a construct that is coherent (across the ISAF command), comprehensive (in terms of Afghan needs), and sustainable over time (during and post transition). For this to occur, the mindset must change now.

**(NIU) Declining resources.** Although ISAF is still calculating the effects of surge recovery, the major conclusion is clear: ISAF will have to achieve more, or at least the same with less. This can only be achieved through combined effort and by enabling the ANSF to do more. This paradigm shift presents an opportunity for ISAF; it should reduce forces that directly conduct COIN while increasing those that deliver assistance, using the remainder of the surge forces (as a reserve) to mitigate the risks associated with handing over battle space. In order to reduce forces, ISAF needs to understand what each constituent force element contributes to the campaign. This is currently hard to assess, as COIN forces are mixed with assisting the ANSF. Assigning forces to either SFA or COIN would enable ISAF to understand what each force element delivers and therefore assist with future planning and force reductions. Not only will ISAF reduce in numerical terms, but also given the financial crisis, many international donors may seek opportunities to reduce their financial contributions. How such reductions affect operations will hinge on whom the money comes from and what restrictions are attached to its expenditure in theater, as well as the nature and speed of the declining finances. Increasing expenditure on ISAF bases and even the ANSF is unlikely; therefore, expenditure must be prioritized and aligned to the ANSF needs.

Conclusion: ISAF must do more or continue to deliver the same effect with fewer resources. This can only be achieved by shifting the current paradigm to supporting the ANSF, rather than trying to win the campaign. ISAF needs to understand what Afghan secure is and how they plan to deploy force in support of GIRoA priorities and not necessarily assisting every ANSF unit equally.

**(NIU) Threat.** Threat levels will vary across the country due to geography and in direct correlation to both the ANSF's and ISAF's force posture. This will not be binary: an ISAF drawdown in one district may equate to increased insurgent activity. The contrary may also be seen if ISAF is the cause of instability then insurgent activity may dissipate as it withdraws. By contrast, increased ANSF capability employed against insurgents may precipitate increased insurgent activity if ANSF actions directly threaten insurgent interests. ISAF must identify those areas where it can take risk and other areas where it should reinforce (augment) or provide overwatch in support of the ANSF. This reinforces the argument that ISAF cannot develop a concept of operations based on "one-size-fits-all." Before the SFA construct is devised at the tactical level (RC and below) ISAF requires a tool to identify what the actual requirement is, and then build an assistance force based on needs. Paradoxically, as the force levels reduce, the risks associated in providing

assistance force may increase. Therefore, ISAF must choose carefully at what level and to what degree it assists the ANSF. This means that assistance teams may require more force protection during and post transition, at the time when other ISAF force elements depart. There are three options for mitigating this risk: first, holding a sufficiently resourced reserve (which requires accurate and timely intelligence); second, change the force profile and create specialized assistance teams with built in force protection; finally, increase the use of SOF, though, there are potentially not enough ODA equivalents. Therefore, a mix of forces will be required, increasing the need for a tool to predict the SFA requirement.

Conclusion: The threat to ANSF and/or ISAF will not be uniform, as transition will produce new dynamics, or Afghan reality may differ from the current Afghan intent. Shifting allegiances could produce opportunities and risks, which ISAF must anticipate in advance. ISAF must be configured to either mitigate this risk or possess a sufficiently resourced reserve. The deployment of any reserve or overwatch force will require accurate and timely information and close coordination with the ANSF. This highlights the importance of ANSF intelligence (primary HUMINT) fused with ISAF technical ISR and the need for collocated HQs.

## **(NIU) HISTORICAL CASE STUDIES**

**(NIU) Historical case studies.** A CAAT special report examined a number of conflicts<sup>7</sup> during which indigenous forces were raised and equipped by coalition forces while simultaneously conducting a COIN campaign. The following themes emerged:

a. **Command and Control.** Command and control of assistance teams is more coherent when they are placed under a dedicated subordinate command (separate to and distinct from the main combat or other “operational” forces). This ensures that while teams work in the same operating environment as the coalition combat forces they remain distinct from them. The requirement is a unified reporting (not operational) chain of command, which ensures a more coherent level of assistance. The aim is two-fold; to provide assistance that mirrors the host nation C2, and to provide parallel reporting. These factors allow the assistance force to understand the issues and then assisting in rectifying shortcomings. A distinct reporting chain also ensures assistance teams remain focused on assistance and not on the close fight.

Discussion: ISAF does not require a separate command at the national level; however, there may be a requirement to establish a more unified approach at the RC level. An empowered command would have responsibility for ANSF development and assistance. This command would tie together the various C10 branches, NTM-A (fwd) and all the Corps, Regional, Zone, and Provincial/District assistance teams into a coherent reporting and resourcing chain.

b. **Selection and training of assistance teams.** Advisors need to be suitable; that is, selected and trained specifically for the mission. Advisors have to be

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<sup>7</sup> The Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq.

good enough but not necessarily the very best. They must both understand their own military and be able to assist the indigenous force. The correct temperament, a desire or willingness to live with indigenous forces, and the ability to assist are key. Assistance teams should be selected, trained, deployed, and employed as a unit/team and not as individual augmentees. Advisors should be afforded relevant language and cultural training in addition to their military specialties.

Discussion: Appropriately selected and trained assistance teams will be required. Force generating them will take considerable time and effort. In order to reduce the manpower bill, to a level that can be sustained, ISAF should prioritize its assistance to the ANSF, and troop-contributing nations will have to alter their force generation mechanisms. There are already a number of models in existence that offer possible solutions, such as the Australian/US Army model in Uruzgan and the UK/USMC models in Helmand.

**c. Assistance team task organization and capabilities.** Manning and equipping assistance teams needs close scrutiny, as they are often placed at risk and may need to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. The disposition and structure of advisor teams needs to be sufficiently flexible to position them down to company (or equivalent) levels, when required. Advisors need to provide *enablers* to host nation security forces including combat support, logistics, and medical support until the host nation security forces have developed their own organic capabilities. Advisors must realize that the host nation security forces are not “their military.” Assistance teams must become the advocate for their ANSF, another reason why assistance teams should not be directly under the command of a local ISAF commander. Advisors should not organize, equip, and train the host nation security forces in their own image. Rather, advisors must improve the combat effectiveness of the host nation military by using existing institutions, systems, and procedures that are culturally and cognitively more aligned with, and agreeable to the host nation.

Discussion: Assistance teams should be deployed under a separate command and control arrangement to the ISAF COIN forces. Their movement, force protection, enablement and logistics should all come from a single base, but they should report up through a separate assistance chain of command, as this would deliver a parallel and complimentary reporting channel.

**d. Employment of and tour length for assistance teams.** Assistance teams must be structured appropriately in order to fully embed with host nation forces for the duration of their respective deployment tours. Advisors cannot “commute to work.” Assistance teams need to be large enough to accelerate development of the requisite host nation security force capabilities and capacities, therefore tailored to the task. Tour lengths for advisors should be more than 6-months (12-18 months is a far better benchmark) in order to foster the personal relationships essential to effective execution of the assistance mission.



Discussion: The sheer number of advisors required would stress the current force generation mechanisms and there is not enough time to alter standing force structures. Therefore, creating a distinction between those elements that directly assist the ANSF and those that support or enable them may be useful. The later categories could conduct shorter tours than the assistance teams, who have daily contact with the ANSF.

**(NIU) Conclusions.** Delivering greater coherence at the tactical level could be achieved by developing a single point of reference for ANSF assistance within each RC. A model that would align the efforts of C10 branches, NTM-A trainers, Advisors (OMLTs/POMLTs at every level) and the RC staff under an empowered DCOM should be considered. This would deliver an ISAF assistance force that mirrors the ANSF chain of command and provide a parallel reporting system. This will provide the information required to facilitate institutional capacity building, as the assistance force would monitor ANSF operations, plans, logistics demands and intelligence and act accordingly to rectify shortcomings.

### **(NIU) CURRENT SITUATION**

**(NIU) The current construct.** ISAF has divided its SFA activities across the commands. At the National level, the construct under which assistance is delivered has emerged over time rather than being specified, and is therefore liable to differing interpretations by the constituent elements, and within the various levels of command. The current construct below forms the basis of ISAF's SFA construct at the national level. The issues that need to be addressed are oversight and synchronization. ISAF needs to ensure that 'connective tissue' between the organizations is formed in order to deliver greater oversight and synchronization. Once this 'connective tissue' has been established, the force should concentrate its efforts on assisting the ANSF to build its own institutional capacity. In simple terms it will allow the Ministries to understand the requirement at the tactical level, which in turn provides the guidance to the force generators and trainers that will ultimately deliver a force that is coherent with the needs of the operators.

- GIRoA Ministerial Support and Political Oversight – Embassies.
- Ministerial Mentoring and Strategic Planning – ISAF.
- Force Generation, Equipping of the Force and Ministry Assistance – NTM-A.
- Assistance, Enablement of the ANSF and Operational Implementation – IJC.
- Special Police Units – ISAF SOF.
- ALP – CFSOCC-A
- CT Special Mission Units – SF.

**(NIU) Incoherent delivery.** While the issue of connecting the organizations within Kabul is relatively easy to achieve and implement, it is far harder in the provinces. Incoherent delivery is most apparent at the tactical level, within the RCs, where there is no defined construct and has led to an ad hoc approach. COMISAF's Aug 2009 Partnering Directive has not been fully implemented. Some ISAF units have been unable or unwilling to deliver partnering, and consequently have developed their own mechanisms for assisting the ANSF. Other units have realized that too much

partnering breeds dependency and have moved beyond partnering. This evolution has resulted in an ad hoc approach to ANSF development and spawned a complex lexicon *describing how ISAF units are configured to assist the ANSF, rather than addressing actual Afghan needs*. However, any new concept must acknowledge partnering as the start point. It must be simple, unambiguous, and prescribe a workable solution that is not overly detailed.

### **(NIU) A NEW APPROACH**

**(NIU) Needs-based approach.** Due to the nature of the conflict in Afghanistan, which includes; the terrain, the people, the insurgencies, the ANSF structures and troop contributing nations with a single “one-size-fits-all” approach in providing assistance, will not prove effective. That said, there needs to be coherence to ISAF’s efforts. *Therefore, ISAF needs a simple concept which focuses on Afghan needs, rather than force generation mechanisms which default to standing conventional force structures*. The current system for assessing the ANSF, the Commander’s Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT), is linked to force generation and readiness and does not take into account the ANSF’s ability to conduct its mission. ISAF requires a command-driven tool that assesses the needs of the ANSF first and foremost which would allow commanders to assess the requirements of the ANSF in their specific areas and devise solutions based on actual needs. At the tactical level (RC and below), CAAT recommends the following criteria, in order of priority, for assessing ANSF assistance requirements<sup>8</sup>:

e. **Necessity.** If a geographic area is not critical to an ISAF operational objective there may be no requirement for ISAF to provide assistance teams to the ANSF. However, over time, certain areas or forces are likely to increase (or decrease) in importance, which would require ISAF to adjust its assistance effort to reflect these changes. Although any assistance construct should seek to move the ANSF along a developmental continuum, it must also have the ability to switch assistance to those ANSF units that have regressed or where the operating environment demands increased focus.

f. **ANSF will to HOLD.** Understanding the ANSF’s will to hold consists of two elements; the importance of a certain area, and how the ANSF plan to resource the hold. Just because ISAF has invested resources in an area, does not mean that the ANSF will necessarily hold it. ISAF must understand local Afghan political, economic, and social dynamics in order to ascertain if the ANSF have the will to hold it. ISAF must also understand how the ANSF intend to hold an area and what is the likely force disposition. In simple terms ANP needs will differ markedly from those of the ANA.

g. **ANSF capability to HOLD.** ANSF capability to HOLD is a product of its institutional capacity to understand the environment, its command and control structures, and its ability to pre-empt and react to events. Simply put, how capable is the ANSF in relation to its given mission.

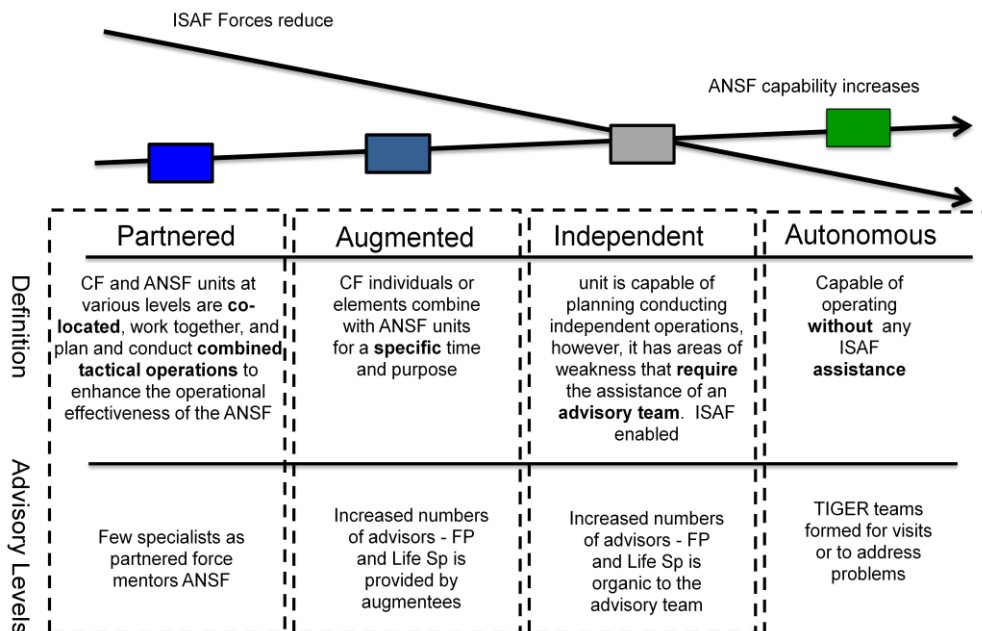
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<sup>8</sup> Assessing the requirement for other organizations above RC level, including the other ISAF commands is not as easy to quantify, however, a similar tool based on necessity, will, capability and capacity and threat should be developed.

h. **ANSF capacity to HOLD.** ANSF capacity to HOLD hinges on its physical needs<sup>9</sup> to conduct the mission. While the CUAT provide useful information relating to readiness, it lacks a commander’s assessment. A unit may not have any vehicles available due to scheduled maintenance. However, because it is conducting training, it only requires vehicles to conduct a mission one month into the future. Thus, the commander’s assessment focus is: will enough vehicles be available to conduct the mission and if not what should the ANSF do about it?

i. **Threat.** Threat drives not only the ANSF posture, but also drives requirements for assistance teams and enablers. A more kinetic area will require considerably more support than a benign area.

**(NIU) Possible SFA model.** Using the prioritized criteria above, and partnering as the start point, an RC commander could assess all the ANSF in his region to ascertain what level of assistance they require to conduct their mission. The RC would then be able to decide what level of assistance to provide the ANSF. The RC Commander could set objectives, which would seek to develop the ANSF over time. The aim would be to progress the ANSF along a continuum towards autonomous operations while simultaneously reducing their reliance on ISAF. This model has merits, it is command driven and is based on ANSF requirements and support which can be tailored to the situation on the ground. It is not a linear model, as autonomous ANSF units can regress depending on the criteria of above; at which point the RC commander would provide an assistance team. The diagram below pictorially demonstrates this concept and seeks to simplify the current complexities relating to ANSF development.



**(NIU) The Model over time.** The model above is coherent with the stages of transition in that there is a progression over time, which sees a declining reliance on ISAF support. It also corresponds with the realities of transition as witnessed by the CAAT. ISAF assistance is based on ANSF needs and progression, which is more

<sup>9</sup> Manpower, AWOL rates, ammunition resupply, weapons, logistics, vehicle maintenance etc.

gradual and not delivered in distinct stages. For example, any manpower savings during a unit's rotation could be reinvested or held as a reserve. The model would require the force generated incoming unit to meet any revision to the lay down and have an appropriate decision point articulated along the force generation timeline with the rule being a switch off, not on, for additional resources. This is another reason why a flexible approach is required.

**(NIU) Summary.** ISAF needs to conduct the campaign differently. The current paradigm of overwhelming superiority, finance and forcing the pace needs to shift to an ANSF lead; with ISAF supporting an Afghan solution. The factors of transition surge recovery, time and declining resources necessitate a decisive change to ISAF's collective mindset; especially at the tactical level. Due to the diverse operating environments within Afghanistan, force generation timelines and multi-national contributions, delivery of a coherent SFA construct is likely to be an evolution rather than a revolution; however the mindset must change now. There can be 'no one size fits all' and the solution must be tailored to suit the requirements of the ANSF, as viewed through the lens of Afghan reality. This assessment must be command-led, politically astute, aware of Afghan reality, and set against the criteria of necessity, will, capability, capacity and threat. ISAF therefore requires a simple and flexible construct that will allow it to restructure over time, while at the same time ensuring that the ANSF needs come first. Finally, ISAF must reconsider the criteria for not only assisting the ANSF, but also for using force in support of GIRoA. As transition progresses, we will learn more about our Afghan partners and how they intend to conduct their counter insurgency<sup>10</sup>. ISAF must understand where national and international red lines are, and be comfortable in accepting Afghans will ultimately do things their way.

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<sup>10</sup> "The motivation that produces the only long-lasting effect is not likely to be ideological, but the elemental consideration of survival. Peasants will support (the guerrillas)...if they are convinced that failure to do so will result in death or brutal punishment. They will support the government if and when they are convinced that it offers them a better life." Inside the Green Berets: The First Thirty Years: A History of the US Army Special Forces by Charles Simpson.

**THE INTENT OF CAAT SPECIAL REPORT IS TO SHARE UNCLASSIFIED REPORTS TO UNITS DEVELOPING TRAINING PLANS IN PREPARATION FOR DEPLOYMENT INTO THE AFGHANISTAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS. ALTHOUGH UNCLASSIFIED, THESE REPORTS CAN CONTAIN SENSITIVE INFORMATION ON CURRENT TACTICS, TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES. RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THAT LEADERS HANDLE THIS INFORMATION TO BOTH SUPPORT TRAINING REQUIREMENTS AND PROTECT EFFECTIVE PRACTICES.**

**James Brown, COL, USA  
HQ ISAF-CAAT, Commanding**

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