

INFORMATION PAPER

24 August 2012

(U) **SUBJECT:** Soldier feedback on five day Advanced Situational Awareness Training (ASAT) course that ended on 25 FEB 2012.

1. (U) **Purpose.** Provide feedback on the first trained five-day ASAT course.

2. (U) **Subject.** ASAT soldier feedback from training course that ended on 25 FEB 2012.

3. (U/FOUO) **Background.** Terrorists and insurgents use guerilla warfare, civilians for cover, and unconventional tactics to create havoc. IEDs and other asymmetric threats continue to catch soldiers unaware. ASAT improves the observation and human behavior profiling skills of soldiers, which enhances their ability to identify dangerous persons and situations before a destructive event occurs. It increases soldiers' situational awareness "left of bang". As much of the military has concentrated on the development of technology and armor, the ASAT program represents a different approach to giving soldiers an edge in combat. It is aimed at developing a new mind-set for situational awareness. ([ASAT Course Overview and Strategy v8](#))

4. (U) **Facts.** Information below was extracted from the [ASAT Maneuver Center of Excellence \(MCoE\) Five-Day After Action Review \(AAR\)](#) for course ending 25 FEB 2012. 60 soldiers participated in the ASAT course to include: 1 x 1LT; 1 x 2LT; 2 x 1SG's; 5 x SFC's; 31 x SSG's; 9 x SGT's; 8 x SPC's; 1 x PV2; and 2 x civilians.

a. (U) **Soldier overall rating of the ASAT course.** Overall, there was a 100% level of overwhelming soldier acceptance on the ASAT course and their participation. 83% of the students rated the ASAT course as "outstanding" and the remaining 17% of the students rated ASAT as "excellent". There were no negative remarks reported on the ASAT course.

b. (U) **Soldier combat experience prior to ASAT course.** 88% of the soldiers trained had combat experience prior to attending the ASAT course. 12% of the soldiers trained had no combat experience (2 x LT's; 2 x SGT's; 2 x SPC's and 1 x PV2). The average number of deployments was 2.6, of those with combat experience. The two civilians had a combined combat experience of four deployments.

c. (U) **Soldier feedback on the relevance of ASAT.** The ASAT course was cited by soldiers as not only having the possibilities of saving lives, but allowing the soldiers to be more effective in reading and understanding their environment. ASAT enabled soldiers to be better equipped (mentally) to paint a clear picture for their commanders. Soldiers stated the ASAT course should to be provided to operational units prior to their deployments; it would better prepare them in understanding their environment. *Observation:* after reviewing the AAR, it was determined that every soldier trained in the ASAT course unanimously rated the relevance of the course very high.

d. (U) **Soldier perspective on the importance of ASAT.** Soldiers stated the ASAT course could enable the saving of lives and valuable time on missions by making soldiers more aware

UNCLASSIFIED/FOUO

of people and their surroundings; rather than looking for a person or explosives, soldiers can observe and report on pre-event indicators. In a new complex role where soldiers find themselves as the “humanitarian, observer, police, politician, and the assault force”, ASAT provided soldiers with a very valuable tool in the human dimension. Situational awareness should be built into the soldiers mindset at all levels, this enables soldiers and leaders to be proactive to stay left of bang, verses being reactive when a negative event has occurred. Observation: There were unquestionable remarks captured on the importance of the ASAT course from the AAR.

e. (U) **Soldier comparisons of ASAT to other pre-deployment training received.** ASAT was commented as providing better pre-deployment training than the National Training Center (NTC) and the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), to include “...ASAT blows all other pre-deployment courses out of the water... the best training ever received...” Soldiers stated that the ASAT course taught them the best skills they ever learned to be prepared mentally for the operational environment. Soldiers wished the ASAT course were available five to seven years ago because lives could have been saved by understanding pre-event indicators, and that deploying units need this training now – it will save lives. Observation: the ASAT course prepares soldiers and leaders to detect pre-event indicators.

f. (U) **Effectiveness of ASAT Course.** The ripple effect is providing soldiers with more situational awareness within the battle space, enabling the soldier to predetermine events and take appropriate action that can have life saving effects to mission success and possibly strategic implications.

4. (U) **ASAT Course Descriptions.** (Extracted from [ASAT Course Overview and Strategy v8](#))

a. (FOUO) **Four Hour ASAT Overview Brief.** This overview provides leadership an introduction to the common language associated with ASAT skills training and sustainment, 200 students per brief at MCoE.

b. (FOUO) **Advanced Situational Awareness-Basic (ASA-B), 5 Day Course.** This course trains soldiers to cognitively evaluate complex environments and to effectively communicate findings to Higher Headquarters while operating as a member of a Squad. The knowledge gained from this training will enhance the Squad’s ability to achieve overmatch in an operational environment; 60 students per course. ASAT is currently taught at Infantry Advanced Leader Course (ALC) and Armor Basic Officer Leader Course (ABOLC).

c. (FOUO) **Advanced Situational Awareness-Advanced (ASA-A), 22 Day Course.** This course prepares soldiers to assist commanders with planning, resourcing, and conducting initial and sustainment Advanced Situational Awareness Training at their unit. For FY15 and beyond this will include providing the 4 hour overview/ refresher. A pre-requisite for this course is the ASA-B course.

5. (U) **Way Ahead:**

a. (U) **Pre-Deployment Training.** A subordinate unit from 4th Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division received ASAT training prior to their deployment. Data will be collected from the MCoE Battle

UNCLASSIFIED/FOUO

UNCLASSIFIED/FOUO

Lab analysts to determine ASAT measures of formation effectiveness (MFE) from an operational level at the squad, platoon, company and higher levels. Date, time and location of survey data collection are to be determined.

b. (U) ASAT Points of Contact.

[Mr. Chris Jaques](#), 706.545.6023, Chief, Course Management Branch

[SFC Charles McMahan](#), 706.626.2341, ASAT Action Officer

[Mr. Chuck Taylor](#), 706.545.7563, ASAT Action Officer

[Mr. Johnny Brooks](#), 706.626.2369, ASAT Action Officer

6. (U) Additional soldier remarks.

- (U) *“Sitting through this class and seeing the things that I missed on deployment could have saved someone else’s life. This has to be incorporated into Army training.”*
--- Staff Sergeant
- (U) *“I wish we knew this five years ago. It would have saved many lives. I don’t know how to implement this training Army wide – I’ll do my best to bring these lessons to my unit / soldiers. The TOC portion of the [range practical application] training was great.”*
--- Staff Sergeant
- (U) *“The course has to start in basic. The mindset needs to be developed throughout a soldier’s life – start a little and develop throughout.”* --- First Sergeant
- (U) *“My knowledge of ASAT is off the scale compared prior to receiving the class. I have been training snipers for a long time and this is the number one thing I wish I could have added to get ready for deployment.”* --- Civilian Sniper Instructors
- (U) *“Out of my 13 years in the Army, this class is by far the best class I have ever taken. It definitely has made me more mentally prepared to handle any situation.”*
--- Sergeant First Class
- (U) *“I have more information than before and I will definitely prepare classes for the privates on Sand Hill to help better prepare them.”* --- Sergeant First Class

[Mr. Joe Parker](#)/SFDF/SAIC/ 706-545-8831

UNCLASSIFIED/FOUO