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AF01, 4 BCT (ABN) 25th IN DIV, FOB SALERNO
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ANA and CF Partnership in Khost and Paktiya

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“In my opinion, as long as we have the U.S. forces with us we want to be counterparted, we want to share ideas and then make a plan. Because there may be something missing from our mind that they can share with us. Or there may be something missing from their mind that we can share with them. That’s the only way we can have a good plan, is together.”

-ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, 25 Nov 2011

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(U) Members of Human Terrain Team AF01 embedded with a U.S. cavalry squadron from November to December 2011. Our goal was to understand the dynamics that influence partnering between the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Coalition Forces (CF) and how those dynamics impacted ANA effectiveness in gaining the Afghan population's support. We conducted 22 interviews with U.S. Army personnel, including U.S. enlisted Soldiers and officers, U.S. troop commanders, police trainers, and ANA mentors. In addition, we conducted 21 interviews with high- and low-ranking ANA enlisted Soldiers and officers and Afghan police officers. We accompanied U.S. forces on non-kinetic missions to villages throughout Khost and Paktiya to gather perceptions from the Afghan civilian population. We also distributed a survey to three U.S. Cavalry companies (N=57). These data, along with research from secondary sources,¹ informed the findings presented in this paper.

(U) A recent study by Bordin (2011)² has drawn attention to “green on blue” hostility. While we acknowledge that his findings are probably an accurate reflection of Soldier views, we disagree with his conclusion that CF and ANA may be “culturally incompatible.” Instead, we are very optimistic that with the right training and leadership, cultural barriers can be overcome. Partnership, if correctly executed, can combine the strengths of Afghan and CF units such that each partner benefits from, and is bolstered by, the other. Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) development can become a force multiplier, not a trade-off, in efforts to defeat the insurgency. While our study, like Bordin's, does highlight some uncomfortable truths about partnership, we hope that as much as we have criticized current efforts, we have equally acknowledged the challenges facing Soldiers at all levels, and provided helpful solutions that begin to address how these can be overcome.

(U) Key Findings:

- Three factors: Motivation, Training, and Dependence begin to explain variation in ANA performance. Closer partnership can increase CF understanding of these factors, and more. Increased understanding is needed in order to improve ANA performance and readiness for transition.
- The squadron with whom HTT embedded prioritized ANA development but faced at least two key obstacles that could not have been overcome without external intervention or support:
 1. Due to geographic separation of headquarters, they could not benefit from regular Afghan contributions to their planning processes. This created an asymmetric relationship, with U.S. unilateral planning driving the vast majority of operations.

¹ Special thanks to The Asia Foundation for sharing their raw data with Human Terrain Teams.

² Bordin, Jeffrey, “A Crisis of Trust and Cultural Incompatibility: A Red Team Study of Mutual Perceptions of Afghan National Security Force Personnel and U.S. Soldiers in Understanding and Mitigating the Phenomena of ANSF-Committed Fratricide-Murders,” Nangarhar, Nuristan, Kunar, and Laghman (N2KL) Red Team, 2011.

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2. A focus on ANA deficiencies in meeting U.S. expectations, due to metric reporting that ignores Afghan knowledge of and interactions with the human terrain, led them to overlook uniquely Afghan strengths that could have improved their planning process.
- Existing CF measurement instruments, such as the Commander's Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) and the Tactical Conflict Assessment and Planning Framework (TCAPF), provide indicators of ANSF performance and effectiveness, but both *lack reporting on population perceptions of the ANSF and are therefore incomplete measures of ANSF's effectiveness* in counterinsurgency. This deficiency in data collection should be addressed.
- Initial findings indicate that CF and Afghan perceptions do not match up when it comes to views of the ANA and the Afghan police. CF rate the police as more professional, but Afghans favor the ANA. This is a reflection of CF preferences for police tactics and frustration with ANA unwillingness to use CF warfighting tactics, such as searching homes or religious buildings for weapons caches.
- HTT's assessment of COP Wilderness found that success lay in a combination of clear guidance, metrics to provide accountability, and regular assessments, along with a shared mission. At COP Wilderness, the U.S. Troop Commander recognized the benefits of partnered training, operations, and social activities.

(U) Recommendations:

- Collocating partnered units is the single most critical adjustment to current operations that would vastly improve opportunities for partnering.
- Give CF a better idea of "what right looks like" in their pre-deployment training.
- Create metrics to measure the quality and closeness of partnership and include them in Soldiers' regular reporting to incentivize them to improve current efforts.
- Because ANSF is on the frontline of building public confidence in the Afghan government, we recommend the rapid development of better metrics to measure both partnership and ANSF effectiveness.
- CF should track population perceptions in order to ensure that their measures of performance and effectiveness resonate with Afghans.
- Better incorporate Afghan input into CF planning. By this we mean not just obtaining Afghan buy-in to a CF plan, but inserting their ideas, especially those regarding the human terrain, into the planning process. In this way, CF can leverage the ANA's strengths—knowledge of, and legitimacy with, the Afghan population—rather than focusing on improving their weaknesses.
- Leverage the ANA's knowledge of the human terrain, knowledge of the local culture, and lessons about how to shift operations to being more population-centric.
- CF training and joint operations with the ANSF should be tailored to address the issue of ANSF legitimacy and the population's perception of the ANSF's ability to improve security and stability.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This bulk of this research was conducted by Human Terrain Team AF01 from November to December 2011 in order to understand the dynamics that influence partnering between the ANA and CF³ and how they contributed to the ANA's effectiveness in gaining the Afghan population's support. The focus of the paper is on CF partnership with the ANA, with an eye towards how that partnership influences and could inform CF engagements with all members of the ANSF and Afghan civilians. HTT's original research objectives for this project were:

- Identify factors that create variability in ANA performance.
- Identify how the ANA view their own performance, training, and assessment.
- Identify whether ANA performance, as assessed by CF, correlates with the Afghan population's perception of ANA's effectiveness.
- Identify factors that create variability in population perception of ANSF effectiveness.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the CF-ANA partnership and its impact on population perceptions of the ANA.
- Provide suggestions to improve CF metrics to assess ANA performance and effectiveness.
- Provide recommendations to supported unit for ANA training or operational improvements.

(U) To meet these objectives, HTT embedded with the 6th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment (6-4 CAV, or "Task Force Raider"), Reconnaissance Squadron of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division (3/1 BCT, or "Task Force Duke"). HTT's research was facilitated by Squadron Commander Lieutenant Colonel Mark E. Borowski, the Task Force (TF) Raider staff, A, B, and C Troop Commanders, along with the TF Duke Brigade Stability Transition Team (STT) responsible for advising the ANA 1st Brigade of 203rd Corps at Camp Parsa in Khost Province. With their collective support and intellectual input, HTT was able to participate in numerous non-lethal targeting sessions and ANSF working groups. We also conducted structured and unstructured interviews with U.S. military, diplomatic, intelligence, and aid personnel; the local Afghan population—in villages, in *shuras*, on military bases, and Combat Outposts; and Afghan district government officials, tribal and community leaders, as well as teachers and students to gain a more complete picture of the local context for research.

(U) The timelines for research were shortened considerably from what was projected due to a change of command, and a resulting change in our supported unit's priorities.⁴ We were not able to conduct interviews with as large a sample of ANA Soldiers or Afghan civilians as intended. The findings, then, must be presented as tentative. Additionally, we experienced a data loss

³ We use Coalition Forces and U.S. Soldiers interchangeably throughout this document. U.S. forces were the only Coalition Forces operating in the battlespace where we conducted this research. We recognize this led to a U.S.-centric bias in the views towards partnership, and additional research to demonstrate how the findings from this study compare with other NATO-ISAF partnership experiences.

⁴ The cavalry squadron with whom HTT was embedded completed their tour in December 2011. After a Relief in Place/Transfer of Authority in late December, ownership of the battlespace transferred to a new battalion.

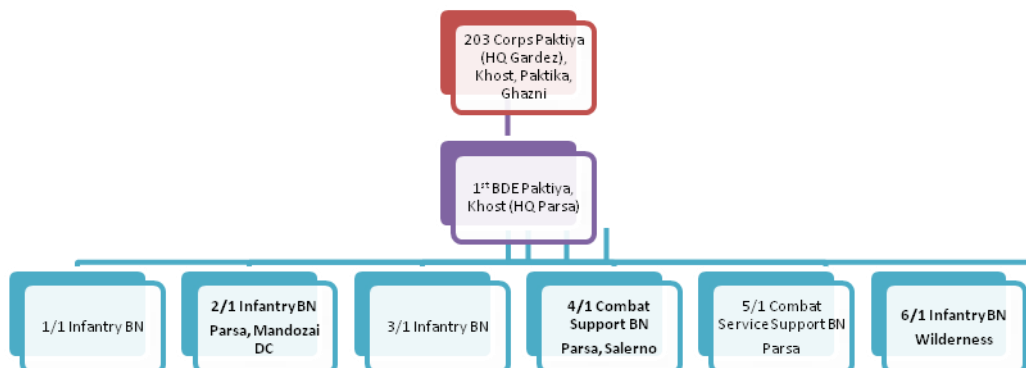
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which included a number of interview transcriptions and field notes. Thus, while this report is informed by a much larger pool of interviews, the quotes we have included are predominantly from those interviews which we were able to recover.

(U) In all, we conducted 22 interviews with U.S. Army personnel, officer and enlisted, U.S. troop commanders, police trainers, and ANSF mentors. We also conducted 21 interviews with high- and low-ranking ANA enlisted Soldiers and officers, Afghan police officers. We accompanied U.S. forces on non-kinetic missions to villages in Khost and Paktiya Provinces, to include the districts of Gerda Serai (unofficial), Wazi Zadran, and Shwak in Paktiya Province and Qalandar, Mandozai, Nader Shah Kot, Shamal (Dwomanda), and Spera in Khost Province to gather perceptions from the Afghan civilian population. In addition, we distributed a survey to three U.S. Cavalry companies (N=57).⁵ The survey instrument is included in the appendix. These three U.S. maneuver companies were partnered with the 2/1, 4/1, and 6/1 ANA Kandaks.⁶ The table below displays the ANA force structure in the battlespace where HTT conducted our research.



(U) HTT was initially focused on the partnership between the ANA and CF in conducting population-centric counterinsurgency operations. However, we found that it is impossible to understand the relationship of U.S. Soldiers to the Afghan Army without understanding the role played by the Afghan National Police (ANP) in partnership. Consequently, we include a discussion of U.S. relationships with the Afghan police in Section 5 of this paper.

(U) We envision this product as a joint ANA-CF creation. A major component of this research was to uncover, and suggest ways to incorporate, Afghan insights into CF military planning. Our intent was to pinpoint areas where CF and Afghan views on ANA performance and effectiveness diverged in order to bridge gaps in understanding. The ANA leadership who are aware of HTT's

⁵ For the survey, the distribution of rank was skewed toward lower enlisted: E2-E5, 34 respondents; E6-O3, 23 respondents. Further, the majority of respondents were Soldiers serving in Khost, with only 11 respondents serving in Paktiya.

⁶ "Kandak" is the Pashto word for Battalion. "Coy" is a British term to refer to a military Company, still in use today in Afghanistan.

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research has expressed an interest in benefitting from the lessons this study has to offer. We intend to translate relevant findings from this paper into Pashto and Dari for them as a measure to enhance partnership.

(U) TF Raider fell under the “combined action” plan that Regional Command-East (RC-E) developed for its ANA partner, the 203rd Corps, which combined advisor and partnering functions.⁷ As a recent RAND review of Security Force Assistance (SFA) by Kelly et. al. (2011) explains, the decision to shift the responsibility for advising ANSF units from Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command (IJC) was based on the belief that maneuver commanders should be responsible for all efforts in their battlespace.⁸ At the same time, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) was activated in November 2009 to “oversee the capacity development” of the ANSF.⁹ In some areas, CF assumed responsibility for advising under a concept called “embedded partnering,” in which CF partner units co-locate and work alongside their Afghan counterparts, without dedicated embedded training teams (ETTs). The NATO Parliamentary Assembly described the creation of NTM-A and embedded partnering as a fundamental shift: “While the previous concept had training teams meeting with their Afghan counterparts in the field to jointly conduct an operation, and then go their separate ways, the new concept of embedded partnering aims to bring international and Afghan personnel together to live, train, plan, and execute missions together. The concept applies not only to mentoring and training in the field, but to all levels of operations, from the Ministries of Defense and Interior down to combat troops on the battlefield.”¹⁰

(U) Research on CF partnership efforts with foreign security forces by the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) indicates that partnership only works well if maneuver commanders “make ANSF development the top priority.”¹¹ If kinetic operations are the top priority, then SFA is often made more difficult. In practice, embedded partnering has sometimes been executed as intended, and sometimes not. Something that we hope will become clear in reading this paper is that many battlespace owners, to include the Squadron Commander who commissioned this study in order to assess his unit’s progress in partnering, understand the importance of prioritizing ANA development. Recent policy papers have placed the blame for the lack of focus on partnering on field commanders’ lack of vision or understanding. For example, a CNAS report said “we are not confident that most U.S. and NATO commanders have

⁷ Hooker, R.D., “Operation *Enduring Freedom X*: CJTF-82 and the Future of COIN,” The Institute of Land Warfare No. 11-1, August 2011, p.141.

⁸ Kelly, Terrence, Nora Bensahel, Olga Olikier, “Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan: Identifying Lessons for Future Efforts,” RAND Corporation Arroyo Center, 2011. p.83.

⁹ “Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan,” Reported to Congress in Accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), as amended, November 2010, p.12.

¹⁰ NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2010, “Preparing the Afghan National Security Forces for Transition,” Brussels: NATO.

¹¹ Kelly et. al. (2011), p.79.

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come to grips with the reality of the impending U.S. and allied transition. U.S. commanders are focused less on partnering with their Afghan allies and more on fighting the Taliban.”¹² Or, analysts claim that the Army mindset predisposes Soldiers to kinetic enemy targeting.¹³ While it is true that U.S. Soldiers are a product of their training, and their current training and equipment prepares them for a different kind of fight than the one currently facing them in Afghanistan, HTT has seen evidence that with clear guidance and leadership conventional forces could become excellent ANA partners and mentors. As one of our interviewees stated about himself and his U.S. military counterparts: “We can follow orders.”¹⁴

(U) Translating ISAF’s overarching mission in Afghanistan into clear guidelines and expectations for action by troop commanders and platoon leaders on the ground is a difficult task. The battlespace owners HTT interviewed in Khost and Paktiya were well aware of the need to focus on their ANA counterparts, but found it difficult given the multiple missions and reporting requirements from U.S. Army leadership. HTT hopes that as an independent observer and aggregator of opinions at both levels, we can help connect U.S. goals with new metrics and assessments that incentivize U.S. Soldiers to focus more on ANSF development.

(U) On a final note, ANA readiness as an independent fighting force ultimately hinges on a number of factors unrelated to ANA Soldier performance or even the quality of the ANA/CF partnership on the ground:

- The willingness of the U.S. and NATO allies to provide an appropriate and adequate level of funding for long-term support through 2014 and beyond
- A self-sustaining and legitimate Afghan government
- A functioning justice system
- Economic stability

(U) None of these requisites are a given beyond 2014. Putting policy matters aside for the purpose of this paper, however, HTT has focused on ANA performance and effectiveness because these are not political matters as much as technical matters over which NATO/ISAF can exert an influence. We realize the exclusion of the above preconditions present a glaring omission from any discussion of ANSF readiness, but hope that the focus of our study will prove useful to a military audience interested in practical recommendations.

¹² Lt. Gen. David Barno, Andrew Exum and Matthew Irvine, “The Next Fight: Time for a Change of Mission in Afghanistan,” December, 2011: Center for New American Security.

¹³ Carstens, Roger D., “Putting the Afghans in charge,” Foreign Policy Magazine, 2 February 2012.

¹⁴ Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

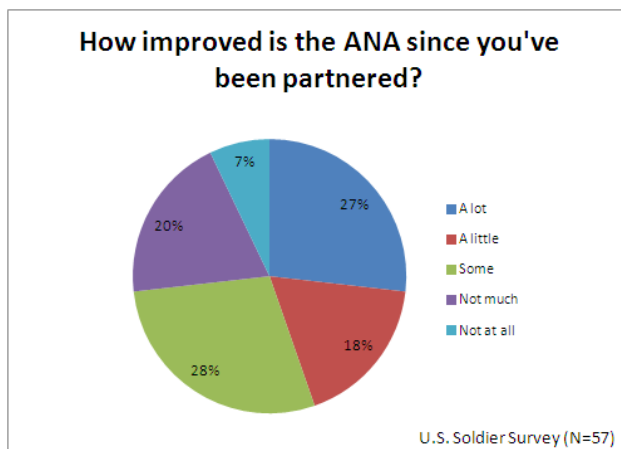
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SECTION 2: UNDERSTANDING ANA PERFORMANCE

(U) CF partners require a more thorough understanding of ANA performance in order to advance progress along their lines of effort for ANA development. CF action needed to improve ANA performance will vary depending on the unique conditions each unit faces. HTT's study of TF Raider's partnership sheds light on a small piece of the puzzle, and we have developed these findings below.

(U) CF is currently using the CUAT to evaluate ANA performance. Its lines of effort include: Leadership, Operations, Intelligence, Logistics, Equipping, Personnel, Maintenance, Communications, Training and Education, and Partnering. However, these categories are limited and raters do not always provide a high level of detail to justify awarded scores. HTT's intent in creating new categories of analysis outside of the CUAT is to try and begin to explain the "why?" behind the CUAT's substantive metrics and to provide an overview of trends. Why are logistics not functioning properly? Is it due to corruption? Poor maintenance? Poor command climate? Why is ANA operational planning lagging behind expectations? Is it due to dependence on U.S. forces? Inadequate training?

(U) A number of explanations for the variability in ANA performance were suggested during HTT's interviews with Afghans and Americans who work closely with the ANA. Many of the factors leading to increased or decreased performance are interrelated, and thus it was hard for us to separate them conceptually. For organization's sake, we have sorted them into three discrete categories which affect all ten CUAT measures of performance.



(U) Factors identified by HTT as impacting ANA performance:

1. Motivation
2. Training
3. Dependence

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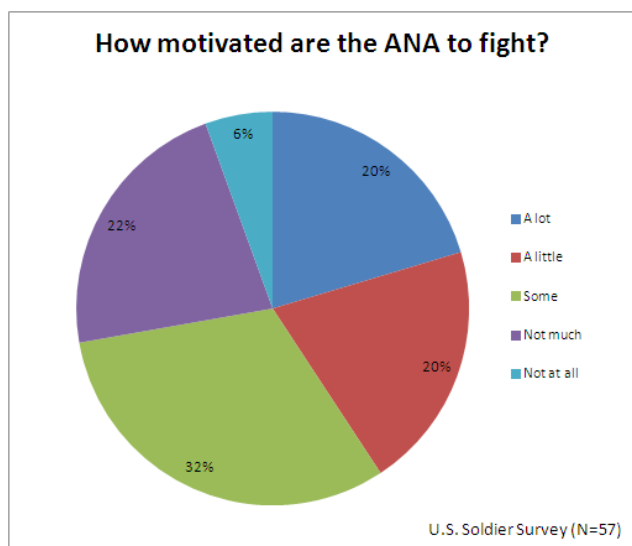
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1. (U) MOTIVATION

(U) “ANA doesn’t care, they are lazy.” “ANA have no motivation to do anything.”¹⁵

(U) HTT’s survey results show that CF perceive their Afghan counterparts as lacking motivation. This is in line with Bordin’s (2011) research, which revealed that negative perceptions of U.S. Soldiers towards the ANA derive from a sense of the ANA’s lack of buy-in or willingness to fight.¹⁶ This apparent lack of motivation, according to the CF Soldiers we interviewed, is a contributing factor to ANA poor performance and initiative to function independently. According to one U.S. Staff Sergeant working with the ANA in Mandozai District, Khost Province, the ANA are not interested in taking on more responsibility: “We do the heavy lifting, they put a face on it.”¹⁷ The ANA, U.S. Soldiers, and local nationals all have perspectives on what motivates Afghan soldiers, which we outline below.



(U) ANA motivations:

To join the ANA

1. Salary, employment
2. Literacy, opportunity for education
3. Patriotism

To fight/work harder

1. Ownership of missions
2. Relationship with CF
3. Immediate threat to Afghan Soldiers
4. Promotion due to merit vs. appointments
5. Leadership
6. Resentment over working outside scope
7. Degree of respect for Soldiers/NCOs

(U) *Salary, employment*

According to one Kandak Command Sergeant Major, a regular paycheck is the main reason Afghan fighters join the ANA. He cited his salary as what led him to join, but pointed out that it was still not sufficient. “When we joined the army we were getting 3,500 Afghanis and now 20,000 Afghanis. But it’s still not enough for family support.”¹⁸ Afghans report that insurgents pay more due to financial support from Pakistan and that the current global recession has impacted young men’s choices for employment. Men who would have left to work abroad in Dubai or Saudi Arabia are finding fewer opportunities given the current economic climate. These

¹⁵ Comments from U.S. Soldier survey, December 2011.

¹⁶ Bordin (2011).

¹⁷ U.S. Staff Sergeant, Interview by authors, 26 November 2011.

¹⁸ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview by authors, 25 November 2011.

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young men are said to be joining the ANA as an alternative, though further research is needed to confirm how widespread this trend may be.

(U) *Literacy, opportunity for education*

“I never thought when I entered Afghanistan as a senior trainer I’d be talking more about literacy training than I would about infantry training. But that is truly the case. We recognized very early on in the NTM-A time frame that we had to put a literacy program in place to compensate and mitigate the great illiteracy problem in the ranks as well as in their society.”¹⁹

(U) A NTM-A policy shift in 2009 mandated and standardized the previously voluntary literacy program of instruction. According to former NTM-A Commanding General, Lieutenant General William Caldwell, this shift towards raising the overall literacy level of the ANA has had a major impact on ANA motivation and morale.²⁰ This decision was also seen as an investment in the professionalism of the ANA: “NTM-A decided that “Literacy undergirds accountability, supports branch and specialized competency, and helps prevent corruption by empowering individuals and increasing individual awareness of rights, responsibilities, and procedures while enabling specialized training. ANSF members who are literate can account for equipment—especially weapons—including filling out paperwork or reading a weapon’s serial number. Literacy also supports the various branch and specialty schools, contributing to greater competency and corresponding improvement in the quality of the ANSF. Literate individuals contribute to an increase in overall transparency, and their literacy mitigates corrupt practices, as literate ANSF members can track their pay and are less likely to be defrauded.”²¹

(U) Almost every Afghan Soldier with whom HTT spoke described education and literacy as an incentive which led them to join the ANA, or as being necessary to their professional advancement. Education in Afghanistan, according to Afghans, is what separates peaceful Afghans from those who wage war. In one of the ANA training facilities at Camp Parsa, an English translation of a Pashto/Dari poster reads: “Remember to forgive, and keep away from the uneducated.” When asked about the factors that motivate people to join the insurgency, Afghan villagers explained that insurgents were “uneducated” and that if they were educated, they would not fight.²² Similarly, ANA officers and NCOs expressed to HTT that professionalism is tied to length of training: the longer someone is trained, the better Soldier they become. Several ANA and civilian respondents noted that the commandos are “the best” ANA because they have received the most training (6 months).

¹⁹ Patton, Major General Gary S., former Deputy Commanding General of NTM-A, “Shaping for Successful Transition in Afghanistan,” Training and Advising for Transition,” Marine Corps University, Quantico, VA, 30 August 2011.

²⁰ NATO Year in Review: November 2009-November 2010.

²¹ NATO (2010).

²² Afghan Border Police Officer, Interview by authors, 28 January 2012. Afghan respondents seemed to overlook the scholarly origins of the “Taliban” (the plural for “student” in Arabic) and focused, instead, on the criminal aspects of the insurgency.

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(U) According to the ANA Lieutenant Colonel in charge of training at Camp Parsa, literacy is now mandatory in all training. Each Afghan Army basic trainee receives 80 hours of literacy coursework to bring him to a first-grade reading level. Camp Parsa reports a success rate of 90 percent, which exceeds the standard set by ANA Corps at Gardez.²³ All ANA are supposed to receive literacy training after they graduate from basic training, but units deployed to remote locations complain that they do not receive the same level of training as units stationed near their headquarters. That affects their morale and, accordingly, retention rates. ANA leaders are looking at offering more mobile training teams in the future but found it difficult to find quality instructors willing to travel to isolated ANA outposts.

(U) ANA's CF counterparts might also consider augmenting NTM-A training with their own literacy classes. For example, once the Camp Parsa Remote Basic Warrior Training (RBWT) team learned that language skills could help qualified ANA basic training NCO instructors become recognized for promotion, they started their own English courses. The RBWT class was very well received by the NCOs and the ANA Colonel in charge of basic training at Parsa. Even though the RBWT team claims to have had fewer resources (in terms of money and personnel) to offer the ANA than their predecessors, they were identified as a model training and advisory team. One of the NTM-A officers observed that RBWT was able to work themselves out of a job because of the positive relationship they developed. The ANA NCOs genuinely appreciated that the same American instructors who taught them marksmanship on the range would volunteer their time to develop Dari and English slides to boost their NCO counterparts' reading levels. Students HTT interviewed reported that the class made them feel that they "mattered" and that it was one of the best things they had done since joining ANA.²⁴

(U) An ANA Kandak Commander cautioned that education is important, but is not a panacea for ANSF challenges. In discussing the Afghan Uniform Police (AUP),²⁵ this ANA Colonel stated that training and literacy are a good start, but ANSF should also have national loyalties. According to this officer, the Afghan police lack the integrity of the Army because police training does not spend time indoctrinating new recruits in national history and patriotic ideas as ANA training does.²⁶

(U) Patriotism

(U) "Iran and Pakistan are the mortal enemies of Afghanistan. This motivates Afghan Soldiers to fight."²⁷ "I am motivated by a good relationship with the people of Afghanistan."²⁸ ANA Soldiers reported to HTT that their parents were proud of their decision to join the ANA, even while at the same time concerned about their safety.

²³ Statistic cited at a Stability Working Group meeting attended by the ANA, GIRoA, tribal elders, and HTT at Camp Parsa, November, 2011.

²⁴ ANA NCO, Interview by authors, 19 December 2011.

²⁵ Afghan Uniform Police is a sub agency of the Afghan National Police, along with the Afghan Border Police.

²⁶ ANA Kandak Commander, Interview by authors, 9 January 2011.

²⁷ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview by authors, 25 November 2011.

²⁸ ANA NCO from Mandozai District, Khost Province, Interview by authors, 26 November 2011.

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(U) *Ownership of missions*

(U) U.S. Soldiers interviewed by HTT admitted that while ANA does contribute some intelligence, U.S. intelligence still drives most partnered missions. “Until they take ownership of it, they’re just going to be along for the ride.”²⁹ Much of that intelligence is classified beyond a level that is made available to their Afghan partners. “Since the ANA doesn’t know [the intelligence], and it doesn’t matter to them because they don’t sit in on your targeting meetings, they’re just going to go out and do their talking points...”³⁰ This dynamic results in a lack of ANA ownership and, accordingly, a lack of motivation. “If you plan something, you want to see it done correctly. The patrols that we’ve done, where they’ve planned them and did them, have been our best...Everybody was more motivated. But when we call and say tomorrow at 9 o’clock, at the trucks, 15 Soldiers. The ANA are like, who wants to go today?”³¹

(U) *Relationship with CF*

(U) Bordin’s (2011) ANSF interviewees in RC-E reported that attempts to correct U.S. Soldiers’ behavior toward the population were met with “verbal abuse, insults and shouted profanities, or were simply ignored, with the Soldiers continuing with the same obnoxious behaviors.”³² This led to poor relations among partners and a lack of mutual respect. HTT’s interview with a U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team member confirmed that Americans’ behavior toward their counterparts impacts the partnership between the ANA and CF. “Some [U.S. Soldiers] think the ANA are good, some can’t stand the ANA and they work with them. The ANA can pick up on that.”³³ While HTT’s preliminary interviews were not focused on personal relationships between CF and the ANA, a Kandak Command Sergeant Major reported positive encounters with Americans in Khost and Paktiya: “I have counseled all the last [CF] units about culture, religion, and civilians, many times. They never criticized my counsel, they always respected my counsel and they obeyed that counsel.”³⁴

(U) *Immediate threat to Afghan Soldiers*

(U) U.S. Soldiers perceived direct targeting by insurgents as impacting ANA motivation. A U.S. Army Specialist working with the ANA in Mandozai District said that once the insurgents began emplacing IEDs for the ANSF rather than CF, he noticed a marked increase in how seriously they took their job.³⁵ A U.S. Army Specialist working with the ANA in Gerda Serai said that when the ANA are shot at in the field, they are very motivated to return suppressive fire to protect themselves and their CF counterparts.³⁶

²⁹ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

³⁰ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

³¹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 25 November 2011.

³² Bordin (2011), p. 35.

³³ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

³⁴ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview by authors, 25 November 2011.

³⁵ U.S. Army Specialist, Interview by authors, 26 November 2011.

³⁶ U.S. Army Specialist, Interview by authors, 11 November 2011.

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(U) *Promotion due to merit vs. appointments*

(U) “There are a few people who are promoted like me, without a good connection or personal connection with somebody. But for most, it’s not up to their talent or ability...if somebody has relations with the high ranks, with a general or with a colonel, a relative or a friend, then he can get promoted quicker than me...When I see other NCOs becoming brigade sergeants major or higher than that in less time than me, they are doing nothing and they are becoming higher than me. That’s why I don’t like to be a sergeant major ...that’s the only thing that brings men’s morale down.”³⁷

(U) *Leadership*

(U) “Now the resupply is better than before and faster than before. General Nassir, the [1st] brigade commander...is trying to have better quality of food for the Soldiers, better uniforms for the Soldiers. Before, as I said outside, a person should be a badass in the army. That’s how the brigade commander is. The S4 is a good guy, but the Brigade Commander brings pressure on him to make the resupply quicker.”³⁸

(U) *Resentment over working outside scope*

(U) “Going out, going to the villages, talking to people—that’s police work. And I think the police understand what their job is, so they have no problems doing that. The ANA are like ‘this isn’t our job, we shouldn’t be going to these villages all the time, talking to the same people, asking them the same questions, doesn’t make sense.’”³⁹

(U) *Degree of respect for Soldiers/NCOs*

(U) “All the battalion commanders that I have been with, they have the old idea from Russian times. They don’t really respect their NCOs...their mentality, their ideas, are from ancient times...The chain of command we have, they’re too old to be a battalion commander or a brigade commander or any higher ups. The officers are dyeing their beards, their hair, to look young. And that’s the problem, because they’ve got old ideas.”⁴⁰

³⁷ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview by authors, 25 November 2011.

³⁸ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview with authors, 25 November 2011.

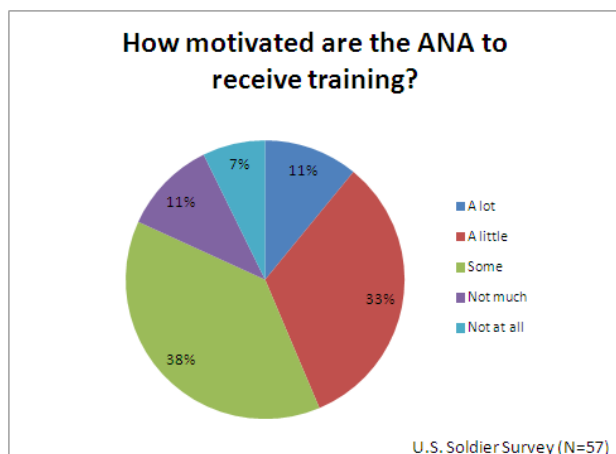
³⁹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

⁴⁰ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview by authors, 25 November 2011.

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2. (U) TRAINING

(U) *“The ANA being here on Parsa is like us being back in the States in garrison. We don’t do a field exercise, or we don’t go on patrol, every single day back at our home station. We do training. We stay on our base and we train. So for us to take these guys out every single day on patrol, it’s not teaching them anything.”*⁴¹



(U) *Issues identified by HTT with regards to ANA training include:*

1. Little time allotted for training in garrison or in the field
2. Functionally mismatched CF-ANA partners such that CF cannot offer MOS-specific training
3. Insufficient continuity between NTM-A trainers and CF partners

(U) Little time allotted for training in garrison or in the field

(U) Lack of training was identified as a problem by both ANA and CF who had served multiple tours in Afghanistan. As former NTM-A Commander Caldwell stated, “NTM-A makes up only 2% of the CF strength in Afghanistan, yet their trainers have generated an ANSF that today makes up 63% of all security forces in the country.”⁴² Allotting time for training provides the ANA the opportunity to make mistakes and have them corrected by CF in garrison, rather than in the field where accuracy is a matter of life or death.

(U) According to one U.S. Troop Commander, “We’ve done some training with them, but we patrol so much. About every day, we’re out patrolling. If we’re not out patrolling, we’ll have a maintenance day, or we’ll assume Quick Reaction Force (QRF)...once we get out there it’s all mission...we don’t do any training once we get out on patrol...”⁴³ Another U.S. Troop Commander reported that his patrolling to training ratio was somewhere around 95% to 5%.⁴⁴

(U) “And if you step back and you do three days of training, then it becomes ‘Hey, you guys haven’t done any patrols in three days.’ That’s what you get from higher. ‘Hey, you guys haven’t been able to do any HIIDE enrollments [Handheld Interagency Identify Detection Equipment] and your hours are down, you need to do some night patrols.’ And you’re like ‘I know, but

⁴¹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁴² Caldwell, Lieutenant General William B., IV, Commanding General, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan, “Remarks to the NATO Military Committee,” NATO Military Committee, Brussels, Belgium. 27 September, 2010.

⁴³ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁴⁴ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

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we've been training the ANA for the last three days, we've been doing classes.' 'Yeah but that's not going to defeat the insurgency, that's not going to keep the bad guys out of the area.' So you have to go out and do your patrols and drag the ANA around with you."⁴⁵

(U) There appears to be a disconnect between the aim of reforms started in April 2009, with the establishment of the NTM-A, and their impact on Afghan Soldiers. NTM-A was created to draw "together enhanced NATO and national efforts to train Afghan Army and police, to increase coherence and effectiveness. The intent is to maintain the present momentum with the ANA, while adding focus to ANP development.⁴⁶ In practice, however, this has meant less training for the ANA. "...before...they [CF counterparts] were training...Right now, it's mostly just doing combined missions and patrols, but not the training."⁴⁷ Despite considerable increases in CF expenditure of resources for training and partnering, which totaled over \$14 billion in FY2010-FY2011,⁴⁸ Afghans seem dissatisfied with the decreased time spent training. According to Bordin's (2011) study, ANSF in RC-E "often voiced disappointment that U.S. Soldiers seem less interested in providing training that they had in the past [prior to 2010]...Many said that they very much wanted more training, but were not receiving it...ANSF personnel were especially impressed with embedded training teams, and much preferred this mode of training and mentorship."⁴⁹ (ETTs were used to train the ANA prior to the reforms.)

(U) "...[CF] units get yelled at for not having so many patrols or so much time outside of the wire. They don't take into account, 'okay, really we should allow these guys some time on the range with the ANA so they can practice shooting.' We don't allow them time to practice cordon and searches with the ANA, doing these things that lead up to making them better at their jobs. We don't give them time to train—and really this is what we concentrated on last time I was here [deployed to Afghanistan]—to train the Afghan NCOs to train their Soldiers. So, we didn't just run them through our M16 range, we trained their NCOs to run a range. And then the ANA NCOs ran the range so they could qualify their guys. It's like teaching them how to fish."⁵⁰

(U) *Functionally mismatched CF-ANA partners Prevent MOS-specific training*

(U) CF maneuver elements are partnered with Afghan support elements and vice versa, so their ability to train the ANA on specific tasks is limited. "They have guys at the OPs [observation point], they've got guys at the Shembowat school, guys at Khwajah Rahim checkpoint OP, but it's not a maneuver battalion so we can't do any large-scale operations with them. That's why we're just partnered with a couple of their platoons. We're mismatched with 4/1 because we're an infantry company and they're a support company. The only reason we're partnered with them

⁴⁵ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁴⁶ "NATO Backgrounder on NTM-A," 2011, Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, Press and Media Section.

⁴⁷ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview by authors, 26 November 2011.

⁴⁸ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, January 30, 2010.

⁴⁹ Bordin (2011), p. 37.

⁵⁰ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview with authors, December 2011.

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is because my battlespace of NSK belongs to 4/1.”⁵¹ This is a byproduct of geographic partnering rather than unit partnering, which we cover in more detail in the next section. HTT’s interview with a Kandak Command Sergeant Major revealed nostalgia for an earlier time when CF and the ANA were partnered based on MOS: “The last unit that we were partnered with were bringing different kinds of lessons and they were teaching the Soldiers. Like, a medic was partnered with a medic, etc.”⁵²

(U) *Insufficient continuity between NTM-A trainers and CF partners*

(U) In 2009, responsibility for training the ANSF transferred from CSTC-A, which had provided both garrison-based training and embedded combat support, to NTM-A, which only provided garrison-based training. Conventional forces became responsible for combat training and support.⁵³ In effect, this resulted in a lack of coordination between NTM-A training and conventional force operations. CF are not able to assess the effectiveness of NTM-A training to provide a feedback loop for NTM-A lessons learned. In other words, there’s little to hold the NTM-A accountable for training the ANA since there is no continuous assessment. With this disconnect, there is no way to assess how gaps in training might affect performance, as assessed by CF. As Cordesman (2011) explains: “NTM-A is not responsible for partnering, and counting the quality of partners and partnering efforts. This is a critical omission in the metrics available on the ANSF.”⁵⁴

3. (U) AFGHAN DEPENDENCE

(U) - “*The U.S. leads most of the operations and patrols.*”⁵⁵

(U)-“*The biggest problem we have with them right now is the sustainability piece because they’ll still come and ask for food and ask for water and ask for fuel.*”⁵⁶

(U) General Stanley McChrystal’s 2009 Commander’s Initial Assessment called for an “acceleration in growth” of ANA force size with a focus on “the development of maneuver units rather than enabler capabilities...The generation of previously planned and programmed enablers such as corps engineers, artillery, motorized quick reaction forces, and large support battalions will be deferred...These [maneuver] forces will be equipped at a ‘minimally combat essential’ level as determined by the Afghan Ministry of Defense.”⁵⁷ The result of these changes has been increasing ANA dependence on CF support capabilities.⁵⁸

⁵¹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁵² ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview with authors, 25 November 2011.

⁵³ McChrystal, General Stanley, Commander, International Security Assistance Force, 2009, “Memorandum: Commander’s Initial Assessment,” Kabul, Afghanistan: Annex G “ANSF Growth and Acceleration” pp. G-1, 2.

⁵⁴ Cordesman, Anthony H., 2011, “Can Afghan Forces be Effective by Transition?: Afghanistan and the Uncertain Metrics of Progress: Part Five,” Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, p. 4.

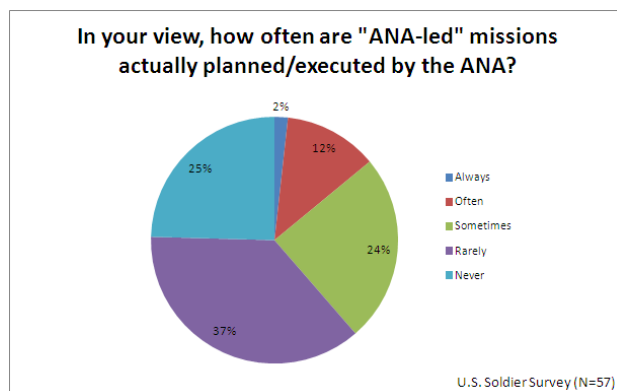
⁵⁵ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview with authors, November 2011.

⁵⁶ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview with authors, 14 December 2011.

⁵⁷ McChrystal (2009), pp. G-1, 2.

⁵⁸ Cordesman (2011).

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(U) *Issues identified by HTT with regards to dependence:*

1. CF takes the lead too often
2. CF intelligence driving missions rather than ANA intelligence
3. Lack of ANA confidence for independent maneuvering
4. ANA lacking air support, heavy weapons

(U) *CF takes the lead too often*

(U) “One of our ‘ANA-led’ missions was an air assault mission, which is problematic number one, because they don’t have any helicopters. I would say that was an ANA idea, but definitely not an ANA-led mission because we did all of the planning on it and obviously all of the resourcing on it. So it wound up being their idea, and then we planned and executed it. Obviously we did it partnered, but really it was just me spoon-feeding [my counterpart] the operations order and the whole plan.”⁵⁹

(U) “A U.S. unit partnered with an ANA unit saw guys with RPGs, weapons, stuff like that. They were able to figure out the guys were security, but probably shouldn’t have had these weapons. The U.S. took complete ownership of the entire situation. They brought the weapons back here and didn’t let the ANA talk to these guys, or make decisions. Then we had the Battalion Commander, myself, the Afghan brigade commander, the American staff sergeant who was in charge of the mission, and the security guy who was the owner of the weapons were all in the same office. And basically, we took all the decision-making away from the Afghan brigade commander and the ANA during this meeting by making directives.”⁶⁰

(U) *U.S. intelligence driving missions rather than ANA intelligence*

(U) “So we can’t really say the missions are being led by the ANA if they’re being driven by our intel. We can say it’s an ANA-led patrol and we can go out there and just sit there, pull security for them and let them talk to people, but again, going to villages every single day and just talking to people, that gets old for us and it’s getting really old for them.”⁶¹ “And they don’t have the intelligence assets that we have so it makes it really hard to do a targeting assessment when you can’t share the target information with them because it’s all classified information. So if you start talking to them about information ‘I heard about a guy in the area’ you can ask him about the guy, but you can’t tell him about any of the information that you have on that guy or why you’re

⁵⁹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

⁶⁰ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview with authors, December 2011.

⁶¹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

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looking for him, which is counterproductive. That's one of the biggest things. And then we do all these assessment working group meetings and targeting meetings, but we're in there by ourselves. And those meetings drive our operations. How can you do that if you're partnered? Why is there not ANA sitting there beside us? I don't get it."⁶²

(U) Lack of ANA confidence for independent maneuvering

(U) "They won't do a patrol unless U.S. forces are on a patrol. If you ask them 'hey what did you guys do today,' you will never hear 'oh we kicked out a patrol over to Seway, 3 trucks, 15 guys went over there, trying to find out some information about blab blah blah...' Never gonna happen. They're just going along with us whenever we need them."⁶³

(U) ANA lacking air support, heavy weapons

(U) "...just the planning we can take the lead. But if it's the operation equipment, or the stuff we need for the operation then we cannot take the lead... We always feel the support of the U.S. army, but we have M16s, 50-calibers, but those are not good enough weapons to defend the country. When we have the air force, tanks, and heavy weapons like artillery, then we will be able to do everything independently. Then we wouldn't need their support, we would support them. If U.S. forces leave Afghanistan, the country isn't capable enough to stand on its feet. We'll be sent back 10 years or 15 years back to mujahedeen time."⁶⁴

FINAL COMMENTS ON UNDERSTANDING ANA PERFORMANCE

*(U) "The more closely partnered you are [with the ANA], the better the junior leaders are able to make up for the mistakes of their leadership because they know what to do, especially at the tactical level, especially on a patrol...[and] if you're better partnered, that means you've got better training. The better partnered you are, the better unit you are, generally speaking."*⁶⁵

(U) Close partnership is a key determinant for enabling or determining a successful ANA unit. The factors examined above are all inextricably linked to the ANA's relationship with CF. The quality of the ANA-CF partnership affects ANA motivation, motivation affects dependence, and so on. Creating closer partnerships will help CF units better understand what impacts their ANA counterparts' performance.

(U) If CF and ANA units are not closely partnered, then the factors HTT has identified as impacting performance—motivation, training, and dependence—will remain largely unexplained and unresolved, hindering ANA readiness for transition.

⁶² U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁶³ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁶⁴ ANA Kandak Command Sergeant Major, Interview by authors, 25 November 2011.

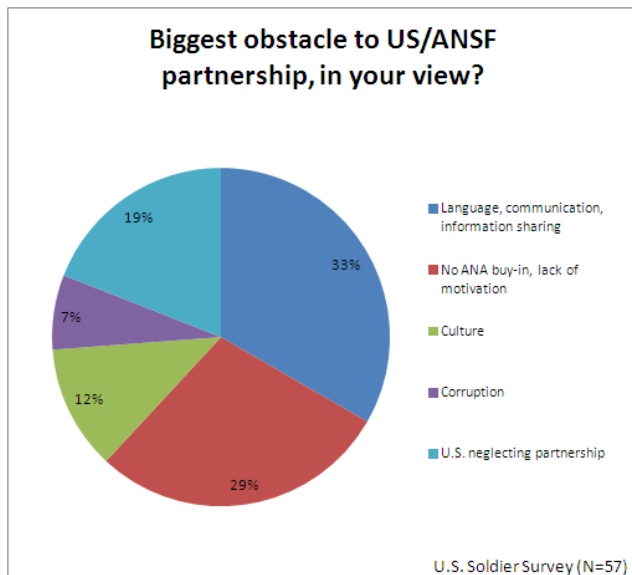
⁶⁵ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

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SECTION 3: OBSTACLES TO PARTNERSHIP

(U) “For the U.S. forces it matters so little who’s with us that we’ll take fifteen guys from their reconnaissance unit or we’ll take 15 cooks from their chow hall—it does not matter. It doesn’t matter what 15 ANA are at the gate, as long as there’s 15. They could be their artillery guys, they might be the engineer guys, whoever, as long as there’s 15 ANA.”⁶⁶

(U) “We should either be tasked to train ANA or accomplish missions, doing both we accomplish neither.”⁶⁷



(U) Primary obstacles identified by HTT:

1. CF and ANSF were not mutually dependent.
2. Inadequate CF training/guidance on what partnering “right looks like”
 - a. Partnered along different geographic boundaries
 - b. Diminished or nonexistent partnering at brigade/battalion command and staff levels, resulting in lack of joint campaign plan
3. Few metrics to assess quality/closeness of partnership
4. Language, communication
5. Cultural differences

(U) CF and ANSF were not mutually dependent

(U) The effort to partner between U.S. and Afghan forces was undermined from the start. CF failed to set the conditions necessary to mitigate all of the known obstacles to partnership with the ANA, the most important of which was to acknowledge the difficulty of the mission: partnered conventional forces would never be directly reliant on their Afghan partners. Most successful partners and advisors are driven to create conditions for success due to mutual dependency and practical needs of survival. Yet, a battlespace-owning unit is quite different from the other Combat Advisor organizations known for pioneering partnership best practices: Special Operations Forces (SOF), embedded training teams (ETTs), or even the Marines. The model of the ETT attached to a kandak, or a SOF Operation Detachment Alpha setting up a Village Stability Platform, is one where the ratio of CF to ANSF dictate abiding by the General

⁶⁶ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁶⁷ U.S. Soldier Survey comment, December 2011.

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Petraeus maxim, “Live, eat, train, plan and operate together.”⁶⁸ An outnumbered CF unit living and working as a minority among ANSF will naturally be more dependent on their host nation counterparts. Such a setup promotes the view of the combination of CF advanced military capabilities and training with Afghan local knowledge as a partnership between equals who complement each another.

(U) In contrast, because TF Raider was a battlespace-owning unit, it was responsible for security conditions in its AO. As such, there was a resistance to sharing control over operations with the ANSF. As a result, the unit operated according to a planning and assessment process that was unilateral rather than based on joint planning with their ANSF partners.

(U) *No clear partnering guidance to show what “right looks like,” either for CF or ANSF*

(U) Through discussions with the unit and Security Force Assistance Team members, HTT identified training as a key deficiency in 6-4 CAV pre-deployment preparation. They were not set up to have a common operating picture with their Afghan partners. Because of this, even though everyone in the unit recognized that partnering to build capacity within ANSF to defeat the insurgency was the key mission, they did not execute it. HTT sought to understand why. As LTC Borowski explained to HTT, “the Army defaults to that which we know we can be effective. And we want to succeed, we want the Afghans to succeed, so we’re going to go out and do something tangible and get after the insurgency.”⁶⁹

(U) Due to the “intangible” nature of building relationships and conditions for effective partnership, the role of training is all the more important. Although Combat Advising curriculum taught by Advise and Assist Brigades stateside has been revamped to reflect the strategic significance of the role of advising for the U.S. military, partnership is not incorporated into the training that units receive at Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC). The fact that there is no template of instruction for partnering runs counter to all U.S. Army instruction and to the mindset of “train like you fight.” The combination of a lack of training with a lack of coordinated planning from division disregards all of the best practices identified for ensuring effective SFA. As the SFA manual states: “if ‘embedded’ partnering is to be adopted for Stability Operations,⁷⁰ then pre-deployment training and plans should be developed accordingly. Pre-deployment training and plans need to incorporate all aspects and requirements of co-location: facilities, security requirements, communication networks, integrated staffs, exchange officers, translators, supporting resources, etc. Commanders should request that Host Nation Security Force officers attend unit-based training in preparation for missions.”⁷¹ Instead, as Kelly et. al. (2011) found their survey of twenty-three Afghan units and their partners, partnership ranges from “true

⁶⁸ Petraeus, General David, *COMISAF Counterinsurgency Guidance*, August 1, 2010, International Security Assistance Force/North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

⁶⁹ LTC Borowski, Interview by authors, 13 February 2012.

⁷⁰ “Stability Operations,” Headquarters of the Department of the Army, Field Manual No. 3-07 (FM 3-07), October 2008.

⁷¹ Grigsby, Wayne W., Jr. and David W. Pendall, “The Combined Team: Partnered Operations in Afghanistan,” *Small Wars Journal*, May 25, 2010.

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embedded partnering to ‘drive by’ partnering,”⁷² in which partners just put an Afghan face on their operations to meet division requirements.

(U) U.S. Soldiers explained to HTT that even once they arrived in Afghanistan, they received conflicting guidance about whether to prioritize fighting the insurgency versus preparing the ANSF to fight the insurgency. This should not be a zero-sum equation. Doctrinally, these two tasks are reinforcing, not mutually exclusive. According to Field Manual 3-24, “Combined Action” refers to the integration of coalition and host nation forces into single organizations to conduct counterinsurgency.⁷³

(U) The one lesson of CF-ANSF partnership and assistance from 2001 and 2009 is that there is no single answer to achieving success in advising and partnering with Afghan security forces. But the key element that all successful partnered units had in common was knowledge of a clear endstate for ANSF capability and a path to achieving it. Commanders should emulate this formula by communicating to their units “what right looks like” and integrate that vision into all operational squadron tasks.

(U) *Partnered along different geographic boundaries*

“Our [CF] battlespaces and their [ANA] battlespaces don’t match up...I think they [the ANA] wanted to create a different entity than the AUP, because the AUP are organized by district...They [ANA] tend to focus on, like, the KG Road for instance—there are probably five different [CF] commanders that own a piece of the KG Road that comes through their battlespace. When we stood the ANA up, rather than have them fall in on our battlespaces to align them with us, we let them choose pieces of key terrain to draw their lines around. For 6/1 Kandak, the KG Road is kind of their key piece of terrain. So it already creates a fragmented, disjointed relationship there because there’s no single U.S. commander that’s responsible for that whole road...”⁷⁴

(U) In Khost and Paktiya, CF assign themselves to areas based on district lines, whereas the ANA cover key terrain features such as major transport or communication routes. As a result, CF and ANSF are geographically partnered instead of partnered unit-to-unit, which results in overlapping responsibilities and multiple ANA units in any given CF battlespace. This has a number of negative second-order effects. For one, CF have different partners depending on the patrol area. Since partnership is district-dependent, CF will bring whatever ANSF is responsible for the area they are traveling to on a given day, be it ANA, AUP, or ABP. This hinders meaningful relationship building between CF and ANA, since they are not together, investing time in getting to know each other every day. “[I]t’s hard when you don’t see the same 15 guys

⁷² Kelly et. al. (2011).

⁷³ Field Manual 3–24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, December 2006). 5-83, p. 5-22.

⁷⁴ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

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all the time. You think that's the platoon you're going to be partnered with and that you're going to see them all the time, but you're not, you get a mixed bag every single time."⁷⁵

"I've been recommending that we either change our battlespace to match up with theirs or we mentor them to change their battlespace in order to facilitate long-term takeover of Khost... AUP, ABP—all ANSF, their boundary lines need to be fixed and then CF needs to match those boundaries. Not 'we have our boundaries, they have their boundaries, and we'll make the best of it' because that's what we currently have."⁷⁶

(U) Diminished or nonexistent partnering at brigade/battalion command and staff levels due to lack of collocation

(U) "I'm a Stability Transition Team guy [NTM-A trainer], I'm not part of this unit. I'm an augmentee, I'm the guy that's supposed to be working with the Afghans. Which alleviates the responsibility for the brigade staff to work with the Afghans, but it shouldn't, because they're the partners. I'm supposed to be the communication conduit, that's what I was told I was going to be. I haven't received any contact whatsoever from the...brigade staff to the ANA staff for the last six months."⁷⁷

(U) Not being collocated is a serious hindrance to brigade and battalion command and staff partnering. Mentoring ANA staff is crucial to address inherent command and control (C2) weaknesses. "The decisive point of mentoring (ANSF) is the transference of our command and control system to (their) centers of gravity. If we teach command and control systems properly to the ANA, they will produce better operations orders and be more proficient. The result of this upward spiral in tactical and operational proficiency will be the successful completion of the coalition mentoring mission, allowing us to leave Afghanistan with success and honor."⁷⁸ The opportunity to partner to enhance ANA C2 was hindered in Khost and Paktiya by the fact that both TF Duke Brigade and TF Raider Squadron command and staff was largely separated both physically and operationally from their ANA counterparts, as detailed below:

CF Unit	Location	ANA Partner	Location
TF Duke Brigade Command & Staff	FOB Salerno	1 st Brigade, 203 rd Corps	Camp Parsa
TF Raider Squadron Command & Staff	Camp Clark	6/1 Kandak Command & Staff	COP Wilderness
A Troop	Camp Clark	6/1 Kandak Coys	COP Wilderness
B Troop	COP Wilderness	6/1 Kandak Coys	COP Wilderness
C Troop	Camp Clark	4/1 Kandak, 2/1 Kandak Coys	Camp Parsa

⁷⁵ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁷⁶ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

⁷⁷ Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

⁷⁸ Park, Major David, U.S. Army, "Identifying the Center of Gravity of Afghan Mentoring." *Military Review*, November-December 2010, p. 44.

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Moreover, "...probably the biggest thing slowing the ANA down is their inability to make decisions at lower levels. Almost everything has to be approved by the brigade commander or higher...To go out on patrols, it has to be signed off on by the brigade or kandak commanders. These ANA Soldiers cannot just go out and make decisions on their own, they have to call up and ask for permission..."⁷⁹ According to the 2010 International Crisis Group report on the ANA, the "Soviet-style, top-heavy command structure" of the Afghan army culture presents a serious obstacle to ANA development.⁸⁰ Close partnership at the command and staff level is needed to combat this tendency and push the ANA to decentralize decision-making in order to become a flexible force.

(U) The geographic separation of the partnered unit ignores all of the primary lessons of Foreign Internal Defense (FID) and SFA. As Kelly et. al. (2011) argued, this failure to set the conditions necessary for partnership is indicative of two interrelated problems: 1) the absence of enduring institutional support for SFA activities to manage ANA development; and 2) the absence of unity of effort between SFA advisors and partners during mission execution.⁸¹

(U) Lack of planning at brigade and battalion levels has negative consequences for ANA ownership and training in operational planning: "Our [U.S.] company commanders plan their missions independently, but their coy commanders don't. Planning on their side happens at the kandak level...getting their coy commander to actually give an order to his platoon leaders, it generally just doesn't happen. They haven't been trained to do it. I mean, I've walked him [Afghan coy commander counterpart] through the process quite a few times. If I hand him a mission, he can decipher it and he can give his platoon leaders their marching orders, but he hasn't gotten anything from his kandak, his higher, so he doesn't get that mental exercise to be able to take a mission and analyze it and then give his platoon leaders their orders and their instructions."⁸²

(U) In the event that a company commander or platoon commander does plan an operation, it often gets redirected from CF at the brigade or battalion level without the Fragmentary Order (FRAGO) being pushed down through the ANA chain of command. The result is that the attempts to bolster ANA planning at lower levels are sidelined due to a lack of CF-ANA coordination at higher levels of command.

(U) Cultural differences

(U) The most operationally relevant cultural difference HTT observed of the ANA 1st Brigade and TF Raider was not religious or social, but rather was the clash of organizational cultures. The U.S. Army follows a decentralized "mission command" that trusts well-trained, highly educated officer and NCO corps to make decisions because they are closest to the ground truth of the

⁷⁹ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

⁸⁰ International Crisis Group, A Force in Fragments: Reconstituting the Afghan National Army, Crisis Group Asia Report 190, 12 May 2010.

⁸¹ Kelly et. al. (2011), p. 99.

⁸² U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

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operating environment. However, Park (2010) explains that the Afghan Army is not set up that way: “Afghanistan is one of the most traditional societies in the world. Its people value the opinions of their elders and superiors more than individual common sense dictates. As most U.S. Soldiers learn, the Afghans value their tribal identities more than their national identity. Tribal elders make all decisions for the tribe in outlying areas...The military is a reflection of the society from which it springs, and it operates in the same way as the society it protects. The Afghan commander and his highest-ranking staff officers run ANA units in a strictly top-down, centralized manner, similar to how the local elders and imams run most villages in Afghanistan.”⁸³

(U) As one Platoon Leader described, the U.S. also suffers from its own “generation gap.” Senior officers who were trained for “high-intensity conflict” of nation state army against nation state army must now lead their Soldiers through “more unconventional, asymmetrical approach that forces us to play more to our weaknesses, and requires senior officers to relinquish some level of control to their subordinates and to their partners.”⁸⁴ Partnering pushes both the western CF military officers and their Afghan counterparts out of their respective comfort zones.

(U) Language, communication

(U) There are only one or two Pashto/Dari interpreters, on average, for any given joint CF-ANSF mission and they are assigned to senior officers. Enlisted Soldiers are generally not able to communicate with their counterparts. Thus, the bulk of partner interactions happen Platoon Leader to Platoon Leader, 1st Sergeant to 1st Sergeant, and Troop Commander to Troop Commander; from the level of squad leader and below there is a sharp decrease in communication between CF and the ANA.

(U) “The language barrier is a problem. When you only have one interpreter on patrols but you’ve got two platoons who are trying to work together, then you’ve only got the two leaders talking, but no talking, no communicating at any other level down. How are you supposed to teach, train, or interact?”⁸⁵

(U) Few metrics to assess quality/closeness of partnership

(U) Overarching goals emphasize ANA capability, but daily tasks and Soldier reporting requirements emphasize defeating the insurgency. ANSF capacity and effectiveness with the population is an endstate that is more nebulous and harder to measure than short-term, immediate accomplishments such as the number of IED emplacers detained, the number of HIIDEs enrollments, the number of hours patrolling, or money spent on projects. This may be why these measures of performance are reported to squadron, brigade, and division. However, the result is that U.S. Soldiers are incentivized to focus more on these metrics than on partnering with the ANA. ANA capability is currently assessed by the Commander’s Unit Assessment Tool

⁸³ Park (2010), p. 45.

⁸⁴ U.S. Platoon Leader, Interview by authors, 20 December 2011.

⁸⁵ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

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(CUAT), which is the primary instrument created for the U.S. Army and NATO to track ANSF progress. However, the CUAT is filled in and discussed only once per month. This suggests that both the mentorship of the ANA and their rating is not a priority.

(U) “The big thing though is whether the measures are to a U.S. standard versus our partner’s standard. If we are really, truly partnered and the ANA are in the lead, what should be the reasonable expectation of U.S. forces to perform as a metric? I don’t think that’s been looked at because the measure is based on the ability of a U.S. unit to do it by themselves.”⁸⁶

(U) The metrics which are emphasized by CF must be reflective of their goals. If CF are to help the ANA become an independent and capable fighting force, then CF Soldiers’ daily metrics reporting should reflect efforts towards that end.

⁸⁶ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 11 December 2011.

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SECTION 4: MEASURING PARTNERING & ITS IMPACT

(U) *“That’s what we’re here for, we’re partnered. But nobody said, okay partnered means this: ‘you must have at least 25 ANA and 5 vehicles.’”*⁸⁷

(U) Partnering between the ANA and 6-4 CAV was not happening at the squadron command and staff level for reasons described in the previous section. This is partly because there was no guidance as to “what right looks like.” Partnership is a vague concept; HTT proposes that it become less vague with clear measures of performance, or goalposts, that CF Soldiers can use to guide their partnership efforts. We suggest that having clear performance objectives will incentivize closer partnership, especially if these metrics are tracked by brigade and division and Soldiers are held accountable for their performance. A second way that Soldiers could be incentivized to improve the quality of their partnership is if greater scrutiny were to be given to their performance in training the ANA. For example, by having an independent evaluation of their ANA counterparts before and after the partnership to measure its impact on ANA development. A comparison of CUAT scores before and after partnership is a start, but a third-party evaluation that would test the ANA on performing command and staff functions independently, such as operations planning, would be preferable.

(U) In this section we examine 6-4 CAV’s measures of performance and effectiveness, and how they were applied by the unit. From this standpoint, we developed the following two recommendations:

1. Collect metrics and assess the quality and degree of partnership to ensure that necessary steps are being taken to include the ANA into unit battle rhythm, and
2. Measure the impact of the partnership on the improvement of the ANA in the field, to hold units accountable for their success or failure to achieve progress in ANA capability.

(U) 6-4 CAV’s measures of performance and effectiveness

CF primarily uses the CUAT to measure ANA performance. It could also be used as a way to measure CF performance in improving the ANA’s readiness if it were tracked over time, and CF partners were either incentivized to succeed or punished for failure. At this time, there is no indication that it is being used this way. The weakness of this approach is that it would not be an impartial assessment because the CUAT is not an independent evaluation tool; in practice, it functions as a self-assessment for the company commander who serves as the ANA rater. As Mausner (2010) explains: “The impartiality of assessors is not addressed in the CUAT system. This problem was neatly summed up by an advisor interviewed in 2010: ‘When my commanding officer comes down and asks me how my Afghans are doing, I know that the guys in the next valley over are saying that their Afghans are doing great. If I’m honest about my guys, my

⁸⁷ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

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commander's going to want to know what the hell I'm doing wrong.”⁸⁸ At least one troop commander reported to HTT, and members of the squadron staff confirmed, that if the CUAT scores were dropped down one level, it would attract attention from brigade. In order to avoid having to explain or deal with the scrutiny, troop commanders would maintain the status quo. Apparently, brigade did not apply similar scrutiny to CUAT scores that remained unchanged for an entire tour or longer.

(U) Another CUAT rater felt that ensuring success in his mission of defeating the insurgency did not allow for time for partnership or the CUAT: “They [CF] have a lieutenant who is developing the CUAT for the kandak. This lieutenant wrote for the CUAT: ‘We don't really partner with the ANA because we're not set up to partner with them. We are too busy with our Ops tempo. We aren't staffed to train and S2, S4, S6. So, when it comes to partnering, it's only being done at the platoon level.’ He writes this in the CUAT. That company's main job in the area—aside from fighting the war—being lethally focused—was to develop that kandak. They actually say very bluntly: ‘We don't do that. We're not capable of doing that.’ And this is a main area over here. 3/1 Kandak is one of the main fights. We're too lethally focused. They can say very openly, ‘We don't partner, except at the platoon level.’ And, by the way, this partnership is limited to: ‘Hey, we're rolling up at the gate at this time. Show up at this time.’”⁸⁹ This vignette provides further evidence that the CUAT is not being used as intended, and is thus a less than useful tool for judging either ANA performance or CF performance in improving ANA unit readiness.

(U) HTT looked at CUAT data on each of the three troops in TF Raider from the second half of 2011. The troop that anecdotally had the closest partnership, based on multiple conversations HTT had with squadron staff and outside observers, ascribed lower scores to their ANSF counterparts than the other two troops in the squadron. Their partners, the 6/1 Kandak, were likewise said to be more proficient at operational planning. This discrepancy, at least anecdotally, provides further evidence that the CUAT is insufficient as a rating of ANA's actual capabilities or the impact of partnership on improving those capabilities. This also highlights the need for independent evaluation of ANSF capabilities to confirm the accuracy of CUAT scores.

(U) Apart from the CUAT, the squadron had the following measures of performance and effectiveness to evaluate the unit's success in developing ANA capability.

(U) TF Raider's ANSF Development Measures of Performance:

- # of policemen who received job specific, literacy, & math training
- # of ANA Soldiers trained through Basic & Advanced Individual Training
- # of qualified officers & NCOs to Afghan standards for all ANSF
- # of higher level courses taught to ANSF

⁸⁸ Mausner, Adam, “Reforming ANSF Metrics: Improving the CUAT System.” Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2010.

⁸⁹ U.S. Brigade Stability Transition Team Member, Interview by authors, 21 December 2011.

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- # of ANP/ANA units staffed at 80% and equipped to 80% of critical equipment tashkil authorization
- # ANSF facilities construction improvement projects
- Are weekly district shuras being conducted?

(U) The meaning of “Afghan standards” is unclear. CF do not have a clear understanding of what Afghan internal performance standards are, so it would be difficult if not impossible for CF to track progress along this measure.

(U) Overall, these are CF inputs into ANA training on basic soldiering, staff oversight, facilities, and the ANA’s community footprint. There is nothing tracking ANA command and control training:

- Battalion- and brigade-level planning
- Staff responsibilities, such as S2, S3, etc.
- MDMP

As such, these measures of performance seem to reinforce the expectation that partnership would only happen at the troop level and below, since there are no metrics that track squadron participation in ANA development. Presumably, the Stability Transition Teams were expected to cover these areas of command staff development. However, a small team of just a handful of ANA advisors could not be expected to advise and mentor battalion and/or brigade staffs in the absence of partnership. Advising is meant to occur *in conjunction* with partnership, not in place of it. According to the SFA manual, “Advisors are not partners; U.S. forces act as partners. Advising and partnering are complementary but inherently different activities.”⁹⁰

(U) TF Raider’s ANSF Development Measures of Effectiveness:

- Increase or decrease in ANSF capacity to plan and conduct operations (independent or joint)
- Increase or decrease in insurgent activity in area of operations
- Increase or decrease in ratio of reenlistment to AWOL
- Increase or decrease in the # of corruption cases against ANSF
- Increase or decrease in the # of local leaders/elders actively engaged in security shuras at their DC
- Increase or decrease in public perception of ANSF effectiveness

(U) While these are useful, it is unclear how some are tied to TF Raider’s measures of performance. Capacity to plan and conduct operations, affect a decrease in insurgent activity, and increase public perception of ANSF effectiveness are all dependent upon the ANA understanding

⁹⁰ Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance*, Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 2006. p. 2-60.

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command and control systems. If there is no expectation that the ANA will be taught this skill, since CF performance is not being measured in that area, how can they be expected to perform?

Additionally, these measures existed in a single document that was not incorporated into the squadron's battle rhythm, given their high operational tempo. Soldiers provided ad hoc reporting on these MOPs and MOEs in their patrol debriefs, but it does not appear that any single TF Raider staff or individual was responsible for tracking the data regularly.

(U) *Collecting metrics to assess the quality and degree of partnership*

(U) When metrics are not collected and expectations of partnering are not clearly defined and enforced, partnership suffers. TF Raider did not set or track measures of performance related to partnership. If they had, it is likely they would have had a closer partnership. Measures of performance that would have assessed the "closeness" of their partnership with the ANA might have included:

- Do CF and ANA live and work on the same military base?
- How many CF brigade staff members work at the Combined Action Tactical Operations Center?
- How many times per week do Soldiers interact with their ANA counterparts?
- What is the average ratio of CF to ANSF on patrols?
- How many times per week do CF Soldiers eat meals or drink chai with the ANSF in garrison?
- How many times per week do CF Soldiers participate in recreational activities with the ANSF (i.e. sports, movies, gym)?
- How many times per week do CF Soldiers visit the ANSF compound?
- How many times per week does the unit conduct some form of training (to include literacy) for the ANSF in garrison?
- How many times per week are joint CF-ANSF meetings held, i.e. planning, BUBs, CUBs at the troop, squadron, brigade command and staff levels?

Ideally these metrics would be collected and passed up to division, who would assess the brigade and squadron on their execution of partnership.

(U) *Measuring the impact of the partnership on the improvement of the ANA in the field*

(U) In order to guard against self-assessment, ANA capability and improvement over time must be evaluated by an independent evaluator who has no vested interest in the outcome of the evaluation. These assessments should be conducted in a rigorous, standardized manner and should test the ANA on specific tasks. For example, the S2 should be assessed on intelligence analysis, the S3 should be assessed on operation planning, and so on. This type of evaluation is also important because as of the writing of this paper, the ANA in TF Raider's AO were not planning operations. If they are not planning operations, how can CF know with any degree of certainty whether they are or are not capable of doing so?

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(U) Importance of external Assessment

(U) The capacity for this type of evaluation already exists in the form of Validation Transition Teams (VTT), whose mission is to observe and assess the ANA in training and combat operations. Unfortunately, HTT could find no record of any past VTT assessment of the ANA of the 203rd Corps. As a result, we echo Mausner (2010) in calling for the expansion of the VTTs to regularly assess ANA units in order to accurately assess performance and to track performance over time, in order to capture the impact of the CF partnered unit:

(U) “NTM-A has acknowledged [the problem of impartiality of assessors] to some extent, theoretically using VTT Regional Teams to independently assess units once they reach the ‘Independent’ level. These teams have the potential to inject some much needed realism into the historically overly-positive ANSF assessment process. VTT Regional Teams are an excellent concept, and should be expanded to randomly assess units throughout the country, at all levels of effectiveness. This will reinforce the accuracy of the CUAT system, as well as ensuring a strong feedback loop between NTM-A, IJC, partners, and operators in the field.”⁹¹

⁹¹ Mausner (2010).

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SECTION 5: ANA EFFECTIVENESS WITH AFGHANS

(U) *“Yeah we track all the SIGACTS, but there are a lot of other factors with that. I mean, if you say, it’s so safe in this area but you never go there, then what makes a place safe? Then in another area where there’s a lot of contact, we go there all the time. So maybe we’re providing the insurgents with a target opportunity. So if I stopped going to an area, the sig acts would stop. Does that mean that the area’s safe and that we’ve achieved success? I don’t know...It depends on what you consider good performance. Do the Afghan people like you? The only way you’ll be able to find out is getting surveys from the population to find out if we’re being successful or not.”*⁹²

(U) Measures of Effectiveness

(U) Rather than recreate the wheel, HTT began by reviewing existing tools and best practices CF uses to assess ANSF performance and effectiveness. We first identified what needed to be measured, and looked for those measures in an existing tool. Clancy and Crossett (2007) make the case that there are three inextricable measures of effectiveness in counterinsurgency.⁹³

1. Capacity to disrupt the enemy’s ability to sustain a continuing level of violence
2. Legitimacy, conferred by both the population and the counterforce
3. Ability to create a stable environment, as perceived by the population

(U) None of these can be utilized in isolation. An environment could be considered stable once insurgents have so thoroughly infiltrated the area that they do not consider the government or its agents a threat to their power or control. They may have made agreements with the local population, offering them freedom of movement and protection from attacks in exchange for their at least tacit support. In these instances, the only indicators of progress may be the population’s perceptions, either of the ability of the counterinsurgents to provide for security or to defeat the insurgency. Or, insurgents may be disrupted in an area (“cleared”), but the population continues to see the area as unstable and therefore does not commit to supporting the counterinsurgent force or does not return to business as usual, impeding growth and development (“hold” and “build”). Or, the population may prefer the governance and security provided by insurgents to that of CF, GIRoA, and the ANSF and thus may actively undermine attempts to establish a GIRoA or ANSF presence after a successful clearing operation. Therefore, HTT was looking for a tool that gathered data on all three of Clancy’s and Crossett’s measurements.

(U) HTT identified two CF tools that provide certain indicators of ANSF performance and effectiveness, but do not provide metrics on all three of the abovementioned measures:

⁹² U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

⁹³ Clancy, James and Chuck Crossett. 2007. “Measuring Effectiveness in Irregular Warfare.” *Parameters* 37: 88-100, p. 96.

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1. (U) Commander's Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT)

(U) The CUAT focuses on ANSF's readiness and performance⁹⁴ in disrupting the enemy; it does not factor in external evaluations of ANSF effectiveness in achieving legitimacy with the population or creating perceptions of stability. Based on current assessments, a unit could be "effective with mentors" on the CUAT measures of Leadership, Operations, Intelligence, Logistics, Equipping, Personnel, Maintenance, Communications, Training/Education and Partnering, but still be losing in the population's eyes. Conversely, some units that are rated as "ineffective with advisors" are actually perceived as doing their job well by the community. As a member of the STT team focused on community policing stated, "Sometimes the CUAT is not based off of reality. Even if you look at the U.S., assessments have the same problem. I work in law enforcement back in the States and you have certain departments across our nation who don't have high-speed equipment or toys, or who are understaffed as hell, but it doesn't mean they can't accomplish their mission."⁹⁵

2. (U) Tactical Conflict Assessment and Planning Framework (TCAPF)

TCAPF data identified whether the local population thought ANSF could solve their problems or not. While TCAPF data does get at population perceptions, it quickly became apparent that the TCAPF questions were not sufficient to evaluate ANSF effectiveness with the population because:

- ANSF were sometimes "the problem" and sometimes "the solution," but because of the aggregated nature of responses, it was almost impossible to use the data as a way of auditing ANSF performance in specific districts.
- TCAPF questions are open-ended and are centered on community stability, which is not necessarily related to security or the ANSF. In many cases the performance of the ANSF was not identified as a key source of stability or instability for villagers.

(U) CUAT and TCAPF are useful tools for tracking ANSF performance and population perceptions, respectively, but both lack reporting on *population perceptions of the ANSF* and are therefore incomplete measures of ANSF's effectiveness in fighting a counterinsurgency. CF should track population perceptions in order to ensure that their measures of performance and effectiveness resonate with Afghans. If CF is rating ANSF as high-performing, but the population does not believe the ANSF are capable of securing an area, then there is something wrong with the way we are measuring the capability of the ANSF to conduct counterinsurgency operations. Perception is reality. It matters more what Afghans think than what CF think.

(U) *Diverging CF-Afghan Views of Afghan Police*

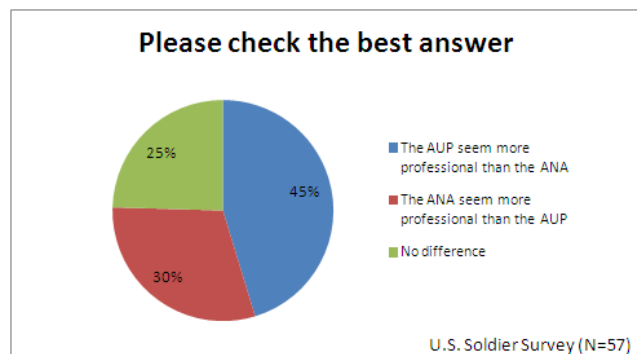
Through the course of this study, HTT identified the police as a good example of how CF perceptions and Afghan perceptions do not line up. The apparent lack of awareness among TF Raider officers of population's negative views toward the Afghan police speaks to the need to further incorporate Afghan views in the CF planning and operations.

⁹⁴ Mausner (2010).

⁹⁵ STT Community Policing Mentor, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

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(U) “While the insurgent does not hesitate to use terror, the counterinsurgent has to engage in police work.”⁹⁶



(U) U.S. Soldiers in HTT interviews and in our survey rated AUP as more professional, better, and more motivated than the ANA.

(U) The perception does not reflect AUP performance or effectiveness with the population as much it reflects U.S. Soldiers’ preference for working with the police due to their own preferences for warfighting. HTT interviews revealed a number of advantages for U.S. Soldiers of working with the AUP over the ANA:

- The AUP are more flexible because they have less oversight, more horizontal chain of command than the ANA, so they can go out on a mission on a moment’s notice
- The AUP is made up of more locals than the ANA, so they know who’s who in the villages and they’re a better source of information for the U.S. Soldiers
- The AUP are more aggressive, are willing to clear homes, and they have the “same mindset” as Americans
- Fewer AUP usually go with CF on joint patrols than the ANA, who tend to be in larger groups, so U.S. Soldiers find it easier to influence them in the case of a disagreement
- The AUP does not ask for food, water, or other rations, but the ANA does, likely due to years of handouts from CF which has created expectations
- The U.S. and the AUP have a similar mission in Afghanistan—community policing—rather than conventional warfare; ANA resist attempts to use them as police
- AUP battlespaces are arranged by district like U.S. battlespaces, unlike the ANA whose battlespaces are arranged by key terrain and often cover more than one district

(U) That CF prefers the AUP does not indicate that the AUP is *actually* more professional than the ANA. In fact, a comparison of AUP and ANA professionalism, especially with regards to corruption, reveals that ANA has a superior track record of performance in the eyes of the population.⁹⁷ This shows one way in which CF preferences may cloud their ability to conduct population-centric COIN, and reinforces the need for population perception data. It is also problematic in the war with the Taliban for hearts and minds.

⁹⁶ Galula, David. *Pacification in Algeria 1956–1958*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, [1963] 2006, p. 119.

⁹⁷ Checchia, Mark, “Corruption in the Afghan National Security Forces,” Kabul: Civil-Military Fusion Center, 2012.

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	CF Views of AUP	Population Views of AUP	Taliban Code of Conduct
Home Searches	“We like [the AUP] because... they have no problem doing searches.” “Unless there’s a reason to go in there...the ANA are not going to go. AUP will go into...any home, because that’s what they do, they’re authorized to do the home searches.” ⁹⁸	“When there is a domestic conflict the ANA try to best to be honest and thorough in resolving the issue. The police are there to search and find something they think is worth taking.” ⁹⁹	“Mujahidin are not allowed to search local people’s houses. If it is necessary to search someone’s house, you must have the provincial authority’s permission, and you also must take with you two elders of that area during the search.” ¹⁰⁰
Confiscating Weapons	“It is an annoyance, but at the same time, if you have 200 houses in a village, that’s a lot of AK47s. And all it takes is 10-15 of those AK47s to become a small insurgent group.” ¹⁰¹	“U.S. Soldiers are not distinguishing between 1 or 2 qalats. Each qalat has the right to 1 weapon. At night, we need it for protection from militants; from the U.S. we don’t know.” ¹⁰²	“The Mujahidin has no right to take local Muslims’ personal weapons by force.” ¹⁰³
Relations with the Population	“...we have the same mindset. The police act more like we act... We’re more aggressive, so therefore the police are more aggressive like us.” ¹⁰⁴ “They’ll [AUP] run their checkpoints, they’ll run their patrols, but then they go back to the district center. They generally don’t hang around to chat [with LNs].” ¹⁰⁵	“You see the difference between the day and night. The ANA is like the day and the police is like night. The police is dark, and the ANA is daytime.” ¹⁰⁶	“The Mujahidin must have a good relationship with all the tribal community and with the local people, so they are always welcomed and are able to get help from local people.” ¹⁰⁷
Theft of personal property	“If we go out on patrol and we want them [AUP] to search homes and they search homes.” ¹⁰⁸	“I never heard that ANA bothers anybody...But the police, in the daytime they’re wearing their uniform but at night they change over and they just, you know, cover their face and they rob the people.” ¹⁰⁹	“This is our mission: to keep people and their property safe. Do not let those people that love money take our local people’s property and cause them problems.” ¹¹⁰
Blood feuds, personal grievances	They’re local so they know who’s who in the villages and they’re a better source of information for CF, to include no language barrier that sometimes exists between the ANA and the civilians.	Police are seen as corrupt. When asked why this is, respondents said because the AUP is made up of some local men, they use their position to exact revenge on personal enemies. ¹¹¹	“Do not give anyone difficulties because of your personal issues.” ¹¹²

⁹⁸ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 Dec 2011.

⁹⁹ Tani Truck Driver, Interview by authors, 9 January 2012.

¹⁰⁰ Taliban Code of Conduct from DuPee et. al. (2009), Section 11, “Prohibited Items” #53.

¹⁰¹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

¹⁰² Bar Khan Khel resident, Interview by authors, 3 Dec 2011.

¹⁰³ Taliban Code of Conduct from DuPee et. al. (2009), Section 11: “Prohibited Items” #48.

¹⁰⁴ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

¹⁰⁵ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

¹⁰⁶ German Emigrant from Gerda Serai, Interview by authors, 12 November 2011.

¹⁰⁷ Taliban Code of Conduct from DuPee et. al. (2009), Section 12: Recommendations #59.

¹⁰⁸ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

¹⁰⁹ Paktiya resident, Interview by authors, 12 November 2011.

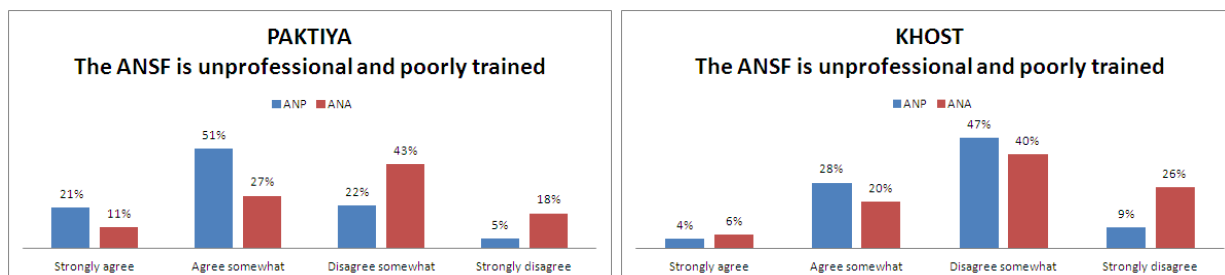
¹¹⁰ Taliban Code of Conduct from DuPee et. al. (2009), “Dear Mujahidin.”

¹¹¹ Delpori Residents, Interview by authors, Mandozai, Khost, 4 Dec 2011.

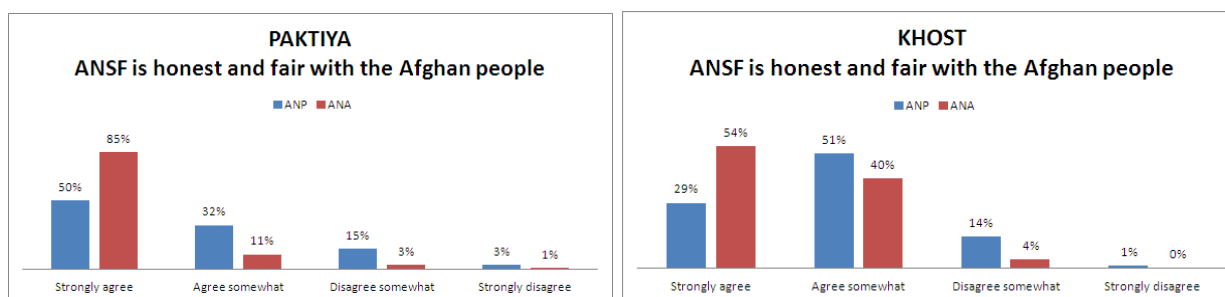
¹¹² Taliban Code of Conduct from DuPee et. al. (2009), “Dear Mujahidin.”

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(U) Asia Foundation (2011)¹¹³ provincial-level data on population perceptions of the ANA versus the ANP shows that the population rates the ANA higher on professionalism



and legitimacy (honesty and fairness).



(U) While provincial-level data may not provide much district-level nuance, HTT interviews with villagers in Khost and Paktiya supports these findings.

(U) These data show an interesting divergence between CF and Afghan perceptions of ANA versus AUP performance, but we want to be careful about what we are claiming. While of note, this finding was based off of a limited number of interviews. We did not test the CUAT measure against population perception data. We did not test the CUAT against U.S. Soldier perceptions, and we did not test U.S. Soldier perceptions against population perceptions. Our initial data gathering effort was too limited to allow for that kind of rigorous testing. Our research does, however, suggest that there is a real disconnect between the way CF and Afghans perceive of ANSF effectiveness. Further research will be needed to uncover greater detail about this discrepancy and other differences in perception that may exist.

(U) CF should not allow their preferences for war fighting to dominate their counterinsurgency strategy. As Cordesman (2009) states, the measure needs to be “whether CF and ANSF efforts at war fighting are having any meaningful or enduring effectiveness in actually serving the Afghan people.”¹¹⁴ CF training and joint operations with the ANSF should be tailored to address the

¹¹³ Provincial-level data from “A Survey of the Afghan People,” Kabul: The Asia Foundation, 2011.

¹¹⁴ Cordesman, Anthony, “New Metrics of Afghanistan: The Data Needed to Support Shape, Clear, Hold, Build,” Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009.

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issue of ANSF legitimacy and the population's perception of the ANSF's ability to improve security and stability. Some of the same ANA qualities that frustrate CF partners—a rigid chain of command, an unwillingness to search homes or religious buildings—and drive CF to prefer to work with the Afghan police, are the same qualities that endear the ANA to the Afghan population. CF should leverage those qualities rather than disparage them. The Taliban is using a population-centric strategy; if CF does not do the same, they risk losing the war for hearts and minds.

(U) *Final comments*

(U) A central goal of HTT's case study of CF-ANA partnership was to determine whether CF measurements of ANA performance corresponded to the Afghan population's perception of ANA's effectiveness. We found that CF and Afghan views of the ANSF often differ, which highlights the importance of expanding CF assessments to include Afghan perspectives.

(U) Effectiveness of U.S. efforts in Afghanistan depends at least in part on the effectiveness of the ANA. If the ANA are ultimately viewed as incapable by the Afghan population, then CF efforts to build them up will have failed. CF needs to continue to track their effectiveness in disrupting the insurgency's ability to sustain a continuing level of violence, but if CF cannot affect their effectiveness in gaining legitimacy and increasing the perception of stability, then CF has only fought half the battle. The ANSF will be able to clear, but not to hold or build.

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SECTION 6: THE WAY FORWARD

(U) *“You can teach them [ANSF] to be awesome or you can teach them to be [not awesome] and just maintain the animosity and disconnect that creates conditions for reduced effectiveness. But if you teach them to be awesome, knowing how much they want to go out and fight, then every time they fight back and push the insurgency that much farther away, you can look at your fellow Soldiers and be like, “Yeah, WE did that. We taught Afghans how to destroy the Taliban.”¹¹⁵*

(U) In this section, we first highlight the strengths that we uncovered in our research to illustrate ways in which they can be reinforced to improve partnership. Next we explain ways to assess ANSF’s effectiveness with the population. Finally, we emphasize the need to leverage their popularity among Afghans and their knowledge of the human terrain to help CF in improving their approach to population-centric counterinsurgency.

(U) Part 1: 6-4 Cavalry’s Partnership Successes

(U) *Addressing the obstacles to partnership*

Lieutenant Colonel Borowski, Commander, 6th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, identified a primary obstacle to the mission of “setting the conditions under which Afghans can assume responsibility for their own security” as the complexity and ambiguity of the multiple responsibilities.¹¹⁶ Further adding to this difficulty, HTT discovered, the activities which would help enhance relationships between CF and their ANSF counterparts were not incentivized and were often at cross purposes with requirements and directives from “higher”—referring to brigade and division-level decisions. Prior to deploying in December 2010, Lieutenant Colonel Borowski observed that preparing Soldiers to “close with and destroy the enemy” was relatively easy, but the mission in Afghanistan now required another level of warrior skills:

(U) *“To succeed in today’s fight, junior leaders—young officers and sergeants—must master not only traditional war-fighting tasks, but also develop language, culture, and negotiating skills. We expect of them a level of professionalism and agility that would be unimaginable to their predecessors of previous generations...Today’s young leaders must learn to analyze and understand the local social and political dynamics that are often at the root of an insurgency. One day they might spend the morning with an Agency for International Development official, assessing the potential economic impact of a new road or irrigation project, meet with village elders in the afternoon to discuss local security or the need for a new school or clinic, and that night be lying in an ambush position with the mission to kill militants trying to infiltrate across the border. Then they get up the next day and do it all over again.”¹¹⁷*

¹¹⁵ U.S. Soldier, Interview by authors, 3 November 2011.

¹¹⁶ Borowski, Lieutenant Colonel Mark E. “Afghanistan Journal: Lt. Col. Mark E. Borowski on preparing for deployment.” *Mass Live*, December 24, 2010.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

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(U) B Troop's best practices: creating closer partnerships

*“Depend on one another. Hold each other accountable at all echelons down to the trooper level. Help our ANSF partners achieve excellence. Respect them and listen to them. Be a good role model.”*¹¹⁸

(U) While it was clear from HTT observations that all of the TF Raider unit was making a great effort to meet the commander's stated goals, B Troop at Combat Outpost (COP) Wilderness was unique in having the opportunity to be more closely partnered due to being co-located with their ANA counterparts, the 6/1 Kandak. As the SFA manual states: Combined Action is ISAF's effort to enhance partnership and embed forces requires aligning the forces “based on recent ‘combined approach’ experiences, operational capacity of forces, and key terrain.”¹¹⁹

(U) Proximity is a start for creating effective partnerships, but it is only half the battle. TF Raider Squadron Commander suspected that clues to addressing the challenges the unit had faced in developing MOPs and MOEs of ANSF development could be found by better understanding the factors that contributed to the increased effectiveness of 6/1 Kandak, as compared to the 4/1 support Kandak, for example. HTT's assessment of COP Wilderness found that success lay in a combination of clear guidance, metrics, and assessments, along with a shared mission (securing the Khost-Gardez Road). If the Combined Action Team Operations Center (CATOC) at Camp Parsa could hardly be truly combined due to a misalignment of the ANA and CF battlespaces, COP Wilderness offered an ideal laboratory for observing the effects of “embedded” partnering. At COP Wilderness, the U.S. Troop Commander saw the benefits of organizing partnered training, operations, and social activities. These successes motivated him to seek HTT's assistance in interviewing the ANA Soldiers at COP Wilderness to check their progress and identify ways to further improve ANSF effectiveness.

(U) Guidance

(U) The Squadron and Troop leadership clearly communicated their intent for an increase in partnered patrols, in anticipation of strategic plans for reduced CF presence and direction. The Squadron Commander stated that he envisioned CF serving more as enablers and assistants in the future, in anticipation of the increased requirements for ANA to take the lead in security responsibilities. To support increased ANA planning capability, the B Troop Commander communicated his intent to HTT that in order to be successful he needed “better visibility into the perspectives and perceptions of lower ranking soldiers outside of the 6/1 command staff.”¹²⁰ The B Troop Commander worked with HTT to formulate questions for the ANA on topics that they would understand. Discussions with the Squadron Commander, staff, and B Troop

¹¹⁸ COMISAF Command Guidance (12 AUG 2010).

¹¹⁹ Grigsby, Wayne W. Jr. and David W. Pendall “The Combined Team: Partnered Operations in Afghanistan,” *Small Wars Journal*, May 25, 2010.

¹²⁰ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 2 November 2011.

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leadership led to an Afghan version of the CUAT to enable the ANA to assess their own unit readiness against the standard CUAT categories. Following B Troop's lead, CF units should begin to incorporate the ANA into the assessment process. Leadership guidance should come from both sides of the partnership.

(U) "If we were strictly tasked with partnership that would be fine, but we're trying to do so many other things...we're so focused on doing our American operations that we're not really helping the Afghans with their operations. So we're doing everything on the tactical level, but where the planning comes down and where the focus is, and the lines of effort—why are there not Afghan lines of effort and us supporting those by supporting them?...Get rid of all the computers. Just work entirely with the Afghans. As a mentor, combat advisor, you don't worry about any other lines of effort, all you do is develop your ANSF....here the focus is insurgents, projects, all that kind of stuff. Here we've got other focuses. We've got too many irons in the fire."¹²¹

(U) ANSF effectiveness: more than just performance

The commanders that HTT observed in Khost and Paktiya recognized that they could succeed if their effort to partner with the ANA began to focus on Afghan priorities and strengths. As noted in prior sections, the CUAT data is not necessarily a direct reflection of the quality of partnering and advising or of the progress made in the "intangible factors" of relationships, such as rapport and trust. These elements are critical to working with ANSF to help CF open "doors"¹²² to the Afghan people.

(U) "When we started to do that with 6/1, we started to truly defer in a lot of ways to their priorities, in terms of when and where we were conducting operations...and made it much more equal. It was to our benefit, because we started to really see their confidence take off. And as a result, from the American perspective when you see these guys acting more confident, you gain more respect. That's what's missing in some instances. Some Coalition folks, they don't have the respect for their partners that they should or could."¹²³ As one former Company Commander previously deployed to Nangarhar explained, when CF focuses on what is truly possible with their Afghan counterparts, it pays dividends. As he phrased it, when he had a company covering several districts in Nangarhar, he was faced with the decision of relying on the "25 sets of eyes we could have deployed at any given time or we could increase that to 1,000 by getting the ANSF proficient or further increase their effort to 25-30,000 if they got the population to believe

¹²¹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 12 December 2011.

¹²² "Doors" is in reference to the metaphor of the three doors used in Iraq to weave CF into the Iraqi social fabric. These were determined to be: 1) the government, 2) tribal leaders, and 3) religious leaders. Brigadier General John W. Charlton, Deputy Commanding General of Regional Command – East in Afghanistan has identified the need to determine what "doors" will weave CF into the social fabric of Afghanistan. HTT believes ANA can be one of those doors, if properly leveraged by CF.

¹²³ LTC Mark Borowski, Interview by authors, 13 February 2012.

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in the ANP. If we focus on killing 50 insurgents, there is the chance we would only create 200 more.”¹²⁴

(U) Proximity and partnership

(U) HTT found that COP Wilderness achieved success from a number of areas of their partnership:

1. (U) Operational:

- Humanitarian Assistance (HA): CF formed a united front with the ANA to respond to requests from the local community for HA and other services. They worked with all relevant members to review requests for items and assist in dispute resolution.
- Partnered patrols that let ANA make mistakes: “Yesterday we also got a rocket but it flew over us. The ANA did not cower or remove themselves from the fight. The ANA fired their 240 Bravo on the back of the Ford Ranger and fired the entire belt. The Taliban was probably scared to death. If I had an ANA guy shooting like a maniac at me, even if I knew for a fact he could not hit me, I would not want to get up and start shooting rockets at them.”¹²⁵
- Bond formed through executing common tasks: “I’m a soldier, ANA are soldiers and we both go out and find IEDs.”¹²⁶
- Information sharing: The ANA began providing valuable intelligence sharing once CF began including them more on joint meetings and intelligence sharing sessions.
- ANA setting up their own OPs overlooking villages and key roads.
- ANA engineers using ANA equipment to improve a road essential to ensuring the movement of security forces and goods to market.
- ANA-led HA missions.

2. (U) Training

- “You have mortar guys who are happy to train the ANA, even though they might have complaints about the ANA and their unique way of doing things, but once they lay the correct grids, the partnership has been solidified.”

3. (U) Social

- The B Troop 1SG “takes care of the ANA like they are his own soldiers.”¹²⁷ They watch movies together and even had a concert once with a famous Afghan singer. The ANSF particularly like movies about Special Forces, including CF’s own American Army commercials and these leave a lasting impression on young Soldiers.
- Resentment: Although there was some resentment in B Troop, they ultimately accepted that these events and meals together were important because the leadership pushed it and held platoons accountable for partnering.

¹²⁴ U.S. Major, Interview by authors, 24 February 2012.

¹²⁵ U.S. Soldier, Interview by authors, 2 November 2011.

¹²⁶ U.S. Soldier, Interview by authors, 2 Nov 2011.

¹²⁷ U.S. Intelligence Officer, Interview by authors, 2 November 2011.

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(U) Part 2: Leveraging Existing Capabilities to Measure ANSF Effectiveness

(U) COP Wilderness offered another perspective of how CF-ANSF “combined team partnering.” The questions that the Troop Commander tasked HTT with answering were a combination of CUAT (unit readiness and status of leadership, training, and logistics), DSF (problems, perceptions, cultural factors, methods of dispute resolution and sources of instability) and the Human Terrain Team’s direct observation and site surveys of local behavior and conditions. The way forward will require a ground-level analysis, planning, and programming tool that integrates population perceptions of ANSF into the existing assessment system. The tool would help: 1) identify local Sources of Instability (SOIs) and 2) design programs and activities to address them. Lastly it would merge the best practices of DSF with the best practices of Security Force Assistance.

(U) Suggested ANSF population perception data to collect

(U) Ways to measure population perception data might be for CF to ask the Afghan population questions such as:

- What is required for the villagers here to feel safe?
- What are your general impressions of the ANSF—ANA? ANP? Why?
- Do you think the ANA/ANP are corrupt? If yes, how?
- Do you trust the ANA/ANP to keep you safe?
- Do you think the ANA/ANP can keep you safe independently or are they still dependent on foreigners?
- Does the presence of ANSF here attract enemy attacks or does it repel/deter them?
- Has ANSF provided more/less/same peace and stability than the Taliban?

(U) These questions could be incorporated into patrol debrief forms for platoon leaders to collect or they could be tasked to enablers to collect and track. One way to ensure that these metrics are collected would be to incorporate the successful tracking of these data into Soldiers performance reviews. In this way, Army leadership can incentivize Soldiers to track meaningful metrics that reinforce their task to mentor the ANA.

(U) Part 3: Leveraging ANSF Strengths to Improve CF Operations

(U) Leveraging ANSF’s ability to win hearts and minds

(U) “I’ve never seen the ANA be abusive in any way. If anything, just the opposite, overly cautious, so respectful to the point that there are areas that they don’t want to go into because they’re afraid of offending someone. And some of that may be, like I mentioned before, familial ties and tribal ties. But the ANA just kind of have this ‘we want to be the good guys’ mentality. They like the fact that when we go into the villages, that the villagers like them. And it really helps us out a lot too. Because like I said before, we really try to get them to get out in the front and them to be the ones talking to everyone, or at least have their platoon leader the one that

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makes first contact with the villagers to let them know what's going on. Their reputation is just a lot better with the local nationals than the AUP.”¹²⁸

(U) *Leveraging ANSF knowledge of the human terrain*

(U) Many of the questions that a platoon seeks to answer now as they patrol their AO: “Is someone in the village who shouldn't be here? Is there something missing? Has something changed? Does the village elder not want to talk today? Why not?”¹²⁹ All of these lessons require an Afghan perspective on the problem. According to one former Platoon Leader, the best way to do this is to focus on incorporating tasks at which the Afghans are naturally skilled. They offer insights into the local culture, how to conduct more population-centric operations, and how to communicate messages so they resonate with Afghans. While CF take the Western military approach of focusing on the enemy's front, ANSF can better help us understand the causes of instability, and to navigate through the ideological components of this war that “infiltrates rather than penetrates defenses.”¹³⁰

(U) When HTT surveyed TF Raider Soldiers, we asked if the unit had learned from their ANA counterparts, but the next question should have been: what have you *tried* to learn from the ANA? If CF does not understand how ANA (or any ANSF element) truly views local problems, and they do not share a common endstate, then efforts can easily become disconnected. An attempt must be made to identify the existing forums and resources that can be utilized to bring more of the ANA's perspectives into CF planning and understanding of the local terrain.

(U) OPSEC concerns generally hinder intelligence sharing, but there are ample opportunities for CF to be creative about identifying safe ways to collaborate and work with the ANA to fill in gaps—particularly with non-lethal social, political, economic and historic information. HTT believes that other enablers such Civil Affairs, Department of State (DoS), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Rule of Law Forces - Afghanistan (RoLF-A), and other elements can help serve as a bridge to facilitate similar opportunities for more constructive collaboration between battlespace owners and their ANA/ANSF counterparts. The Stability Working Group¹³¹ organized by USAID and DoS team in Western Khost was a very successful example of how to facilitate open dialogue between U.S. military and civilian representatives and GIRoA and ANSF leadership.

(U) ANSF will need a clear understanding of what they can bring to the table and where their perspectives of local culture can fill in crucial gaps. They will need to become advocates of what

¹²⁸ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

¹²⁹ U.S. Troop Commander, Interview by authors, 14 December 2011.

¹³⁰ Greene, Robert, *The 33 Strategies of War*, New York: Penguin Group, 2006, pp. 416-417.

¹³¹ Stability Working Groups (SWGs) are introduced in Annex B of the Afghanistan Provincial Reconstruction Team Handbook. The SWG is made up of key stakeholders from all relevant organizations in an area to discuss sources of instability identified through the district stability framework (DSF). DSF is an analysis and program management process specifically designed to help practitioners improve stability in a local area.

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information they have to offer CF, rather than accepting that CF has everything to teach them but nothing to learn. We are not suggesting the creation of create an ANSF Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). Instead, we are recommending the development of an existing strength so that CF can begin to recognize the value of ANSF's existing socio-cultural knowledge.

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SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

(U) *“Full partnership between the Afghan Army and ISAF will create a force in Afghanistan that no one can beat. The American Soldier has the money, technology, and training; however, the Afghan Soldier has the eyes and ears that the American Soldier lacks.”*¹³²

(U) Although this paper is not intended to be a policy paper, our findings from research on the partnership between 6-4 CAV and ANA 1/203rd Brigade indicate that the 2009 command decision made by General McChrystal to use “close partnering between ANSF and CF to begin to compensate for the inadequacies in ANSF training, motivation and leadership,”¹³³ missed two key factors needed to achieve the intended effects:

- 1) Partnership must happen at the brigade and battalion command and staff level, and collocation is necessary to facilitate that end.
- 2) CF Soldiers need to be given a clear picture of what partnering “right looks like” and trained to standard.

(U) According to LTG Curtis Scaparrotti, Commanding General, ISAF Joint Command, the partnership role in “combined action” partnership and advising operations requires extensive time, resources, and planning.¹³⁴ At the tactical level that HTT observed, the focus on a rapid acceleration of ANA forces largely left the burden on conventional forces to close the ANSF gaps without showing them how this should be done, or ensuring that partnership tasks were integrated into unit battle rhythms and planning along the entire chain of command.

(U) As survey responses indicate, 6-4 CAV paid a price for not sharing the same battlespace as their counterparts. The Combined Action Tactical Operations Center (CATOC) at Camp Parsa became viewed as the symbol of the partnership’s flaws. It looked good on paper, but if CF and ANA are tracking different operations, then the CATOC becomes “just a room” with Afghans and Americans sitting in it. From our understanding of the TF Duke campaign planning and Operations Order, there were limited opportunities for partnered planning sessions with the ANA. The partnered planning sessions that did occur were generally limited to targeting single objectives and tied to short-term effects. HTT observed several sessions where Brigade and Squadron clearly sought to bring their ANA partners into the process, but it seemed too late in the game. They did not have qualitative guidelines on where to insert ANA feedback into the planning process.

¹³² General Sher Mohammad Zazai, ANA Ex-Commander, 205th Corps quoted in “NATO COIN 1.10 - Security Force Assistance - Ronna.” Kabul: NTM-A, 25 Nov 2011.

¹³³ Bowman, Steve and Catherine Dale. “War in Afghanistan: Strategy, Military Operations, and Issues for Congress,” CRS Report R40156, p. 59.

¹³⁴ Combined Joint Task Force, “Operations in Regional Command East: A CJTF Perspective,” Kabul: CJTF, 2010.

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(U) As CF seeks to develop the ANSF in ways that are “Afghan sustainable,” it is important to increase constructive dialogue with their counterparts to solicit their views on the challenges that lie ahead. If both CF and ANSF commit to putting this effort into their partnership, they will develop the common understanding needed to best leverage ANSF strengths to complement CF military capabilities. Obtaining an honest appraisal of where ANSF leaders feel they are and where they feel they need to be is critical to factor into CF plans reaching the desired end state of Afghans taking the lead on security for their country.

(U) CF is beginning to see how ANA can be a force multiplier. The majority of the junior officers we interviewed recognized that no matter how advanced CF’s warfighting capabilities may be, only ANSF can provide the legitimacy (through their knowledge of language, local views of security, and the operational environment) to truly gain the population’s trust and confidence. As one Platoon Leader observed, now is the time to apply the lessons learned from the past ten years in Afghanistan: “As far as the conflict here, partnering has exposed a lot of strengths and a lot of the weaknesses. The Afghan forces now, as I see it (army and the police) are two large, somewhat capable, police forces. I understand that’s a strange way to describe the Afghan National Army but all of their operations are designed around community policing principals in order to affect the populace. So much of our resources now are applied to Afghanistan in order to influence the population, but we have failed to understand our targets. The Army is set up to reach the population and when we let them do that, they do it fairly effectively.” But we don’t live out in the villages with the Afghans, we live within the structures we need to support our “large set piece” army. We live on FOBs, disconnected from the population. Even at the COP level. What we really need to do is leverage the Afghan Army strength. While they can’t (aren’t resourced) to do the large set piece army maneuvers, they can go out among the population and talk to people, get to know the communities. Show a familiar human face to them. Show that we are the face of GIRoA and we are here to help them. That should be their modus operandi. We can’t do that. A lot of the locals still think of us as infidels. We don’t speak their language, we have a very alien belief system and culture.” With this approach to partnering, CF weaknesses thus can become ANSF strengths and better set the conditions necessary for sustainable transition.

(U) Areas for further research

(U) This study was intended to be conducted over a four month period. Because it was truncated, our treatment of some of our research goals was condensed. We focused on partnership because it was a subject that U.S. Soldiers understood well, and HTT had easy access to U.S. Soldiers who spoke a common language. Of our research objectives, the three that got the least attention were:

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- Identify how the ANA view their own performance, training, and assessment.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the CF/ANA partnership and its impact on population perceptions of the ANA.
- Identify factors that create variability in population perception of ANSF effectiveness.

(U) *Understanding ANA performance, training, and assessment from their perspective*

(U) What causes ANSF progress to be sustainable? How much of it is dependent on leadership, unit moral, or the quality of CF partners? HTT has only scratched the surface of this topic; further research is needed by both CF and HTT, especially among the ANA in RC-East where embedded partnership has become a priority effort.

(U) *How to measure partnership*

(U) HTT suggested that reliable metrics be collected to measure partnership and suggested a few options. Further work is needed to develop a tool that can be used to assess what aspects of partnership pay the most dividends in ANSF development. A problem with current and past ANSF assessments (such as the Capability Milestone and the CUAT) are that they overemphasized numbers and often “obscured the real level of readiness and operational capability of units.”¹³⁵ By cross-checking existing assessments with a tool that gathers ANSF units’ perspectives on their own readiness, decision makers can gain a better picture of the ground truth. HTT also recommends command climate assessments of ANA CF partnership to gather perceptions of how both CF and ANSF feel that partnership is or is not helping them achieve their mission.

(U) *How to improve training*

(U) HTT found that structural deficiencies in planning and preparation for the partnership mission was a larger obstacle to partnership than culture. As one respondent stated, Soldiers can follow orders, but more research is needed to determine what vignettes and methods of instruction would be most constructive to include in Soldier training. The partnering and advising missions do not come naturally to all who conventional forces. One 1st Lieutenant described NTM-A mentors as a “random group of people from all over Kabul – Air Force, Navy, Army, active duty and National Guard – [were] pulled from their previous assignments, [are] thrown together and expected to do a job that none of us were trained in any meaningful way to do... we are expected, by virtue of time-in-grade and membership in the US military, to be able to train a foreign force in military operation, an extremely irresponsible policy that is ethnocentric at its core and which assumes some sort of natural superiority in which an untrained American soldier has everything to teach the Afghans, but nothing to learn.”¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. “Actions Needed to Improve the Reliability of Afghan Security Force Assessments: SIGAR Audit-10-11-Security/ANSF Capability Ratings, 29 June 2010.

¹³⁶ Reynolds, Matt and Trent Rhea, “Perceptions, Practices, and Impacts of ANSF/US Partnership in Khost/Paktiya: A Case Study,” Fort Leavenworth, KS: Human Terrain System (HTS) Research Reachback Center (RRC), 20 Jan 2012, p. 2.

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(U) *Understanding population security*

(U) Further research will need to be conducted to identify factors that create variability in population perception of ANSF effectiveness. Based on initial surveys of the population, HTT suspects that CF, ANSF, and the population do not have a common definition of “security” and the means to achieve local security. More information needs to be gathered on population needs in each district and to place population security at the center of planning efforts. Future research could seek to understand how partnered operations can be better grounded in efforts to maintain legitimacy of ANSF in the eyes of the people.

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Appendix A: ANSF Partnership Survey – Dec 2011

Please circle your rank:
PV1 PV2 PFC SPC SGT SSG SFC
MSG 1SG SGM CSM 2LT 1LT CPT

Please circle the troop you are attached to:
A Troop B Troop C Troop

Please circle the platoon you are attached to:
1st 2nd 3rd

How long have you partnered with your current ANA unit?
_____months

Putting aside official guidance, what do you perceive to be your PRIMARY mission in Afghanistan?
___Capturing/killing INS
___Partner w/ ANSF to build their capacity to capture/kill INS

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWERS, BELOW:

How often have you seen your ANA counterparts pull security for a joint mission?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

How often have you seen your ANA counterparts care properly for their equipment?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

How often have you seen your ANA counterparts ration their food/water/ammo on a mission?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

How often have you learned something from your ANA counterparts?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

How often have you seen your ANA counterparts flag U.S. soldiers?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

How often have you seen your ANA counterparts shoot near U.S. soldiers?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

How often have you seen your ANA counterparts shoot directly at U.S. soldiers?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

In your view, how often are "ANA-led" missions actually planned /executed by ANA:
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

Do you feel that the ANA hold you back from accomplishing your missions?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

How improved is the ANA since you've been partnered?
A lot A little Some Not much Not at all

How motivated are the ANA to fight?
A lot A little Some Not much Not at all

How motivated are the ANA to receive training?
A lot A little Some Not much Not at all

What is your opinion of your ANA partners' interactions w/ LNs?
Generally positive Generally negative Don't know

Has your unit has given your ANA partners training?
___Yes
___No
___Only what we offer in the field, no training at Parsa
___Don't know

Do you think it's a good idea to brief the ANA prior to going out on missions?
___Yes, they should know everything
___Yes, but only vaguely so they can't leak the info to INS
___No, they don't need to know anything beyond SP time

How often do you conduct an AAR after a mission with your partnered ANSF element?
Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

Please circle AUP you're currently partnered with, if any:
NSK Mandozai Shamal/Dwomanda
Wazi Zadran Shwak Gerda Serai

How long have you partnered with this AUP unit?
_____months

Please check the best answer:
___The ANA seems more professional than the AUP.
___The AUP seems more professional than the ANA.
___No difference.
___I don't work with the AUP.

Biggest obstacle to U.S./ANSF partnership, in your view?

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Appendix B: ANSF Semi-Structured HTT Interviews

ANSF Semi-Structured HTT Interviews		Date
1	1/203 S3 (Parsa)	12 Oct 2011 26 Oct 2011
2	1/203 Religious and Cultural Affairs (RCA) (Parsa)	1 Nov 2011
3	1/203 Training Officer (Parsa)	15 Oct 2011
4	1/203 Brigade Commander (Parsa)	14 Oct 2011
5	1/203 Education Officer (Parsa)	
6	1/203 ANA Brigade Interpreter	3 Jan 2012
7	1/203 ANA CATOC Battle Captain	8 Jan 2012
8	2/2/1/203 2 nd LT (Mandozai DC)	26 Nov 2011
9	2/1/203 Battalion Command Sergeant Major (Parsa)	25 Nov 2011
10	2/1/203 Battalion Commander (Parsa)	26 Nov 2011, 9 Jan 2012
11	2/2/1/203 Non-Commissioned Officer (Maneuver BN at Mandozai DC)	26 Nov 2011
12	2/2/1/203 Non-Commissioned Officer (Maneuver BN at Mandozai DC)	26 Nov 2011
13	2/2/1/203 Non-Commissioned Officer (Maneuver BN at Mandozai DC)	26 Nov 2011
14	5/1/203 Battalion Commander (Parsa)	16 Oct 2011
16	5/1/203 Training Officer (Parsa)	16 Oct 2011
17	6/1/203 Battalion Sergeant Major (Wilderness)	29 Oct 2011
18	6/1/203 1 st Sergeant S2 (Wilderness)	8 Nov 2011
19	AUP Chief (Shamal DC)	3 Oct 2011
20	AUP LT (NSK-Jiga Kalay OP)	8-9 Oct 2011 5 Jan 2012
21	AUP Commo Officer (Mandozai)	9 Dec 2012

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Appendix C: ANSF Semi-Structured HTT Interviews

CF Semi-Structured HTT Interviews		Date
1	3/1 BCT Brigade TAC ANA Mentor (Clark)	11 Dec 2011
2	3/1 BCT Brigade TAC ANA Intel Mentor (Clark)	21 Dec 2011
3	ISAF RBWT S3 ANA Mentor (Clark)	14 Dec 2011
4	ISAF RBWT ANA Mentor/English Teacher (Clark)	19 Dec 2011
5	6-4 CAV Combined TOC Sergeant Major (3/1 Brigade Staff Training)	08 Dec 2011
6	6-4 CAV Battalion Civil Affairs Team Captain (Clark)	03 Dec 2011
7	6-4 CAV Battalion Civil Affairs Sergeant (Clark)	03 Dec 2011
8	C/6-4 CAV Troop Commander	12 Dec 2011
9	C/6-4 CAV E3 (Clark) (partnered with 4/1/203 RECCE)	26 Nov 2011
10	C/6-4 CAV E4 (Clark) (partnered with 4/1/203 RECCE)	26 Nov 2011
11	C/6-4 CAV E5 (Clark) (partnered with 4/1/203 RECCE)	26 Nov 2011
12	C/6-4 CAV E2 (Clark) (partnered with 2/1/203 at Mandozai DC)	26 Nov 2011
13	C/6-4 CAV E4 (Clark) (partnered with 2/1/203 at Mandozai DC)	26 Nov 2011
14	C/6-4 CAV E5 (Clark) (partnered with 2/1/203 at Mandozai DC)	26 Nov 2011
15	A/6-4 CAV Troop Commander	14 Dec 2011
16	A/6-4 CAV Platoon Leader	20 Dec 2011
17	B/6-4 CAV Commander (6/1 Kandak)	29 Oct 2011
18	B/6-4 CAV 1 st Sergeant (6/1 Kandak)	29 Oct 2011
19	B/6-4 CAV Platoon Leader (6/1 Kandak)	18 Dec 2011
20	B/6-4 CAV Company Intelligence Support Team (COIST) (6/1 Kandak)	29 Oct 2011
21	B/6-4 CAV Humint Collection Team (HCT) (6/1 Kandak)	29 Oct 2011
22	B/6-4 CAV PCAT SGT NCOIC (AUP Training)	8 Nov 2011