

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

DEVELOPING USAF GENERAL PURPOSE FORCES
FOR
BUILDING PARTNER NATION AVIATION CAPACITY

by

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Biography

Colonel Joseph J. Turk, Jr. was born in Biloxi, Mississippi in 1964. The son of an Air Force Chief Master Sergeant, Colonel Turk was raised in the South before moving to Massachusetts in 1978 where he graduated from Bourne High in 1982. After attending Northwestern Preparatory School in Santa Barbara, California, he entered the United States Air Force Academy and graduated in 1987.

After attending Basic Communications Officer Training at Keesler AFB, Mississippi, he reported to his first assignment as the Chief of Operations at Robins AFB, Georgia. His career includes assignments in communications, acquisition, and training units at the combatant command, Air Force major command, center, wing and squadron level. He has served in special duty assignments at Officer Training School and the Air Combat Command Inspector General's Office and has been an executive officer three times. From August 2005 to June 2007, Colonel Turk commanded the 367th Training Support Squadron at Hill AFB, UT where he led operations of the DOD's premier visual information production facility and the Air Force's largest interactive multimedia instruction unit.

Colonel Turk has deployed twice in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, most recently to Baghdad, Iraq as the Director of the Mission Support Unit, Coalition Air Forces Training Team, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq where he led 56 personnel at five locations training and advising 400 Iraqi Airmen on all aspects of base support operations.

He is currently a student at Air War College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. Prior to his current assignment, Colonel Turk was the Deputy Commander, 782nd Training Group, Sheppard AFB, Texas where he led 1,100 personnel training 19,800 DOD and international students annually in aircraft maintenance, civil engineering, fuels management, vehicle operations and telecommunications.

Colonel Turk holds a Bachelor of Science degree in International Affairs and a Master of Arts Degree in Business Administration and Management from Troy State University. Colonel Turk attended Air Command and Staff College and Joint Forces Staff College in residence.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal (five oak leaf clusters). Colonel Turk was the 82nd Training Wing's Lance P. Sijan Leadership Award recipient in 2007.

Introduction

In our 2006 National Security Strategy (NSS), then President George W. Bush stated the goal of America statecraft as “to help create a world of democratic, well-governed states than can meet the needs of their citizens and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. This is the best way to provide enduring security for the American people.”¹ President Bush identified several threats and challenges to our national security including transnational terrorism and outlined our strategy for defeating this threat. He identified the battles in Iraq and Afghanistan as the front lines of this war and highlighted the need to build the security forces of these countries to partner with the United States to ensure their peaceful governments continue to control their countries.² Our NSS encompasses a whole of government approach integrating our political, economic and military instruments of power to build international institutions to promote freedom, justice and human dignity in these nations and the world while defending peace and international stability. The Department of Defense (DOD) designated United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) as the lead combatant command for synchronizing DOD’s plans for the war on terror and developed CONPLAN 7500 to coordinate efforts. CONPLAN 7500 identifies six lines of operation under direct and indirect approaches to shape and stabilize the global environment and defeat the enemy; a fundamental capability under the indirect approach is enabling partner nations to combat violent extremist organizations to increase friendly freedom of action while reducing the enemy’s.³

Building partner capacity (BPC) also called security force assistance (SFA) or foreign internal defense (FID) is a complex mission; the DOD recognized advising partner nation

¹ White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 2006, 1.

² *Ibid.*, 2.

³ United States Special Operations Command, *United States Special Operations Command Mission Brief*, 2009.

security forces requires personal attributes and skills not inherent in every military member. Historically, the military mission for building partner capacity has fallen under the realm of USSOCOM utilizing selectively manned special operations forces (SOF) units specifically trained and equipped to conduct this mission. As coalition efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan transition to building partner capacity and efforts in Africa, South America and other parts of the world continue, USSOCOM forces are unable to meet these growing requirements. The DOD, and specifically the Air Force, has turned to general purpose forces (GPF) to meet this manning shortfall. In his January 2009 Irregular Warfare (IW) Strategy, General Norton Schwartz, Air Force Chief of Staff, directed the Air Force to “establish a permanent GPF advisory capability for steady-state protracted IW requirements to complement existing special operations advisory capabilities.”⁴ General Schwartz also recognized the Air Force could no longer utilize ad hoc pre-deployment training courses to prepare GPF Airmen for advising duty and tasked Headquarters Air Education and Training Command to develop a formal and institutionalized training academy specifically designed to train GPF Airmen.⁵ As a GPF Airman who served in an advisory position in Iraq from February 2008 to February 2009, I received minimal pre-deployment training and was only marginally prepared for this unique duty. If the Air Force is to maintain a GPF capacity truly capable of advising partner nation Air Forces, it must modify current pre-deployment training for GPF Airmen to model more closely the extensive training SOF receive to conduct the air advisor mission.

This paper will establish the need for the Air Force to deploy GPF Airmen as air advisors by analyzing USAF SOF advisor capacity, including the extensive training requirements to develop SOF advisors, and evaluating this capacity against current requirements. After

⁴ Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, *Draft USAF Air Advisor Academy Charter*, 2009, 1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

establishing the SOF manning shortfall, it will discuss how the Air Force has trained GPF Airmen since 2006 for this SOF core mission task and current plans to establish an Air Advisor Academy specifically chartered with training GPF Airmen. The paper will then review how the US Army and US Marine Corps are training their GPF for advisor duty and analyze the differences between USAF SOF advisor training and USAF GPF training as well as the differences among the USAF, US Marines and Army programs. The paper will conclude with recommendations on how the Air Force should modify its concept for the Air Advisor Academy to develop a more effective GFP advisory capacity General Schwartz calls for in his IW strategy.

Current USAF SOF Air Advisor Capacity and Requirements

6th Special Operations Squadron

The 6th Special Operations Squadron (6 SOS) at Hurlburt Field, FL is the only dedicated USAF unit specifically organized, trained and equipped to conduct air advising duty. Established during World War II to assist British forces operating behind enemy lines in India, the 6 SOS evolved into an air commando unit designed to train foreign air force personnel to combat Soviet trained and supported forces engaged in insurgencies during the Cold War, but was deactivated in 1969.⁶ Re-activated in 1994 under US Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), the current mission of the 6 SOS is “to assess, train, advise and assist foreign aviation forces in air power employment and sustainment and to integrate these assets into joint, multinational operations.”⁷ The 6 SOS is a selectively manned unit—all personnel are critically screened to determine their ability to interact with foreign military personnel and train

⁶ Hurlburt Field Homepage, “6th Special Operations Squadron Fact Sheet,” <http://www2.hurlburt.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=3496/>.

⁷ Ibid.

and live with host nation air forces in austere conditions. To prepare for this unique duty, all 6 SOS personnel complete extensive training through the Air Force Special Operations School.

Air Force Special Operations School

The Air Force Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field, FL trains Airmen for assignments in the 6 SOS and other special operations units through its Combat Aviation Advisor Mission Qualification Course. This course consists of four phases: SOF Doctrine and Mission Operating Environment; Mission Enabling Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures; Language and Cultural Awareness; and Aviation and Specialty Development. The first two phases form the core training all combat advisors receive and last approximately three months.⁸ Key elements of phases I and II include cross culture communications, contemporary insurgent warfare, media, negotiation and interpreter operations, and security assistance management as well as all aspects of combat skills training. Beginning in August of 2009, the Special Operations School established a working relationship with the Air Force Culture and Language Center (AFCLC); AFCLC now provides cross-culture competence curriculum to the school and participates in curriculum reviews.⁹ I will discuss the mission of the AFCLC and its role in training both SOF and GPF Airmen later in this paper.

After completing the core training program, SOF Airmen receive intense language and cultural awareness training that lasts either two or four months depending on the region they are assigned and the language spoken. Airmen deploying to Iraq receive four months of Arabic training; currently, the Special Operations School does not offer Dari or Pashtu language

⁸ Joseph DeCaro, Special Operations School, Director of Operations, interview with author, 9 December 2009.

⁹ Ibid.

training.¹⁰ Once SOF Airmen complete advisor training, they proceed to various locations for aviation training and specialty development for up to 90 days.¹¹ According to the Director of Operations for the school, the school allows GFP Airmen to attend if class loads allow.¹²

Increasing Air Advisor Requirements

After September 11, 2001, the focus of the USAF SOF air advisor mission shifted to include developing counterterrorism capabilities under CONPLAN 7500. This new direction in mission created greater need for 6 SOS advisory teams and influenced the countries they supported—specifically adding an extensive advisory mission in Afghanistan and a smaller mission to Iraq.¹³ As the advisor missions in Afghanistan and Iraq continued to evolve, the Air Force initiated several studies and Tiger Teams to analyze its capabilities and capacity for SFA/FID missions. In 2006, the Air Force commissioned the RAND Corporation to evaluate Air Force policy and strategy for counterinsurgencies including steps the Air Force should take to contribute to counterinsurgencies most effectively.¹⁴ As part of the study, RAND analyzed the manning and deployments of the 6 SOS to determine future air advisor requirements.

RAND studied 6 SOS deployments from 2002 through 2005 to develop a “deployment efficiency ratio” based on personnel assigned, total mission days, and a goal of 180 days of deployments per year for each advisor.¹⁵ RAND then analyzed the 6 SOS advisor missions to group the missions into three phases based on the depth and length of the mission, the number of

¹⁰ Air Force Special Operations Command, *Combat Aviation Advisor Mission Qualification Course*, 2009.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² DeCaro, interview.

¹³ RAND Corporation, *Air Power in the New Counterinsurgency Era: The Strategic Importance of USAF Advisory and Assistance Missions* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2006), 122.

¹⁴ Ibid., iii.

¹⁵ Ibid., 130.

personnel deployed in advisor roles and the frequency of missions to the country.¹⁶ RAND determined the 6 SOS required 304 personnel to accomplish its advisor missions and meet its threshold of 180 days of deployment per advisor.¹⁷

During this period, the unit was authorized 109 personnel and averaged between 87 and 99 assigned personnel—an average manning level from 80 to 90 percent.¹⁸ The 6 SOS manning situation becomes more critical when you consider during the period of the RAND study, the 6 SOS deployed only small advisory teams to Afghanistan and were not deploying teams to Iraq. RAND’s study concluded the USAF should “expand its aviation advisory capacity to at least wing strength” under the command of AFSOC since it is the only USAF organization officially tasked with the counterinsurgency mission.¹⁹ Colonel Billy Montgomery, HQ AFSOC A5/A8, seconded the recommendation to grow the 6 SOS into a wing strength organization in his 2007 White Paper, “USAF Irregular Warfare Concept” endorsed by the AFSOC Commander.²⁰ The Air Force has yet to act on either of these recommendations and continues to man the 6 SOS well below 100 percent. According to the current Commander, as of January 2010 the unit was authorized 218 personnel, but only had 144 assigned—a dismal 66 percent.²¹ As the Air Force fails to man the 6 SOS adequately, the advisory missions in Iraq and Afghanistan continue to expand. In May 2009, a USAF Irregular Warfare Tiger Team identified a requirement for 700 personnel in FY11 leveling out to 600 personnel in FY12 and beyond.²² Unable to staff these

¹⁶ RAND Corporation, *Air Power in the New Counterinsurgency Era: The Strategic Importance of USAF Advisory and Assistance Missions* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2006), 131.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 131.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 120.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 137.

²⁰ Col Billy Montgomery, *USAF Irregular Warfare Concept*, (Hurlburt Field, FL: Air Force Special Operations Command, 2007), 6.

²¹ Lt Col Joseph K. Michalek, Commander, 6th Special Operations Squadron, e-mail to author, 3 February 2010.

²² Chair, Irregular Warfare Task Force, *US Air Force Irregular Warfare Tiger Team Observations and Recommendations* (Washington D.C.: Headquarters, United States Air Force, 2009), 54.

units with SOF air advisors, the Air Force turned to GFP Airmen in 2006; however, training capacity quickly became a limiting factor in developing GFP Airmen. The following section will discuss AF efforts to develop this capacity and its plans for moving forward.

USAF Training for GFP Airmen

As the Air Force began to deploy GFP Airmen in increasing numbers to support the development of the Iraqi and Afghan Air Forces, the lack of a comprehensive USAF pre-deployment training program became apparent. Initially, Air Force Central Command (AFCENT) developed a four-week course to satisfy this emerging requirement and utilized instructors and facilities at the USAF Special Operations School to train GFP Airmen; however, the need quickly exceeded the school's capacity and detracted from its primary mission of training SOF personnel.²³ In March 2007, the CSAF directed Air Education and Training Command (AETC) to develop and execute a training program for GFP Airmen deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan in advisor roles.²⁴ From May 2007 to January 2008, AETC provided three-week courses at Camp Bullis, TX and two-week courses at Lackland AFB, TX utilizing on-site contractors and instructors from the Defense Language Institute, AFCENT, 6 SOS and the AFCLC to train GFP Airmen.²⁵ Prior to my deployment to Iraq, I attended the last two-week air advisor course at Lackland AFB in January 2008. At this time, the air advisor course was 11 training days of which 7 were dedicated to combat skills training including survival, evasion, resistance, and escape training. I received less than 32 hours of SFA/FID mission training, cultural training, Arabic language training and Iraq advisor mission orientation from instructors

²³ Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, *Draft USAF Air Advisor Academy Charter*, 2009, 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁵ Ken Arteaga, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, "Air Advisor Education & Training Information Brief", November 2009.

from multiple organizations--there was no overall course director to tie the course material together. Our instruction had no logical flow from topic to topic and no continuity as we transitioned to each training block. To provide increased capacity and greater consistency, the AF moved GPF advisor training to the USAF Expeditionary Center in February 2008.²⁶

USAF Expeditionary Center

The USAF Expeditionary Center located at Fort Dix, NJ is the current location for training GPF Airmen preparing to deploy for advisory duty through AETC's Air Advisor Course (AAC). According to the AAC syllabus, the course provides over 190 hours of academic instruction over 22 training days to provide "just-in-time pre-deployment, ground-centric training for USAF personnel in advanced weapons handling, combat lifesaving, enhanced force protection, and counter-improvised explosive device awareness, high threat diving, language, cultural awareness, counterinsurgency, convoy and other combat/advisor critical ground skills."²⁷ Foundational air advisor training includes nine training days of mission, culture and language education. The major course objectives for these 80.5 hours of instruction include:

- 1) Comprehend the roles and responsibilities of the military air advisor
- 2) Comprehend the theory and practices of insurgency, counterinsurgency, and foreign internal defense operations
- 3) Comprehend the complexity, basic customs, values, and diversity of the South Asian or Middle Eastern as it relates to air advisor duties
- 4) Comprehend the role Islam plays in cultural and political development
- 5) Comprehend the Iraqi or Afghan perspective of their country
- 6) Demonstrate familiarization with Iraqi or Dari/Pashtu conversational language
- 7) Comprehend the techniques used to interact with an interpreter²⁸

²⁶ Ken Arteaga, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, "Air Advisor Education & Training Information Brief", November 2009.

²⁷ Headquarters, Air Education and Training Command, *Draft Air Advisor Course Syllabus*, (Randolph AFB, TX, January 2010), 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

In FY09, 606 students completed advisor training at the USAF Expeditionary.²⁹ AFCLC is a key contributor to the course curriculum.

Air Force Culture and Language Center

Established in April 2006, the AFCLC at Maxwell AFB, AL is responsible for coordinating and implementing cultural, regional and foreign language education and training to satisfy Air Force requirements in professional military education and expeditionary skills training.³⁰ A foundation of the center's training approach is its concept of cross-cultural competence (3C); the objective of 3C is to enable Airmen to serve effectively in a culturally complex environment with little or no previous exposure to the culture or language of a region.³¹ The center provides the Air Force 3C training in a tiered approach by providing Airman foundational cultural training in their accession and initial occupational training and continuing this training at Air Force wings as units prepare during their expeditionary training spin-up.³² For Airmen preparing to deploy, the center offers a 10-hour package that includes general cultural training, cross culture communications, building cross cultural relationships, and cross-cultural negotiations, and culture-specific training for Iraq and Afghanistan.³³ AFCLC is the Air Force center of excellence for cultural training; however, AFCLC does not have the classroom capacity to train all Airmen requiring 3C training on-site nor the instructors to travel to the other schools training Airmen preparing to deploy to advisory duty. AFCLC provides its 3C curriculum to the USAF Expeditionary Center training GPF Airmen and the Air Force Special Operations School training SOF Airmen.

²⁹ Mr. Ken Arteaga, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, e-mail to the author, 9 February 2010.

³⁰ Air Force Culture and Language Center, *The Air Force Culture and Language Center Mission Briefing*, 2009.

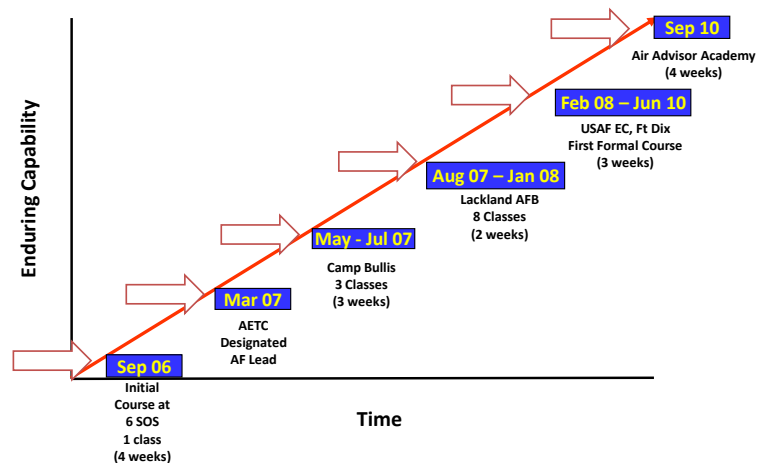
³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Air Force Culture and Language Center, *Expeditionary Culture Skills Training Basic 10-Hour Package*, 2009.

As the Air Force continued to modify GPF training, the CSAF recognized the Air Force would have a long-term requirement to train GPF Airmen for advisor duty and ad hoc training programs were no longer sufficient to prepare Airmen for this important mission. As part of his 2009 IW Strategy, General Schwartz directed AETC to establish an “air advisor schoolhouse to preserve the hard-won experience gleaned from current efforts to stand-up the Iraqi Air Force and the Afghan Army Air Corps.”³⁴ Figure 1 below provides a complete timeline of the evolution of GPF air advisor training leading to this CSAF direction. Under CSAF’s guidance, AETC has collaborated with a multitude of Air Force, sister service, joint and Non-Governmental Organizations to develop the concept and curriculum for an Air Force Air Advisor Academy scheduled to begin training GPF Airmen in September 2010.

Figure 1: Evolution of GPF Air Advisor Training³⁵



³⁴ Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, *Draft USAF Air Advisor Academy Charter*, 2009, 1.

³⁵ Ken Arteaga, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, “Air Advisor Education & Training Information Brief”, November 2009.

The Future: Air Force Air Advisor Academy

The mission of the Air Advisor (AA) Academy is to “provide vigorous, relevant, and flexible continuum of education and training to Airmen so they are capable of applying their aviation expertise to assess, train, educate, advise, and assist partners in the development and application of their aviation resources to meet their national needs in support of building partnerships and IW operations.”³⁶ AETC’s methodology for developing GPF Airmen at the AA Academy is to take mature, experienced Airmen and build on their accession, AF specialty, and professional military education and training.³⁷ AETC envisions three threads of courses of varying lengths tailored to meet the combatant commanders’ needs:

- 1 – 4 weeks: AA course only (no combat skills or aircrew/maintenance training)
- 3 – 7 weeks: AA course + combat skills (no aircrew/maintenance training)
- 7 – 15 weeks: AA course + combat skills + aircrew/maintenance training³⁸

During a June 2009 curriculum conference attended by the major stakeholders in the AA Academy, the committee identified five overarching categories of academic instruction:

- 1) Define Air Advisors in a Strategic Content; Understanding Where an AA Fits In
- 2) Define Air Advisor Combat Skill training requirements
- 3) Define Air Advisor Communication Skill requirements
- 4) Define Air Advisor Cross-Cultural Competence requirements
- 5) Define Air Advisor Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures³⁹

The committee then grouped advisors into five levels based on advisor capabilities requirements, previous advisor training and experience, cultural and language training, and ability to deploy in autonomous operations and continued to define the required level of learning necessary to accomplish the different levels of advising.⁴⁰ Figure 2 on the following page summarizes the

³⁶ Ken Arteaga, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, “Air Advisor Education & Training Information Brief”, November 2009.

³⁷ Ibid.



³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Minutes. *2009 Air Advisor Curriculum Review Conference*, 23 – 26 June 2009, 3-4.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 2.

committee’s conclusions and is the foundation AETC will use to develop the AA courses. The Air Force is not alone in developing programs for training their GPF as advisors; the following section will discuss the efforts of the US Marine Corps and Army for developing programs to train their GPF for advisor duty.

Figure 2: Air Advisor Courses⁴¹

Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

Courses	DETCAP	Advisors	Composh	Staff	Senior Officers	MTI/ETTs	CRGs	6 SAs
Language	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Interpreter / Translator	C	F	U	U	F	C	C	C
Culture General	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Culture Specific	C	U	C	C	F	C	C	C
Relationship to US Policy	C	C	C	C	U	C	C	C
Doctrinal Framework - IW, BP/BPC, etc.	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
Joint/Combined/Interagency	U	C	C	U	U	C	C	C
Authorities / DISAM	U	C	U	U	F	U	C	C
U.S.A Understanding	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
TTPs - Assess, Train, Advise, Assist, Equip	C	U	F	C	U	C	C	C
Interacting with PN Counterparts	C	C	U	C	U	C	C	C
Mission Execution	C	U	U	C	U	C	C	C
Advisor Techniques	C	F	U	C	U	C	C	C
Advanced Combat Skills	C	F	U	C	F	C	C	C

F = Familiarization U = Understanding C = Comprehension

Multiple Courses, different levels of understanding, different durations, and tailored to meet COCOM requirements.

The First Command

Sister Service Training Programs

US Marine Corps

The USMC has a long and rich history in building partner nation capability around the world. Since 2007, the Marine Corps have conducted 20 bi-lateral missions annually and currently have over 1,000 Marines from different organizations engaged in SFA missions in addition to supporting Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.⁴² As requirements for Marine trainers and advisors continued to grow, General Conway, Commandant

⁴¹ Minutes. 2009 Air Advisor Curriculum Review Conference, 23 – 26 June 2009, attachment 2.

⁴² Gen James T. Conway, Commandant United States Marine Corps, to Secretary of Defense, memorandum, 3 September 2009.

of the Marine Corps, reiterated the Marines' commitment to this mission. In his September 2009 memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, he outlined the Marines' holistic approach to training and organizing its forces to enhance and develop "existing capabilities of the total force to provide combatant commanders with specially tailored, regionally focused, and culturally attuned forces".⁴³ The Marine Corps previously established the Security Cooperation Education Training Center for implementing and evaluating Marine Corps Security Cooperation education and training programs in order to support Marine Component Commands' efforts to build partner capacity and formed the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning to increase cultural awareness of all Marines preparing to deploy.⁴⁴ The foundation of the Marine Corps' GPF training efforts was the stand-up of the Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group (MCTAG)--the Marine Corps established the MCTAG in 2007 as part of their "Long War Concept".⁴⁵

Based at Fort Story, VA, the mission of the MCTAG is to train GFP Marines as trainer/advisors to provide commanders with tasked-organized training and advisory teams.⁴⁶ The MCTAG follows detailed plans of instruction (POIs) outlined in the Navy/Marine Corps Advise, Train and Assist Partner Nation Forces Training and Readiness Manual (ATA T&R Manual) to train Marines assigned to SFA missions.⁴⁷ The ATA T&R Manual describes mission essential task lists and individual training events to provide Marines basic knowledge and skills necessary to become effective partner nation trainers and advisors. The following are key training events to develop core advisor skills:

⁴³ Gen James T. Conway, Commandant United States Marine Corps, to Secretary of Defense, memorandum, 3 September 2009.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ United States Marine Corps, *The Long War: Send in the Marines*, (Washington D.C.: 2009), 24.

⁴⁶ *Marine Corps Training & Advisory Group (MCTAG) Mission Brief*, January 2010.

⁴⁷ United States Marine Corps, *ATA T&R Manual*, (Washington D.C.: 2009), 1-2.

ASSESSMENT

ATA-ASSE-1001 Assess Partnered Nation Forces

CULTURE

ATA-CULT-1011 Understand Operational Culture

ATA-CULT-1012 Understand Cross Cultural Learning

ATA-CULT-1013 Understand Cross Cultural Negotiations

ATA-CULT-1014 Recognize Cultural Shock

ATA-CULT-1015 Mitigate Cultural Shock

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

ATA-ICOM-1021 Employ Interpersonal Communication Skills

ATA-ICOM-1022 Negotiate Differences

ATA-ICOM-1023 Identify Formal and Informal Leaders

ATA-ICOM-1024 Develop Relationships

ATA-ICOM-1025 Interact with an Indigenous Population

ATA-ICOM-1026 Display Personal Traits that Support the Mission

ATA-ICOM-1027 Communicate Non-verbally

ATA-ICOM-1028 Demonstrate Media Relations Techniques

INFORMATION OPERATIONS

ATA-IO-1031 Support the IO/PAO Campaign

LANGUAGE

ATA-LANG-1041 Communicate in the Spoken Language

ATA-LANG-1042 Use an Interpreter

LEGAL

ATA-LEGL-1051 Abide by the Law of Land Warfare

ATA-LEGL-1052 Abide by Dodd Standard Rules of Engagement

ATA-LEGL-1053 Abide by Human Rights Directives

ATA-LEGL-1054 Apply Legal Authorities and Considerations

ATA-LEGL-1055 Apply Foreign Disclosure Guidance⁴⁸

In addition to demonstrating proficiency in these individual core tasks, Marines train together as teams and units prior to deploying in support of theater SFA plans--total training time is 120 days.⁴⁹ The Marines are not the only service to establish capacity specifically for training GPF for advising—the Army has developed a similar capacity.

⁴⁸ United States Marine Corps, *ATA T&R Manual*, (Washington D.C.: 2009), 3-3.

⁴⁹ Maj Joseph Teasley, S6 Plans Officer, MCTAG, interview with the author, 13 January 2010.

Army

The Army began training GPF as advisors in 2006 and assigned this mission to the 162nd Infantry Training Brigade (162nd ITB) at Fort Polk, LA in August 2009.⁵⁰ The 162nd ITB trains combat advisors at Fort Polk and select offsite locations to create a cadre of trainers capable of training, advising and assisting foreign nation security forces in support of national policy objectives.⁵¹ The brigade has the capacity to train approximately 4,000 personnel per year through two lines of effort: 1) a 60-day resident program at Fort Polk and 2) a 15-day mobile SFA training course.⁵² The in-residence course includes combat skills training--the mobile course does not.⁵³ Core advisor training for both programs includes 80 hours of classroom instruction with seven major enabling learning objectives (ELOs):

ELO 1: Understand the Operational Environment: Includes regional/country overview and Friendly/Enemy Situation

ELO 2: Advising and Mentoring: Includes advisor doctrine, history, principles, and functions; interpreter roles and management; cross culture communications; influencing and negotiation; and interaction with counterparts

ELO 3: Understand the Advisor's Operational Framework: Includes IW concepts; COIN doctrine; FID doctrine

ELO 4: Fundamentals of Personnel Recovery

ELO5: Utilize COIN Advisor Tools: Includes assessing measures of effectiveness and planning

ELO 6: Understand Insurgency: Includes root causes, strategies, strengths, weaknesses and tactics of insurgencies

ELO 7 Understand COIN: Includes COIN doctrine, military operations, small unit tactics, and large unit operations⁵⁴

Each training day includes 1.5 to 2 hours of language training; also included in the training are six Leader Engagement scenarios.⁵⁵ These scenarios run for 90 minutes and allow the trainees to interact with former Iraqi officers through an interpreter to practice relationship building, cross

⁵⁰ MAJ Steve Stowell, 162nd Infantry Training Brigade, e-mail to the author, 10 January 2010.

⁵¹ Directorate of Cultural Influence and Counterinsurgency (DCC), *DCC VIP Briefing*, 7 January 2010.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

culture communications, and negotiations while developing cultural understanding.⁵⁶ Other key training events are a Battle of Algiers case study, a cultural meal and a “chai session” with an Iraqi officer to simulate a typical first meeting with a host nation counterpart.⁵⁷ Both training courses culminate with a two-day exercise scenario. During the exercise, the advisors in training receive a mission concept of operations. The advisor must train and advise their host nation counterparts as they conduct a mission analysis, complete the planning process, develop a maneuver and support plan, and brief their plans to their security force commander.⁵⁸ As combat forces in Iraq draw down, the brigade anticipates the requirements for GPF advisors will grow as the Army assists in developing the Iraqi security forces.⁵⁹

As the requirement for GPF advisors for the services expand, what can the Air Force apply from the Marine Corps and Army GPF training to make its training for GPF Airmen more effective? The following section will analyze these programs and USAF SOF training to make recommendations for future Air Force GFP training.

Analysis and Recommendations

In order to analyze and compare the training programs of SOF Airmen and GPF Airmen, Marines, and Soldiers, it is necessary to establish a common analytical framework. Based on my experience in Iraq and my analysis of the core objectives of the various service programs, I established the following core skill set required to serve as an effective advisor:

- 1) Understand and apply IW, SFA, FID, and COIN doctrine, strategies, and tactics, techniques, and procedures
- 2) Understand and appreciate the effects of local culture; includes understanding history, customs, values, nonverbal communications, and basic use of common language phrases
- 3) Understand host nation political systems and informal leadership relationships

⁵⁶ Directorate of Cultural Influence and Counterinsurgency (DCC), *DCC VIP Briefing*, 7 January 2010.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ MAJ Steve Stowell, 162nd Infantry Training Brigade, interview with author, 17 January 2009.

- 3) Ability to communicate effectively through an interpreter
- 4) Ability to negotiate with host nation counterpart
- 5) Ability to train and assess host nation forces

I did not include combat skills since I consider these necessary for anyone deploying and not specific to being an advisor, and therefore, not essential to advisor training. I also assumed how the services present GPF for advising duty is immaterial. Whether a member is deploying as an individual or as part of a unit, the core training to be an effective advisor is the same—deploying as a unit may add team events but would not alter basic advisor training requirements.

By nature, SOF advisors will receive more in-depth training; however, when applying this framework to compare USAF SOF and GPF training, several discrepancies arise. First, although AETC's Air Advisor Course matrix (Figure 2 on page 12) calls for a comprehension level of learning for IW, BPC, SFA, and FID doctrine, GPF Airmen only receive 5.5 hours of lecture on this foundational doctrine with 1.5 hours devoted to the insurgencies in either Iraq or Afghanistan.⁶⁰ In contrast, SOF advisors receive 1.5 *months* of training on SOF doctrine and mission operating environments including a weeklong course in Contemporary Insurgent Warfare.⁶¹ Although the AFCLC ensures some consistency in training between SOF and GPF Airmen with its cross-culture competence curriculum, the difference in depth of instruction is significant despite AETC's desire for both SOF and GPF to achieve comprehension level learning in general culture, interacting with host nation counterparts, and working with an interpreter.⁶² GPF Airmen receive 20 hours of lecture in key cross-culture concepts such as interpreter support, negotiations and conflict resolution, and introduction to Islam and Arab culture.⁶³ SOF receive a weeklong course in Cross Cultural Communications, Negotiation and

⁶⁰ HQ AETC. Plan of Instruction/Lesson Plan, Air Advisor Course, 1 June 2009, 1, 15, 40.

⁶¹ Air Force Special Operations Command, *Combat Aviation Advisor Mission Qualification Course*, 2009.

⁶² Minutes. *2009 Air Advisor Curriculum Review Conference*, 23 – 26 June 2009, attachment 2.

⁶³ HQ AETC. Plan of Instruction/Lesson Plan, Air Advisor Course, 1 June 2009.

Interpreter Operations, and Cultural Integration Techniques before proceeding to their regional language and cultural awareness training that lasts from two to four months.⁶⁴ Although these differences in training between SOF and GPF Airmen are understandable, how does USAF GPF training compare to the Marine Corps and Army?

Applying the core advisor skill set against the USAF, Marine Corps, and Army GPF training programs does not reveal significant differences in core advisor curriculum despite varying program lengths; however, there are differences in methods and depth of instruction in key areas. Other than language training, USAF training does not include any interactive scenarios or exercises for developing critical advisor skills such as communication and negotiation through an interpreter or training and assessing host nation forces.⁶⁵ In contrast, Army training includes six 90-minute scenarios for advisors to work through an interpreter with former Iraqi officers to practice communication and negotiation skills and culminates with a two-day exercise working with interpreters and host nation forces to plan and execute a mission.⁶⁶ Marine Corps training also includes interactive scenarios concluding with a three-day mission rehearsal exercise to evaluate the Marines understanding of IW and COIN doctrine, ability to communicate through an interpreter, and training and assessing skills.⁶⁷ To reinforce cultural training, the Army program includes a cultural meal and an informal “chai session” to simulate a first meeting with a counterpart.⁶⁸ The Air Force and Marine Corps do not include these types of events in their programs.

Marine Corps training provides in-depth training on how to utilize an interpreter in advising including how to prepare the interpreter before the engagement, how to establish

⁶⁴ Air Force Special Operations Command, *Combat Aviation Advisor Mission Qualification Course*, 2009.

⁶⁵ HQ AETC. Plan of Instruction/Lesson Plan, Air Advisor Course, 1 June 2009.

⁶⁶ Directorate of Cultural Influence and Counterinsurgency (DCC), *DCC VIP Briefing*, 7 January 2010.

⁶⁷ *Marine Corps Training & Advisory Group (MCTAG) Mission Brief*, January 2010.

⁶⁸ Directorate of Cultural Influence and Counterinsurgency (DCC), *DCC VIP Briefing*, 7 January 2010.

rapport with the interpreter, how to paraphrase properly, and correct body position and eye contact during interaction with the interpreter and host nation forces.⁶⁹ USAF curriculum provides only a one-hour lecture on interpreter support with no performance demonstration.⁷⁰ Finally, all three programs include basic language training, but the Marines also include training on how to use commercial language aids while the Air Force and Army do not.⁷¹

To address the differences among USAF, Marine Corps, and Army GPF training and close the gap with SOF advisor training, AETC should work more closely with the Special Operations School, 162nd ITB, and MCTAG as it develops the curriculum for the AA Academy. Although there has been some cross-flow of information, AETC should formalize these relationships through quarterly curriculum conferences or VTCs to improve communication and share lessons learned. AETC and the Special Operations School should develop a more in-depth basic IW, BPC, SFA, and FID doctrine course with case studies to provide GPF Airmen a better understanding of these complex missions—5.5 hours of lecture is insufficient for these critical foundational concepts. AETC should coordinate with the AFCLC and the Defense Language Institute to revise the basic language training to include utilizing language aids to communicate with host nation counterparts and integrating language into each training day to reinforce basic greetings, common expressions, and military phrases the advisors will use. AETC and the AFCLC must develop more robust cross culture communication and negotiation training modeled after the leader engagements in the Army program. AETC should collaborate with the 162nd ITB to utilize their contract with the former Iraqi officers who serve as role players and incorporate these role players into scenarios. These scenarios would provide Airmen with

⁶⁹ United States Marine Corps, *ATA T&R Manual*, (Washington D.C.: 2009), 3-15.

⁷⁰ HQ AETC. Plan of Instruction/Lesson Plan, Air Advisor Course, 1 June 2009, 313.

⁷¹ United States Marine Corps, *ATA T&R Manual*, (Washington D.C.: 2009), 3-14.

realistic training for the advising environment they will face and would serve as capstone events to tie together many aspects of the curriculum.

Conclusion

As the United States implements its NSS to create a world of democratic, well-governed states to provide enduring security for Americans and all freedom-loving peoples, the ability to build effective partner nation security forces to combat transnational terrorism will continue to be a fundamental requirement for the DOD. USSOCOM maintains specially trained forces to advise partner nations, but the requirements have exceeded their manning. The DOD and the Air Force have turned to GPF to fill the void, but lacked the training capacity to develop effective GPF advisors. The CSAF directed AETC to develop a formal training academy to replace the existing ad hoc programs and reduce the training gap between USAF SOF and GPF Airmen. AETC has taken commendable steps to meet CSAF's direction and can realize his vision by leveraging aspects of Marine Corps and Army training programs to increase depth in core advisor skills such as cross culture communications and negotiations by adding interactive scenarios and exercises. Increasing the depth of instruction for IW, SFA, FID, and COIN doctrine, strategies, and tactics, techniques and procedures would provide GPF Airmen a stronger foundation for advising duty. Incorporating these recommendations into the Air Advisor Academy would improve training and provide the Air Force an effective GFP advisor capability necessary to execute its IW strategy.

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