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Operational Handbook:
Working Amongst Different Cultures

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ABSTRACT

This Handbook provides information that will assist in understanding the complex environment that is the Solomon Islands. The research and analysis supports a range of contingencies that might see the Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel operating in the Solomon Islands in support of the Solomon Islands Government. These include bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises, stabilisation and capacity building missions and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.

RELEASE LIMITATION

Approved for public release

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

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Executive Summary

Deploying with the ADF is likely to see you contributing to Defence operations amidst communities with cultures that differ from your own. Whether working as part of combat, peacekeeping, stabilisation, security force capacity building or a disaster relief operation, interaction with the local population will not just be a part of your experience, but a crucial aspect of your job.

Working in a new cultural environment can be confusing and challenging. Understanding the new environment and how one's behaviour can impact both positively and negatively is essential for the mission and the way Australia is perceived abroad. This Handbook contains research and analysis on key aspects of culture, communicating across cultures and working with partners. It provides a number of useful hints and tips that help make cross cultural communication successful.

The Handbook has been developed at the request of the Commander 1st Division and forms part of the material provided to all Australians prior to their deployment or posting to the country

Operational Handbook

Working Amongst Different Cultures

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Updates, observations or feedback to maintain the utility, accuracy and relevance of this handbook are welcomed and can be emailed to HQ1DIVAWB@DRN.MIL.AU

This guide is available electronically at:

http://teamweb/sites/1div/awc/Afghanistan%20Case%20Studies/Forms/AllItems.aspx

Foreword

Success on operations favours those who adapt fastest. Being an adaptive force means we must not only learn quickly, but then rapidly and comprehensively apply relevant lessons. The culture of a learning organisation is fundamental to our success as an Army – of being an Adaptive Army. The ADF has extensive experience and knowledge harnessed through operations within Australia and around the globe.

This handbook is a compilation of these practical, hard-learned lessons from our forces on the ground, and of rigorous academic studies by DSTO. It contains general knowledge about the environment, culture, history, people and combatants – essential information that everyone needs regardless of their role in the mission.

I recommend that you prepare yourself thoroughly by investing the time to read this handbook in detail, and be mentally prepared for the challenges of the operational environment that you are deploying into.

Remember: every soldier is a forward scout. Be the eyes and ears for the rest of the Army, report back so we can all learn from your unique perspective and experiences. Don't keep it to yourself.

I wish you every success on your mission.

R. M. Burr, DSC, AM, MVO
Major General
Commander 1st Division

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Introduction

When deploying with the ADF it is likely that you will be contributing to Defence operations amidst communities with cultures that differ from your own. Whether this is part of combat, peacekeeping, stabilisation, security force capacity building or a disaster relief operation, interaction with the local population will not just be a part of your experience, but a crucial aspect of your job.

However, working in a new cultural environment can be confusing and challenging. Different cultures may consist of new languages, customs, foods, traditions and behaviours, all of which can be difficult to interpret and many of which can lead to misunderstandings. Simple things like nodding or pointing can have different meanings.

In Australia, nodding your head up and down generally means "yes" but the same gesture in Bulgaria means "no".

The advice in this booklet can be used as a guide to how your behaviour can impact, both positively and negatively, on interactions with locals. In addition to an introduction to the various cultures that the ADF is currently deployed within, the booklet provides a number of hints and tips that help make cross cultural communication successful, regardless of the country context.

For further information on the cultural context of your deployment, ADF members are encouraged to seek advice from deployed cultural advisors (CULADS), human terrain teams or in-country DFAT and AusAID representatives, many of whom are deployed for significantly longer than the ADF and who are a useful source of information on local conditions. DSTO's COIN Studies Team also provides a 'reachback' facility for more detailed advice and analysis on the politics and sociology of the conflict in your area of operation.

"No matter how successful the military operation, it can all be brought down through a small, seemingly innocuous, incident of cultural insensitivity."

- LTGEN Ken Gillespie, Chief of Army

Chapter 1

What is Culture?

WHAT IS CULTURE?

101 Culture is the shared concepts that guide what people believe, how they behave and how this behaviour is interpreted. Importantly, culture is multi layered. Within any given culture it is typical to find discernible sub-cultures which may be separated along regional, gender, generational, class or any number of additional lines. For example, the ADF as an organisation has a 'culture' in which the three services have their own sub-cultures.

102 Culture is a complex entanglement of values, beliefs and assumptions, many of which are taken for granted and rarely questioned. It is useful to conceive of culture as an iceberg, where a small portion is easily visible while the rest remains hidden. However, those unseen drivers shape the way people see the world and affect their assumptions, perceptions, motives, intent and behaviours. Therefore, without significant effort to uncover local culture, we are unlikely to be able to determine why locals are motivated in one direction and not another, or why they are reacting to us in a particular manner.
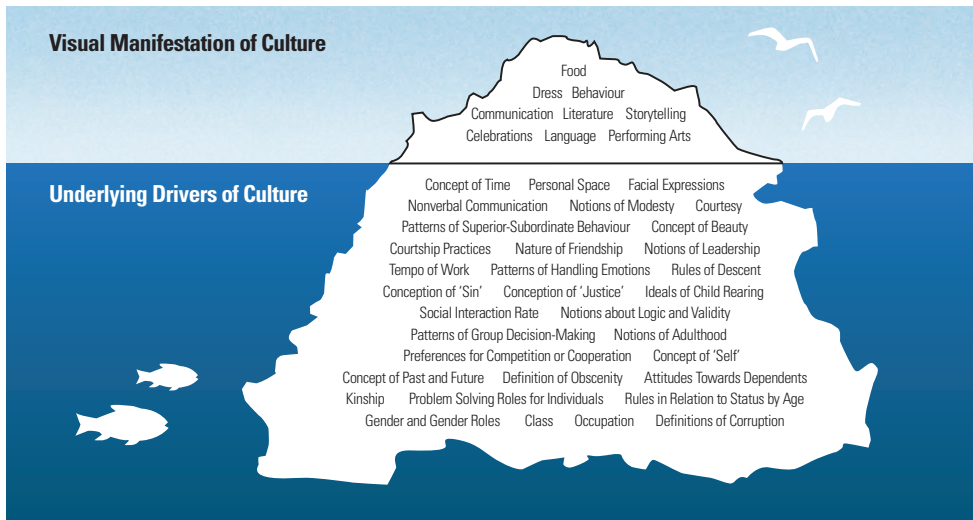
103 As culture is socialised it follows that members of one group will be able to distinguish themselves from another, even though the distinctions may not be apparent to us. Most cultures include some form of social hierarchy, or division of entitlements, which may be the subject of dispute. Different members of a single culture may be recovering from a crisis, may be combatants, non-combatants, military or civilian, elite or underprivileged. A sense of belonging to, and position within a given culture is often shaped by a shared historical experience. It does not matter whether such histories are influenced by real events or whether they are mythology; both are equally powerful in shaping culture and consequently, behaviour.

CHALLENGES FOR THE MILITARY

"I had perfect situational awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness".

- Commander US Third Infantry Division, Iraq 2003

104 For the foreseeable future ADF operations are likely to be conducted within countries that are suffering from, or in the process of

Visual Manifestation of Culture

Food
Dress Behaviour
Communication Literature Storytelling
Celebrations Language Performing Arts

Underlying Drivers of Culture

Concept of Time Personal Space Facial Expressions
Nonverbal Communication Notions of Modesty Courtesy
Patterns of Superior-Subordinate Behaviour Concept of Beauty
Courtship Practices Nature of Friendship Notions of Leadership
Tempo of Work Patterns of Handling Emotions Rules of Descent
Conception of 'Sin' Conception of 'Justice' Ideals of Child Rearing
Social Interaction Rate Notions about Logic and Validity
Patterns of Group Decision-Making Notions of Adulthood
Preferences for Competition or Cooperation Concept of 'Self'
Concept of Past and Future Definition of Obscenity Attitudes Towards Dependents
Kinship Problem Solving Roles for Individuals Rules in Relation to Status by Age
Gender and Gender Roles Class Occupation Definitions of Corruption

The iceberg concept of culture is commonly used to illustrate that the vast majority of influences are 'below the surface'. The above representation is a suggestion of some of the factors which can be of importance to individuals and cultural groups.

recovering from, societal conflict. In this context understanding culturally appropriate ends, ways and means is crucial for optimising effectiveness and achieving campaign success.

105 Unfortunately, however, history is rich with examples of well-resourced and well-meaning military interventions into other societies that have failed, or succeeded initially, but proved unsustainable. One of the reasons for these failures is a lack of understanding of the cultural context in which the military is operating and a subsequent failure to communicate in a manner which is appropriate to local expectations.

> We need to know the aspirations, priorities, stories, beliefs and dynamics of the communities we seek to rebuild or assist – all the things that reflect the quality and texture of their life. Only then will we be in a position to engage successfully with local populations and, by so doing, succeed in our mission.

106 The challenge for the ADF is that in order to successfully plan and execute operations, commanders require a detailed understanding of the host society. In operations amongst the people, virtually every action, inaction and communication by an ADF member shapes the opinions of an indigenous population which we are trying to influence. This includes how ADF personnel treat civilians during cordon and search operations, the accuracy and psychological effects of close air support, how ADF members behave with each other, how ADF vehicles are driven in public spaces, the treatment of detainees and the manner in which the ADF engage key local leaders, women and other persons with special status. Positive perceptions will facilitate freedom of movement, intelligence and popular support for the mission.

107 In addition, when it comes to measuring the progress of a campaign, success can only be understood in terms of what constitutes stability, normality or positive change in the local culture. This is in contrast to conventional operations, where success is defined by defeating an easily identified enemy.

CULTURE SHOCK

When arriving in an unfamiliar location you may experience culture shock. Culture shock is the feeling of confusion, bewilderment, distress or anxiety sometimes experienced when suddenly exposed to new and unfamiliar social and cultural environments. Culture shock can be traumatic, affecting your confidence and performance, however, it can also be the beginning of a rewarding cross-cultural experience.

Culture Shock: anxiety that results from losing all of our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse.

Culture shock can occur because:

• People use their own culture as the reference point for interpretation of other cultures and therefore misinterpret the values, beliefs, behaviours and norms of their hosts.

• The system of rewards and punishment for interaction are not understood and social rules for politeness vary, leading to confusion and embarrassment.

• Central aspects of one's identity are challenged within the new culture.

• Ethical and moral dissonance results from the need to accept standards, values or expectations that are disconcerting (such as poverty, corruption or the poor treatment of women and children).

"Generally speaking there are three phases associated with culture shock. The first phase, known as the honeymoon phase, occurs immediately following the introduction of the subject into the new environment. This phase is marked by feelings of fascination and interest in the novel aspects of the new environment. Soon the subject will move into phase two, the negotiation phase, during which the subject may experience feelings of frustration and anxiety while attempting to navigate through this new environment. Finally, the subject enters into the last phase, known as the adjustment phase, when they will begin to establish mechanisms for understanding and working within the new environment while developing new behavioural and cognitive norms.

In plain language, they learn to live and operate in the new environment."

- ISAF Joint Command (IJC) Public Affairs Officer

"There's an interesting story behind this picture. It was originally taken to be the cover… of COIN Common Sense. However, when it was submitted to the editorial staff, it was almost

summarily rejected. You see, our staff is made up almost exclusively of US and European members. To all of us the picture appeared to portray a funeral with service members laying flowers on the flag-draped coffin of an Afghan. What sort of message does this send? …Are we saying our efforts in Afghanistan are doomed… before any conversation could occur a red "X" was drawn across the photo and we decided to replace it. Then someone spoke up…

The voice came from the photographer who took the photo; he happened to be an Afghan. He looked around the room – at all of us wearing foreign military uniforms – then turned to me and said, "You don't understand."

"For us," he said, "flowers are a sign of peace and happiness. We present them at birthdays and weddings, not funerals." Then he explained the imagery he built into the photo. The sleeves of the men holding the flowers represent the many nations who have come together to support the Afghan people in their counterinsurgency fight. "Notice," he said, "how they are standing next to men from the ANA and ANP." Then he pointed out how the extended arms came together to form a circle over the Afghan flag. "For Afghans," he claimed, "the circle is a sign of strength and unity." Then he turned to me and asked, "how can you see anything negative in this image?" I was dumbstruck."

LCDR "JW" Stolze, Senior Managing Editor, COIN Common Sense

CHAPTER 2

Key Aspects of Culture

IDENTITY

INDIVIDUALIST & COLLECTIVIST SOCIETIES

In individualistic societies the ties between individuals are loose and people are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate family. Identity is centred around the individual and people think in terms of 'I'. In collectivist societies people are born, or assimilated, into strong cohesive groups that are long lasting. Identity is based around the social group to which one belongs and people think in terms of 'WE'. Individualistic societies tend to prioritise goals, tasks and achievements whilst collectivist societies tend to prioritise relationships and social harmony.

Australia rates as one of the most individualistic countries in the world, while Pakistan rates as one of the least.

201   In many of the countries in our immediate neighbourhood, how people identify themselves and others is strongly influenced by the social structures that exist within that society. However, people are rarely members of a single group and there are many ways that people may be identified. For example, ethnicity, religion, tribe, family, political affiliation, sporting associations and profession are all common markers of identity. Each group to which an individual identifies influences their beliefs, values, attitudes and perceptions and the identities which people choose to bring forward at any one time will be determined by the context. As a consequence, the more identity groups that we can use to describe a particular individual, the better understanding we have of the person in question.

Social psychological research has shown that encouraging people to identify with a goal or group has a more lasting effect on attitudes and behaviours than that induced by coercion or persuasion. Where people are required to comply with new norms but no attempt has been made to ensure that they identify with the group requiring that conformity they are likely to conform in public but not change their private views or behaviour.

People are not mobilised individually by cold calculations of rational facts; they are mobilised as part of social groups.

- David Kilcullen

202   Groups exist in relation to other groups. In fact it is the socially constructed boundaries between 'us' (the in group) and 'them' (the out group) which serves to define the group. If other groups did not exist then our group would not exist either. Sociologists call this process "othering" – the defining of a group in opposition or contrast to another group. As a consequence, it is interaction with other groups that tends to reinforce a person's in-group identity. Importantly, the mere labelling of a group of individuals as a group by outsiders may strengthen people's identification with the group. Thus, when NATO forces and agencies refer to all anti-government elements in Afghanistan as "Taliban" it can serve to increase people's identification with the Taliban even if there was no prior association.

"Treating people as if they were all members of a single group actually increases their identification with the group in question"

- Dr Kathryn Tomlinson, UK Ministry of Defence

203   Of all the identity groups which influence a person's behaviour, kinship is perhaps the most universal. In most societies, a person's social obligations are closely influenced by whom they are related to. These relations are typically split into those based on blood ties (i.e. descent) and those based on marriage (i.e. alliance). Whether through tracing relationships back through previous generations or analysing alliances built on marriage, an understanding of kinship remains one of the more powerful indicators of a person's identity and allegiance.

TRIBE

The concept of 'tribe' and its relationship to both 'ethnicity' and 'modernity' is hotly contested. Initially anthropologists used the notion of 'tribal societies' to denote a transitional phase in social evolution from pre-modern 'bands' of hunter-gatherers to modern 'states'. However, few anthropologists today accept this linear view of societal evolution and, as a consequence, the term 'tribe' has fallen out of favour. Where it is used it is generally considered to describe a form of social organisation which is:

• Structured largely on the basis of kinship and, as generations pass, families on different branches of the tree grow into distinct sub-tribes.

• Not governed through standing formal institutions, but ad hoc councils of heads of families and other leaders.

Tribal societies are often referred to as 'headless' or 'segmentary' because different parts (or segments) come together to co-operate when it is appropriate to do so (for example, to repel an invader), but dissipate

again into segments (or sub-tribes) thereafter. In tribal societies segments such as clan, sub-tribe and tribe are defined in opposition to each other (and are often in conflict with each other), but combine at higher levels in opposition to other larger segments (such as other tribes, ethnicities, Government representatives or external forces).

"Me against my brother; My brother and me against my cousin; Me, my brother, and my cousin against the stranger".

- Arab Proverb

THE WANTOK SYSTEM

Solomon Islands culture is based around the family, extended family, extended kinship group *(laen)* and the *Wantok*. The *Wantok* (one talk) refers to the broader language community. A Solomon Islander will feel strong loyalty to their family *(laen)* and *Wantok*. There is significantly less identification with the Solomon Islands and its various state institutions. The *Wantok* operates as a strong social support group. It is not uncommon to find people helping others in their *Wantok* find food, shelter and employment, even to the point of bankrupting themselves. When an offence occurs, compensation is demanded for the extended family, and sometimes the entire *Wantok*, not just the individual.

The *Wantok* system has played a significant role in shaping Solomon Island politics which has traditionally promoted the "big man." The "big man"

gains power by accumulating wealth and distributing it to his followers to gain support. *Wantok* and family obligations shape the way "big men" distribute this wealth and there are powerful expectations that resources (including the state's largesse) will be preferentially distributed to family members.

In this social situation it may be difficult to determine what constitutes corruption and what constitutes the normal functioning of a society that is different from our own. Often the answer is simply a matter of scale and impact. When the resources of the state are captured by a single group and the *Wantok* system is used as an excuse for that group's enrichment at the expense of others, it is likely to be a significant driver of conflict.

Passing on traditions through the generations.

BEHAVIOUR

Time & Timeliness

204   Concepts of time and timeliness vary greatly across cultures. In some, there is a strong emphasis on punctuality. In others, life is taken more slowly. Meeting times may be considered flexible and may take place several hours (or even days) after the scheduled time. It may be considered rude to be late, or it may be considered

foolish to be frustrated at another's tardiness. In any context, it is important to be patient, to find out what the local protocol is and to work with it. Different attitudes towards timeliness should not be interpreted as rudeness, laziness or disinterest. It simply reflects a different pattern of life in the host country.

> **HINTS & TIPS**
> - Regardless of the local custom, always be punctual and maintain your own standards.
> - Be patient and accept that time often works differently in different countries
> - Never show frustration when an appointment is not kept. This reflects poorly on you, is counter-productive and will lower your standing in the eyes of locals.
> - Remember that following proper process (as determined by local custom) is almost always more important than the decision reached. In many countries the need for consultation and consensus slows down decision making. If outsiders rush this process in order to be efficient or meet their own timelines it is likely that decisions will not to be honoured.

Hospitality

205   In many of the societies in Asia and the Pacific hospitality is considered to be of the utmost importance. Hospitality conveys dignity and respect on both the host and the guest and is often used as a precursor to business. When sitting down to tea or sharing a meal with a counterpart, the formalities of talking about each other's families, health and livelihoods may continue for some time before conversation turns to the reason

for the visit. These formalities are significant on two levels: First, it is considered polite and courteous, and secondly it is an important trust building exercise. These conversations should not be rushed.

DSTO Analyst and member of International Stabilisation Force share a meal with a local family in Timor Leste.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOSPITALITY IN AFGHANISTAN: A TALE OF TEA AND SALT

Pashtunwali is a complex mix of codes, customs and informal institutions which Afghanistan's Pashtuns have lived by for centuries. Among the more important elements of Pashtunwali are *nanawati* (the obligation to provide asylum or shelter), *badal* (the expectation of reciprocal justice or revenge) and *tureh* (honour in acts of bravery). However, perhaps the most important social code within the Pashtun system is *melmastia* or hospitality. Pashtuns consider this one of their finest virtues. A Pashtun does not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity, religion, social status or qawm in respect to *melmastia* and hospitality is given free from any reciprocal obligation.

Sharing a meal or tea together consolidates relationships. It is called "the right of salt" and places great responsibility on the guest to be faithful to and honest with his host. The following story is used to teach the importance of hospitality to Afghan children.

A group of thieves one night entered a man's house while all of the family was asleep. The thieves, under the instructions of their leader, began carrying out carpets and cushions - anything portable that had any worth. In the dark, the leader of the band reached into a cupboard, finding a hard smooth rock-like object. He immediately decided that it must be some kind of a gem. The thieves had almost finished their work when the leader put this "gem" to his lips. Tasting it, he was not only disappointed at finding that the gem was just a block of salt, but he was horrified that he had stolen the property of a man whose salt he had eaten. He immediately ordered his men to return all of the property to the house before the family awoke.

Reciprocity

206   In some communities social ties are formed by the obligation to reciprocate, to both give and receive. When individuals and groups enter into reciprocal exchange arrangements it generates mutual obligations that tie both parties into an ongoing relationship. Understanding these relationships can give insights into who people trust, who people are obligated to support and where allegiances lie.

207   Reciprocity also works the other way. In many cultures perceived injustices ranging from social slights to gross abuses can only be righted through acts of reciprocity. When applied at the level of identity group (i.e. district, tribe,

ethnicity) this can lead to widespread communal violence and instability. As a consequence, many societies have developed sophisticated traditional mechanisms for restoring honour without resorting to violence.

JUSTICE AND RECIPROCITY IN AFGHANISTAN

In Afghan (Pashtun) society it is considered honourable to respond to slights with reciprocation ('eye for an eye'). This can sometimes get out of control, spawning vicious blood feuds which last several generations and result in substantial loss of life on both sides. Failure to take revenge is seen as shameful. However, *nanawati* (forgiveness) and punishments levied by *jirga* (council of elders), such as *saz* (compensation) can absolve an aggrieved person from the obligation of taking *badal* (revenge). The cessation of a blood feud is known as *teega.*

Deputy Governor, Khoday Rahim, addresses local community leaders at a Shura in the Southern Baluchi Valley.

Dress

208   Different countries have different expectations (and in some cases laws) on what you should wear. When in civilian attire try to dress modestly by local standards and keep your clothes neat and tidy. You may also discover that local clothes are better suited to local weather conditions.

HINTS & TIPS

- In most cultures it is rarely acceptable to wear clothes in public that expose the body between the knees and shoulders (applies to males as well as females). Avoid shorts, singlets and open shoes. Trousers (or female equivalents) should be worn at all times outside the wire.

- In some cultures, especially those that require women to cover themselves in public, a woman deliberately exposing her shoulders, legs, or hair can imply she is engaged in prostitution.

- In cultures where it is the norm for women to wear head coverings, the wearing of a head scarf by female ADF members in civilian attire in public can avoid unnecessary attention from local men and indicate cultural sensitivity to your hosts. It does not have to be seen as a religious observance.

209   In some cultures, people may make personal comments that you may find inappropriate or offensive. For example, in Asia and the Pacific locals may have no hesitation in commenting on your weight or calling you fat. This is rarely an insult and sometimes a compliment (the size of one's waist line is an indicator of wealth).

Gender Roles

210   Gender roles have changed markedly in Australia over the course of the last five decades.

However, in many societies in our region gender remains an important determinant of behaviour and status. From the moment they are born, people learn how to act, dress and behave in an appropriate manner for their gender. Gender roles are influenced by past and present culture and effect expectations of dress, behaviour, status and roles that are assigned in the home, work place and government. In many societies, emerging women's liberation movements are one of the drivers of conflict and understanding the local attitudes toward gender may be important for effective and credible communication. Remember that social change is an often slow and sometimes turbulent process, but that for it to be sustainable it needs to come from within.

MATRIARCHAL AND PATRIARCHAL SOCIETIES

Matriarchal refers to a form of social organisation where the woman is the head of the family and/or where inheritance and family name is traced through the female line.

Patriarchal refers to a form of social organisation in which the male is the family head and title is traced through the male line.

Some of the Melanesian societies in our region remain matriarchal.

211   While abroad, you are expected to treat men, women and children with dignity and respect, regardless of local practice. However, you should still respect cultural practices in relation to physical contact and interaction. While deployed with the ADF, you may discover that some activities are socially unacceptable for a man or a woman to conduct. For example, at check points it may be unacceptable to search a person of the opposite sex. Be sensitive to this, and be creative in finding solutions.

US FEMALE ENGAGEMENT TEAMS (FETS) BUILD BRIDGES INTO AFGHAN SOCIETY

CAMP DWYER, Afghanistan — As the Female Engagement Team of Regimental Combat Team 1 patrols the fields, canals and villages of Helmand, they are bridging the cultural gap that is sometimes at the forefront of the counterinsurgency here.

In Afghanistan's culture, a woman's modesty is a sanctity closely guarded by everyone. But, this specially trained team is able to reach across those boundaries, enabling them to go where male Marines often cannot.

"Afghanistan's society is much more conservative [than that of the U.S.] when it comes to women," said 1st Lt. Quincy Washa, FET platoon commander for RCT-1. *"Very rarely are they allowed to go outside the compounds without a male escort, so it's imperative that we get the female Marines to go to them."*

The team is responsible for engaging with local Afghans to help promote security, governance and development. They gather information regarding the community's needs, and foster communication between US and Afghan forces while respecting local customs. This strategy has proven effective, explained Washa.

"The Afghan men have responded very *well to our presence here, and they appreciate what we do,"* said Washa, 25, from Ogallala, Nebraska. *"The Afghan women are very excitd to see American females out here and to have someone to voice their concerns too."*

Lt. Col. John Carson, the officer-in-charge of the RCT-1 Effects Cell, said the FET is invaluable to the unit. As the lead supervisor of the Effects Cell, Carson oversees coordination of all RCT-1 noncombat operations, which encompass the FET and Civil Affairs Group, among other subsections. The FET provides information that can be used across the spectrum of operations, he said. "[Information collected] has greatly increased the Marines' situational awareness during patrols, and it has given us a better overall sense of the atmospherics in our area of operations," said Carson. "Our battalions value the FET's input and are eager to partner with them during day-to-day operations."

The FET's mission isn't limited to interactions in the villages. Like any Marines, they are riflemen first. They attach to infantry companies, where they provide security, gather information and search people, vehicles and compounds.

- *Sgt. Dean Davis, Regimental Combat Team 1*

DSTO Analyst with local children in Timor Leste.

Children

212   Children are an important part of any society, but there are different ideas and laws about how they should be raised, what work they should do, and how they may be disciplined. Children everywhere love fun and games. In appropriate situations, an impromptu game of soccer can be a good way to break the ice and build rapport.

ADF Soldier with local children.

RELIGION

213   Religion, beliefs and faith are a significant aspect of the lives of almost every individual, even if they claim not to be "religious". These factors shape the way we live our lives, including the roles of men, women and children, the way society is structured, the way we interact with each other, and the laws that society creates. While on deployment, you should be aware of local beliefs and customs, and should respect them (even if they seem strange to you).

Symbols of Major World Religions.

HINTS & TIPS

- If in a conflict or a post-conflict zone, you should ask about local practices in regards to death and bodies.

- Local religious leaders may hold great political influence in some cultures. It is a common mistake among western militaries to focus exclusively on secular leaders during Key Leader Engagement.

- Under no circumstance should you use your deployment as an opportunity to promote your own religious beliefs. Evangelism by outsiders is often associated with colonialism and sometimes illegal.

- Chaplains are usually able to provide information on religious beliefs and practices of host nations and are useful conduits to talk with local religious leaders.

- Participating in local religious services will usually be seen in a positive manner and help build rapport.

FOCUS AREA: ISLAM

The ADF is increasingly engaged with people of Islamic faith, and it is important that we understand their beliefs in order to work effectively with them. Some of our closest neighbours have large Muslim populations. For example, Indonesia, a secular democracy, has the largest Muslim population of any nation in the world.

Islam is one of the world's largest and fastest growing religions. There are approximately 1.3 billion Muslims in the world and most of these do not live in the Middle East.

The term "Arab" (referring to someone whose ethnic origins are from Arabian peninsula) is sometimes mistakenly correlated with "Muslim." However, the majority of the world's Muslims are not Arabs, and not all Arabs are Muslim.

The word Islam means "submission" [to God]. Like Christianity and Judaism, Islam is a monotheistic religion which worships the God of the Old Testament (known as Allah in Arabic). Muslims recognise the New Testament and believe that Jesus was a great prophet of the faith. However, they hold that the final and culminating revelations were made to Muhammad, the last and greatest of the prophets. The Qur'an is considered to be the verbatim word of God as revealed to Muhammad through the Archangel Gabriel.

Mosque in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Mosques come in many shapes and sizes, and are strongly influenced by local cultural taste (just like Christian Churches vary significantly).

Muslims also believe in a day of judgement *(Qiyāmah)* and the bodily

resurrection of the dead. Much like the New Testament, the Qur'an describes the last days preceding *Qiyāmah* as encompassing various trials and tribulations.

Sunnis and Shi'a

Sunni and Shi'a are the two main denominations within Islam. The division occurred as a result of a succession debate following the death of Muhammad. Some believed that leadership of the Muslim *Ummah* (faithful) should be based on merit as determined by a *shura* (council of elders). These people are known as Sunni. Others thought that it should be vested in Muhammad's lineage through his son-in-law Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Those who believed that Ali was the rightful successor to Muhammad and that future Imams should descent from this line were called *Shi'a-t-Ali* (Party of Ali), or simply Shi'a. Only 10-13% of Muslims are Shi'a.

The Five Pillars of Islam

A Muslim's duties form the five pillars of the faith:

- **Shahadat**, literally 'testimony', is the central creed of Islam: "There is no god but God (Allah), and Mohammed is His Prophet". This profession of faith is repeated often, and its sincere recital designates one as a Muslim.

- **Salāt**. (Prayer) is conducted five times a day. Muslims pray in a prescribed manner after purification through ritual ablutions at dawn, midday, mid afternoon, sunset, and nightfall. Worshippers recite the prayers while facing Mecca and where possible congregate in a mosque under a prayer leader *(imam)*.

- **Sawm** entails a period of obligatory fasting during daylight hours in the ninth month *(Ramadan)* of the Muslim (lunar) calendar. Muslims are forbidden to eat, drink, smoke, or have sex from sunrise to sunset during this time.

- **Zakat** is the act of giving alms to the poor. In the early days of Islam, governing authorities imposed *Zakat* as a tax on personal property. Now, *Zakat* may be collected at mosques or by government for distribution to the poor. It is considered a religious obligation (as opposed to voluntary charity).

- **Hajj**. Once in their lifetimes, Muslims are required, if physically and financially able, to make a pilgrimage, or *Hajj*, to the holy city of Mecca during the 12th month of the lunar calendar. Those who have undertaken the *Hajj* sometimes change their name or title to Haji in recognition of their pilgrimage.

Crowd of Faithful at the Hajj Pilgrimage.

Jihad

Sometimes referred to as the 'sixth pillar of Islam', *jihad* is an important religious duty for all Muslims. The term is best translated as "struggle" and is typically used to refer to struggles in defence of the faith. This could be a personal struggle to maintain faith, an internal struggle to improve the faithful *(Ummah)* or an external struggle to defend the faithful from the non-faithful *(infidel)*. A person engaged in jihad is known as a *mujahid*, the plural is *mujahideen*. The concept of *jihad* has been coopted by violent extremist groups in recent decades and used to justify a state of permanent armed conflict against Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Notwithstanding this, the vast majority of Muslims practice *jihad* as a peaceful struggle to maintain personal faith.

Muslims pray five times a day, facing Mecca. Like Christian parents in Australia, Muslim parents teach their children the principles of their faith by bringing them to Church or Mosque.

LAW & JUSTICE

Rule of Law Institutions

214   The legal framework for your deployment is likely to be complex. Many Australian laws will continue to apply, especially the Defence Act. The Geneva conventions and the laws of armed conflict will apply at all time. Although it is likely that you will be exempt from some local laws as a consequence of formal agreements, many local laws will also apply (for example, pornography that is legal in Australia may be illegal in other nations). When in doubt, it is recommended that you respect local laws.

RAMSI Soldiers and a Solomon Islands Police Officer exchange information as they patrol their different ways in the Central Market in Honiara.

215   Unfortunately, ongoing societal conflicts such as insurgencies and civil wars tend to be characterised by the corruption, loss of authority or whole-sale disappearance of state security forces. This, in turn, opens the way for the proliferation of predatory armed groups for whom warfare and criminal activity constitute their livelihood, the development of criminal networks, often with a regional presence, and a significant increase in minor opportunistic crime. In addition, a population's experience of state security forces may be extremely negative. Security forces may be perpetrators of human rights abuses, undermining the very human security they are there to protect. Judicial systems may be weak, corrupt or

dominated by sectarian interests. Prisons may suffer from inhumane conditions, such as overcrowding, widespread disease, ill health and poor facilities.

216   For many people the security sector will be the main manifestation of the authority of the state and the primary arena of interaction between the government and the population. As such, it is essential that the sector is seen to be effective, legitimate, transparent, just and subject to the rule of law. Where this is not the case anti-government elements will prey on widespread perceptions of injustice by portraying the state as ineffectual and corrupt. In such an environment the reform of the security sector becomes central to the success, or otherwise, of the mission and a precondition of long-term stability.

Land Ownership

217   Land ownership is a major source of conflict in many parts of the world. This is particularly significant in countries where there are multiple and competing systems of land ownership, poor local capacity for surveying and registering ownership or significant people movements brought about as a result of conflict. In the latter case disputes over land ownership may be both the cause and effect of conflict.

Conflict over land is a significant source of instability in Afghanistan, the Solomon Islands and Timor Leste.

> **CONFLICT OVER SCARCE RESOURCES IN AFGHANISTAN**
>
> The vast majority of local conflict in Afghanistan takes place within the tribe, most being within or between families. Land, water and debt are the most frequent. Significantly, the Taliban have become adept at using local conflict to cement their position within rural communities.

> Travelling Taliban judges provide quick, predictable justice thereby resolving disputes and saving communities from the potentially disastrous effects of revenge-driven blood feuds. Alternatively, the Taliban may become a party to the conflict, providing weapons or fighters in support of one of the protagonists. This, in turn, forces the opposite side to seek support with ISAF or government forces as entire families, clans and sub-tribes become politicised.

218   In Australia it is the norm to request permission to enter private property. In some countries this concept may extend to communal areas and lands owned or used by the village or clan, often with boundaries that are unmarked. Where possible, it is good practice to seek permission to enter land that has evidence of human habitation, including farm land.

Corruption

219   When immersed in unfamiliar cultures it is common to interpret certain actions as graft, corruption or disloyalty. However, local leaders may have culturally recognised privileges or engage in culturally acceptable behaviours that you are unaware of and which you may mistakenly perceive as corrupt. It is not easy to assess what constitutes corruption within a different society to one's own and debate continues over whether nepotistic practices such as patronage or clientelistic systems should be considered corrupt in all contexts and across all societies. As a general rule, local custom and norms should guide the commander in his assessment.

220   That said many countries where the ADF is deployed have serious and internally acknowledged problems with corruption which transcend that which could be put down to cultural difference. In some societies, corruption undermines confidence in the state, impedes

the flow of aid to those who need it most, concentrates wealth into the hands of a minority and provides elites with illicit means of protecting their positions and interests. In addition, it affords anti-government networks with vital propaganda opportunities and contributes to social conditions which foster other forms of crime and instability.

221   Even where corruption is widespread, it may fall outside the ADF mission to resolve. There may be insufficient political will or resources or both to deal with the problem. Here it is useful to distinguish between 'grand' and 'petty' corruption. Grand corruption is corrupt practices which pervade the highest levels of government leading to an erosion of confidence in the rule of law. Petty corruption, on the other hand, involves the exchange of small amounts of money or the granting of minor favours by those seeking preferential treatment. The critical difference between the two is that grand corruption involves the distortion of the central functions of the state whereas petty corruption may develop and exist within the context of established social frameworks. Typically, the ADF will only become involved in anti-corruption measures in cases of grand corruption or where petty corruption transcends the bounds of what is acceptable within local norms or impinges on the human security and wellbeing of the population. In such cases other government agencies (such as the AFP) will usually lead this line of operation with the ADF in a supporting role.

Anti-corruption measures often constitute a threat to elites on whom a political settlement depends. As such, the timing of anti-corruption measures should be considered carefully. Political settlements may depend on a degree of patronage and opportunity for enrichment and routinely involve cash payments by either the host government or intervening forces

and agencies. Once anti-corruption initiatives do commence, the military may be required to support:

- Broader multinational pressure being brought to bear on host governments to eradicate 'grand' corruption.

- Development and dissemination of codes of conduct and ethical standards for host government security forces and civil servants.

- Accountability arrangements and transparent contract management procedures, especially in the dispersal of reconstruction funds provided by intervention forces and agencies.

- Whistleblower protection schemes.

Compensation

222   In many cultures compensation following a perceived injustice (whether for loss of land, housing, infrastructure or the death of a family member) is an important precondition for restoring relationships. For example, it is recognised that in Afghanistan civilians who have suffered loss need to be compensated as it sends important messages to the broader population, the Afghan government and the individuals concerned. A mechanism for providing compensation payments for those that have suffered loss is paramount to maintaining population support for coalition and ADF forces.

223   Depending on the loss suffered, compensation may take the form of

- An apology for harm done.
- Transparent investigations of possible violations of humanitarian law.
- Equitable condolence payments.

Compensation payments differ for the participating countries involved in the transgression and for the

loss suffered. The different levels of compensation are also a source of resentment as a person may receive less payment than someone else for the same act. Locals may be unaware that compensation payments are available to them and it may be your responsibility to inform them.

COMPENSATION IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

One of the central elements of both the formal and informal justice system in the Solomon Islands is the principle of compensation. Social harmony is highly valued, and where an individual or group violates *kastom*, injures or insults someone, or otherwise does wrong, compensation is demanded. Compensation is designed to restore balance, and is part of a process of reconciling the two parties.

It generally involves an exchange of wealth, elaborate ceremony and a process of reconciliation. During the 'Tensions' period prior to the ADF deployment in 2003, the mechanisms for compensation were abused, with claims being made against the central government on behalf of entire islands and compensation being used as a cover for corruption.

POLITICS

"Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln"

(War is a mere continuation of politics by other means)

- Carl von Clausewitz

224　Societal conflict is domestic politics by other means and, as a consequence, you will be entering a politically charged atmosphere. Although Australians are often relaxed about their political opinions and alliances, this is unlikely to be the case anywhere the ADF is deployed. Political issues are likely to be shaping people's identity and grievances, driving violent conflict and fragmenting society.

225　Before deploying, make sure you have a basic understanding of the political drivers of conflict in theatre.

- When rotating in, make sure you ask the outgoing deployment about specifics of the local community, including key individuals, local structures, hot topics, security issues and any other cultural tips.

- Try creating your own tree diagram of key individuals in your area of operation.

- Look at both CLASSIFIED and UNCLASS reporting on your area of operation. The Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) and the Insurgent Network Analysis Cell (INAC) provide good CLASSIFIED analyses of the politics of conflict. However, there are an increasing amount of high-quality analyses in the public domain through organisations such as the International Crisis Group (ICG), United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB), International Council for the Red Cross (ICRC), Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Unites States Institute of Peace (USIP), Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), Center for a New American Security (CNAS) and American Enterprise Institute (AEI).

Unless otherwise directed to by your chain of command, do not get involved in local politics. Be neutral and offer no opinion in political discussions. Do not indicate (or be seen to indicate) support for a political party or pressure group. Do not get involved in family or tribal debates. Keep your opinions private.

Chapter 3

Communicating Across Cultures

301   So now that you know a bit about culture, how will this impact on your mission? First, and most importantly, it will help you engage with locals in a manner which will facilitate trusted working relationships and elicit hints, tips, information and intelligence on how best to work within your new cultural context. The local population is likely to be your most important resource for information and should be your biggest ally. However, communicating effectively with locals will be one of the most challenging problems you will face while deployed. This section will provide advice on how to engage with locals. It will help you determine what is appropriate to say and how to say it, as well as what gestures, expressions and postures are likely to facilitate successful interactions.

COMMUNICATION

Verbal Communication

302   One of the first things you will notice in a new country is the language (or languages) the locals are speaking. The ADF has deployed to a number of linguistically diverse countries, including, Bougainville, East Timor, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands. Although language is something that makes different cultures unique and contributes to the cultural diversity and richness of different countries in our region, it provides a formidable barrier to effective communication. In addition to vocabulary, intonation, volume and tempo of speech can also provide indicators of the meaning and veracity of what is being spoken. Some cultures are comfortable with silence, allowing time for deliberation or contemplation, while others are not.

"Culture and language are inextricably linked. An appreciation of culture facilitates the use of language, whilst linguistic skills facilitate the gaining and exploitation of cultural knowledge".

- The Significance of Culture to the Military. DCDC Joint Doctrine Note, MOD, UK

TIMOR LESTE

As a result of the colonial education system and Indonesian occupation, approximately 13% of East Timorese speak Portuguese, 43% speak Bahasa Indonesian, and 6% speak English. Tetum, the most common language, is spoken by approximately 91% of the population, although only 46% speak Tetum Prasa, the form of Tetum dominant in Dili. Mambae, Kemak, and Fataluku are also widely spoken. This linguistic diversity is enshrined in the country's constitution, which designates Portuguese and Tetum as official languages and English and Bahasa as working languages.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

At least 87 distinct languages are spoken in the Solomon Islands. English is the official language, but only about 2% of the population are proficient. Instead, locals have developed their own language, Pijin English, which is used as the dominant language. Most locals are multilingual.

AFGHANISTAN

The two official languages of Afghanistan are Dari (50%) and Pashtu (35%). Dari predominates in the north and west of the country as well as the major urban centres. Pashtu, on the other hand, predominates in the south and east, especially amongst rural Pashtun communities. Other widely spoken languages include Turkic dialects (11%) such as Uzbek and Turkmen, and the Persian-Mongolian hybrid language (Hazaraji) spoken by the Hazara community. Most educated Afghans are bilingual.

A Major and local Afghan Interpreter speak with local Afghan man whilst travelling through the Baluchi Valley, Southern Afghanistan.

HINTS & TIPS

- Learn some simple phrases in the local language, such as hello and thank you. This will help break the ice in a new location.

- Keep a phrasebook handy.

- Don't be scared to try the local language. You will make mistakes, but practice makes perfect and people appreciate the effort. Be prepared to laugh at your mistakes.

- When using English, make sure you keep your key point short, clear and unambiguous. Avoid slang or local Australian idiom.

- Remember, the tone of your voice is important. Avoid aggressive or frustrated tones, as people can hear this even when they cannot understand you.

- Never speak louder in an attempt to be understood.

- A sense of humour can go a long way. However, **do not use sarcasm or irony** unless you are very familiar with the person and are sure they will understand.

Non-Verbal Communication

303   In life, it's not just what we say that is important, but how we say it and how we behave. This includes our tone of voice, our posture, what we do with our hands, our eyes, our feet, and a range of other factors which are not universal. In a foreign environment, you need to be especially careful of what non-verbal messages you are sending as research suggests that up to 2/3 of messages are communicated non-verbally.

Gesture

304   We use gestures all the time to communicate. We nod our head to show agreement and we wave to greet our friends. However, these gestures are not universal. For example to motion at someone with the index finger is insulting in many nations, even obscene, yet it is used in Australian culture to mean "come here". It may be more acceptable to beckon with the palm down. Some cultures have very "loud" and expressive hands, while others keep there hands very still when speaking.

305   While overseas, try to find out about local gestures. Watch how the locals behave. Ask a local if you aren't sure what is being said, or if you don't receive the expected reaction when trying to communicate.

George Bush Snr visiting Australia. He believed he was giving the "peace" sign as a friendly greeting to us Aussies, but clearly made a mistake.

Giving the thumbs up. In much of the Middle East, Afghanistan, Iran and some of South America, this sign is extremely offensive.

This sign has many meanings. In Australia it could mean 'zero' or 'ok'. 'Ok' is the most common interpretation internationally. However in Brazil and other South American countries, Germany, Turkey, Iran and Russia it can be an offensive suggestion that you are a homosexual, while in Japan it means "money."

Body Language

306   Have you ever got the impression that someone was being hostile or aggressive, even though they had not said anything? Maybe their body language, such as how they were standing or holding their arms, gave you that impression. Body language is often unconscious, but plays a significant role in how we are perceived. Facial expressions and gestures can provide indications of feelings and intent whether they are involuntary or conscious. For example, standing with hands on your hips may appear confident in Australian culture, but in other cultures may be read as arrogant or aggressive. Also, be aware of how you are sitting and in what direction your feet are pointing. In most Asian societies the foot is considered unclean and pointing your foot at someone is a considerable offence.

Afghans usually sit on the floor in their own homes. Cross your legs rather than stretch them out as pointing your feet towards someone else may cause offense.

307   Eye contact varies between cultures. In some cultures, not maintaining eye contact is interpreted as a sign of dishonesty, while in others it is a mark of respect to divert your eyes. For example, in the Solomon Islands and Afghanistan a man should avoid making eye contact with married women as a sign of respect. In cultures where eye contact or aversion are important non-verbal cues, such as most Asian cultures, the wearing of dark sunglasses and protective eyewear can be seen as rude or untrustworthy, so it is best when meeting people to remove sunglasses.

BODY LANGUAGE TIPS FOR ENGAGING LOCALS

DO

- Shake hands firmly but gently in greeting and departure. Always use the right hand.

- If an alternative to the handshake is used in your area of operation, learn this and use it when interacting with locals. For example, Afghans may place their right hands over their hearts after shaking hands. This gesture simply means that the handshake is from the heart. It is appropriate and expected that the receiver reciprocate.

- If you're a male – only shake a female's hand when it is extended otherwise use the right hand over heart gesture. And if you're female – only shake a male's hand if it is extended otherwise use the right hand over heart gesture.

- Remove footwear before entering a home or place of worship and place shoes in the designated area.

- Cross your legs rather than stretch them out as pointing your feet towards someone else may cause

offense. If you're unable to cross your legs then ensure that the legs and feet are covered.

- Stand up when someone enters a room.

- Respect elders.

- Try all food and beverages offered. This acknowledges the hospitality of the host.

DON'T

- Use the left hand for physical contact with others, to eat, to gesture or to make an offering: it is considered unclean in many societies.

- Sit with the soles of your feet facing someone. It often indicates that you believe the person is beneath you.

- Show a women attention by touching, or staring at her.

- Walk away from someone or turn your back on someone who is speaking to you.

- Beckon or point with a finger. It is often considered rude and may be mistaken for a challenge.

- Wear sunglasses when speaking to locals.

- Photograph someone without first asking permission.

Touching

308   In some cultures touching is reserved for close friends or family members, whilst in others touching is common place. A kiss on the cheek may be considered normal between strangers, male or female, or considered inappropriate. Wherever you are find out about local customs with respect to greetings and touching.

A powerful handshake often will not impress, and may be seen as aggressive.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

In Afghanistan and Timor Leste it is not uncommon for males to hold hands whilst walking or to kiss each other on the cheeks when greeting or departing. This is a sign of friendship. On the other hand, it is rarely acceptable for people of the opposite sex to display affection in public, even if they are dating or married.

Personal Space

309   Personal space is the distance you need between yourself and another to feel comfortable. It is helpful to imagine this as a "bubble" that you carry around yourself. These bubbles get bigger or smaller depending on who you are around (e.g. you may feel comfortable letting a family member or partner get physically closer to you than a complete stranger).

310   Different cultures have different views on what constitutes an appropriate level of personal space. Standing too close may be interpreted as rude or confronting, while standing too far may seem as distant. Whilst on deployment you may discover that locals may have no hesitation in invading your personal space (as they probably will not realise you are uncomfortable). Alternatively, you may inadvertently invade another person's personal space.

Appropriate levels of personal space can be affected by familiarity, age, gender and social position.

311   Unfortunately, there are no defined rules for personal space. It is best to handle the topic with delicacy and respect. Over time, you will learn what is considered "normal" and acceptable by local standards. Until then, be patient, remain calm and do your best to fit in.

APPROACHES TO ENGAGEMENT

Forms of Engagement

312   According to Dr Kathryn Tomlinson (UKMoD) engagement can be seen to take five distinct forms: direct, indirect, third party, non engagement and failed engagement.

313   **Direct Engagement.** Direct face-to-face engagement is the most personal form of interaction, allowing for observation of the other party's body language and instantaneous reactions. Trust is established though repeated positive verbal and non-verbal communication.

SHARED VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS

Communication should not be limited to the written or the spoken word. Active representations of ideas can also be empowering. These include visual representation and diagramming such as:

• Mapping (with paper and pen or sticks on the ground) - to identify existing resources and infrastructure for planning.

• Role plays – peer education.

• Modelling and diagrams – decision making, explanations, cause and effect.

• Photo-voice methods – sharing of perceptions, representation of social dynamics.

• Time lines and seasonal calendars – quantification of resources, planning.

• Transect walks (travelling through the environment as you discuss it) – general appreciation of the problems space, sharing perceptions.

Visual representations such as these can create a shared reference point for discussion, and can be less confrontational than direct questioning or other forms of messaging. Importantly, in areas of low literacy rates, they enable the participation of a broader cross section of the community.

314   **Indirect Engagement.** Indirect engagement refers to interaction that is mediated via a technology (such as email or telephone). It is of benefit when it is inappropriate or impractical to meet directly with the other party or when they do not want to meet or do not want to be seen meeting with the ADF. Indirect engagement is most effective after trusting relationships have been established via more direct approaches.

315   **Third Party Engagement.** In some circumstance, cooperative relationships are better built, at least initially, through third parties. For example, engagement with the ADF may be perceived as dangerous by the other party who may wish to interact with the military through third parties such as local NGOs. Given the current lack of language skills among the ADF, in practice almost all interaction with non-English speaking locals will be conducted through interpreters, themselves a third party (see Section below on working with Interpreters).

316   **Non-Engagement.** Isolated communities or communities living in insecure areas or those antagonistic to the ADF mission may be difficult to engage. However, these communities represent an important source of alternative perspectives that may be important to the success of the mission. Non-engagement with certain groups (for whatever the reason) generally skews our understanding of the values, motivations, intents and behaviours of locals towards that subset which the ADF is engaging with. However, the

concerns that are not heard are potentially more important than those that are audible and every effort should be made to make it as easy as possible for those voices that are unheard to have their say.

Before the advent of Female Engagement Teams (FETs), ISAF found it difficult to engage with women in Afghanistan as there were far too few female linguists serving in the US forces.

317   Failed Engagement. Engagement fails when the other party has become so dissatisfied with the outcome of interaction with the ADF that they cease further engagement. As cooperation is built on reputation and repeated interaction, if these break down it will be very difficult to (re)establish a cooperative relationship. Disengagement with the ADF might lead to greater engagement by the other party with groups hostile to the ADF's mission.

Messaging versus Engagement

318   Messaging is carried out in order to achieve a specific, usually short-term, effect in the community. It involves managing perceptions, explaining actions, countering negative propaganda and achieving psychological dominance. Messaging is often a priority for information, psychological and media operations units, who focus on identifying the change that they wish to achieve among a target audience, and developing appropriate narratives to achieve this end.

319   Engagement, on the other hand, is carried out in order to build trust among the local population, but without the expectation of achieving immediate outcomes or behavioural changes. The focus is on building relationships with people in the area, on their terms, usually with longer-term but more enduring outcomes. Engagement strategies focus less on the content of messages and more on consistent interactions in order to build trusted relationships.

"Just saying "Good morning" to local people passed on patrol is a building block; taking tea with a local elder whenever offered is an excellent step".

- Dr Kathryn Tomlinson, UK Ministry of Defence

An Australian MAJGEN takes time to meet with local community members during the day and share a word and a cup of chai.

Narrative Technique

320   The narrative technique is a process of eliciting information which avoids the potentially confrontational method of asking direct questions. People naturally communicate through sharing stories which deliver information, context, time stamp, emotion and implication. Story telling is an essential part of engagement with locals and should be used as part of any messaging strategy.

321   Rather than asking respondents to venture opinions or assessments, the narrative technique seeks to focus discussion on experiences (as articulated in stories) which reinforce the opinions. In this way, it reduces the expression of unsubstantiated opinion and provides a richer context to the data that are gathered.

When using the narrative technique avoid asking "what" or "why" questions as asking "when" is more likely to encourage the sharing of stories. Volunteering a story of your own is the most effective way to get things started.

322 During focus groups, if a participant attempts to disagree with someone else's story, the facilitator may ask them to tell their own version of the story, to avoid a debate developing.

POSSIBLE FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Questions which may encourage participants to share important stories include.

- What is the most significant change that happened in your life in the past year?

- Can you tell us about a time that you felt especially worried recently?

- What has been the most exciting change for your family in the past year?

- Can you tell us about a time in the past that you have felt particularly proud of your community?

Experience has demonstrated that questions such as these not only encourage participants to share about the things that most affect them (and by implication possible sources of future instability or positive change) but also highlight local capacities for positive change in the community.

Storytelling in Lahore, Paikstan. Photo: source unknown.

PARTICIPATION

323   Participation is a term you will probably come across while working with partner organisations. At its heart, participation is about the ability of local people to be involved in the planning, implementation and ongoing monitoring of activities which will ultimately affect them long after Australian forces have returned home. Degrees of participation range from passive attendance at project proposal briefings through to active and vigorous engagement in all aspects of the ADF mission and associated tasks.

Locals may be observers, recipients of assistance, people you employ, subject matter experts, participants in the conflict or colleagues. To win their support, you should try and ensure their participation in the ADF mission is a positive experience.

Locals talking to ADF.

324   People who have lived their whole lives in the community and who have a direct stake in the outcome of an intervention, have vital knowledge to contribute to your mission. However, it is likely that these people will disengage or obstruct if their local knowledge is not acknowledged and respected. If someone is attempting to communicate something to you, be prepared to 'hand over the stick', empowering and enabling them to conduct their own problem analysis and develop their own solutions. This is referred to in development practice as reverse learning and involves changing the role of the intervening actors from the 'specialist' to the 'facilitator'.

NON-PARTICIPATION

As important as participation is in generating local ownership and support for the ADF mission, you must also be prepared for active and passive non-participation. As frustrating as this might be, part of demonstrating respect and building trust in any community is accepting the right of any member to choose not to participate. In such circumstances it may be useful to try and discover why someone chooses not to participate in order to identify potential problems. The choice to not participate may be the result of apathy, scepticism toward the process, participation fatigue or active antagonism to the mission. It may also indicate the presence of underlying conflict, tensions or unequal power relations between the participants.

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

325   One of the major challenges you will find is the limitations on your ability to make positive changes. Stabilisation of violent conflict and post-conflict reconstruction can take several decades. As such, you will need to have realistic expectations of what you will achieve while deployed, and this will need to be conveyed to the locals you interact with. Over time an initially exuberant welcome can sour and give way to resentment as expectations of a "peace dividend" remain unmet.

Chapter 4

Working with Partners

WORKING WITH INTERPRETERS

Selecting Interpreters

401   Selecting a good interpreter is absolutely vital. A good interpreter may save your life at times where a gun cannot. Conversely, a poor interpreter is one of the most significant liabilities you could have, further reinforcing the divide between you and the local population.

402   There are both advantages and disadvantages to working with local interpreters. Locals are more familiar with the operational context (political, military, economic, socio-cultural, etc). They may be familiar with the idiosyncrasies of local dialects, idiom or slang and may be able to provide more context than a simple language specialist. They also have a high chance of being accepted by the local population through established relationships or shared identity. However, in conflict-affected environments locals will rarely be perceived as neutral. By virtue of their ethnicity, tribe, dialect, religion, caste, profession or any other identity marker, they will be identified as representing one side of the conflict at the expense of another. In these situations the local knowledge of the interpreter may become a liability rather than an asset and it would be better to use an outsider with clear and unambiguous neutrality.

Working with Interpreters

403   Interpreters are essential members of your team. As you would any other team member you should try and build a good rapport through both work and social activities. Get to know your interpreter. Where are they from? What is their religion? What is the composition of their family? Sharing meals and asking questions about their life are a good way to establish rapport. In addition to translation services, interpreters are also a good source of cultural understanding. Spending time with your interpreters will invariably increase your awareness of your operating environment.

Remember, trusting relationships are generated through repeated interaction.

404   Try to appreciate the difficulties facing your interpreter and think of things that might make them more comfortable. For example, Muslim interpreters may need to pray and wash their hands, face and feet up to 5 times a day. Where practical, you should allow room for this. In conflict environments your interpreter might be making great sacrifices in working for you. By helping you, they may be identified by your enemies as a traitor. Try to understand the security implications of their work and always ensure they are provided safe passage home when on leave (e.g. in remote areas with high insurgency rates, you may need to fly interpreters out for their leave time). In Afghanistan, for example, the Taliban and other insurgents are known to treat captured interpreters far worse than captured foreign soldiers.

Always call your interpreter by their first name and never refer to them by the Australian slang 'Terp', even if you think they cannot hear you!

ADF Officer speaks with the Director of Department of Agriculture, Mr Haji Sardar Mohammed (left), through his interpreter.

405   To work effectively with your interpreter, you will need to explain to them your needs. Make sure your interpreter is familiar with the acronyms and jargon you will be using. After selecting a suitable interpreter, you should help build their experience and skills. Mistakes will be made – work to fix them for next time, rather than just firing them. This is how experience is built. It is important to help your interpreter fit in. Your

interpreter may be unfamiliar with ADF customs (remember the ADF is a foreign culture to most outsiders, including Australian civilians). Explain your expectations and negotiate a set of rules.

Some final points to remember:

- You can check your interpreter has translated properly and that your message is understood by asking the local to repeat what you said and having your interpreter translate it back to English.

- Use clear, unambiguous language. For example, "let me see if I can do…" could be mistranslated as "let me see I will do…" A safer way would be to say "I'm going to try but I'm not sure if I can do…".

- Avoid slang.

- Interpreters may have trouble with some strong accents. Spend more time with your interpreter to help them understand you better.

- Leave a 5 second gap at natural pauses in conversation to let your interpreter catch up.

- Look at the person you are talking to, not your interpreter.

- Don't let your interpreter answer questions for you. They are there to be your voice, so make sure you do the talking.

- Treat your interpreter decently, not as "hired help," and they will provide a better service. Treat your interpreter as one of your soldiers or like a brother. Build their trust and respect them.

- Make sure your interpreter has suitable equipment for the mission (e.g. pens, notebooks, sleeping bag, uniform and boots).

- Involve them in planning where appropriate. They may have helpful information. Make sure they are briefed on security matters.

- However, always remember that your interpreter's loyalties may ultimately lie elsewhere.

An Australian Army Nurse talks to a Pakistani interpreter to relay the dosage of medicine required for her young Pakistani patient.

STORIES FROM AFGHANISTAN

"As we were driving between two bases, we ran into a traffic snarl at a bridge, with dozens of Afghan soldiers and police officers milling about. Our colonel… got out of his Humvee and asked Brooklyn [interpreter] to begin translating for him. After discussing the issue with the Afghan forces, she explained that they had found several bombs underneath the bridge, and were waiting for an American bomb disposal team to arrive. They had likely saved our lives, but we got that message only because we had an interpreter…"

"Once the interpreter helped his unit identify a suicide bomber in a large crowd before the man could activate the explosives in his vest. The would-be bomber was acting nervously in a way that Afghans could recognise but that Americans were oblivious to, and the translator picked up on it."

"Your interpreter is way more important than your weapon," Cory Schulz [US Army major embedded with Afghan troops]… *"With an interpreter… you*

can command hundreds of Afghan soldiers; with a gun, you can only defend yourself."

- Comments from Foust J. (2009) 'Maladies of Interpreters' in the New York Times 2 September 2009.

WORKING WITH OTHER SECURITY FORCES

406 When deployed, it is often tempting to only work with your colleagues whom you have trained with and have established trusted relationships. However, many missions involve cooperation with other coalition forces in addition to mentoring local security forces. Increasing their participation in your activities will help achieve better outcomes.

407 Different security forces have different cultures. Each nation in the coalition will not only have different cultures but are likely to also have different ROE's. In these situations it is important to acknowledge the differences, be open and honest and respect strengths and weaknesses. Commonality can be found through emphasising those values which are shared, brotherhood of arms, desire to assist another nation, etc.

An Australian health officer serving with the International Stabilisation Force in East Timor, talks about local news with East Timorese policewoman Aurora Da Silva.

PRINCIPLES FOR CULTURALLY SENSITIVE TRAINING & MENTORING OF INDIGENOUS SECURITY FORCES

DO's

- **First Encounters**. A good start is vital. Take time to go through the formalities of greeting in the local custom. Pushing instructional material without this foundation will make it harder to build rapport. A poor start is difficult to atone for, so do not try and achieve anything other than a good rapport in the first instance. Schedule follow up meetings for instruction.

- **Hosting**. Where possible allow your counterparts to be the host. Go to their barracks or training facility. Allow time for them to engage in culturally required openings, ceremonies and meals associated with your stay. Learn about the expectations of reciprocity for their hospitality.

- **Respect**. Use applicable titles (sir, doctor, professor, etc) this confers honour on your counterpart.

- **Relationships**. Get to know each other. Trust, respect and solid relationships are key to any successful partnership. Focus more on building relationships than conveying your message, especially in the initial meetings. Expect to spend a disproportionate amount of time off topic, drinking tea, socialising and sharing stories. Ask questions about your counterpart's family.

- **Team Building**. During multi-day instructional periods or exercises

every effort should be made to build an integrated team. This means planning, training, operating, billeting and sharing meals with each other.

- **Local Expertise**. Allow your counterparts to be part of the instruction process. When they speak expect them to take longer to get to the point than you. In Australia we want the "bottom line up front". However, in many of the societies in which we deploy, context is everything and story-telling is common. Be patient and learn the local way of fighting – they will probably understand more about enemy TTPs than you.

- **Local Leadership.** Allow your counterpart time and opportunity to build relationships in their community. Let local forces be the face of your mission, to build credibility and legitimacy in the eyes of locals.

- **Approaches to Instruction**. Practice listening and indirect inquiry over direct questioning. Use the technique of regular dropping of ideas into casual talk rather than long lectures. Use anecdotes, pictures and film and minimise the use of text (powerpoint slides and student handbooks). Some of your counterparts may be illiterate and by using text you will embarrass them. In some parts of the world literate counterparts can sometimes be identified by the presence of a pen/pencil in their shirt pockets (it is a status symbol).

- **Structured Classes.** Hold classes of peers. If you hold classes of mixed

rank, juniors will defer to seniors and you will not be able to generate broad participation. Similarly, a mixed Army/Police class is likely to result in lack of participation by some.

DON'T'S

- **Embarrass Your Counterpart.** Never embarrass your counterparts by telling them that they are wrong, even if they are patently incorrect. This is considered a slight and will undo the building of trusted relationships. Find a way of making your point without contradicting your counterparts. The key is to avoid shaming your counterpart and ensuring that face saving opportunities are practised.

- **Confuse Your Counterpart.** Avoid the use of acronyms (even basic ones) or jargon which your counterparts will be unfamiliar with.

- **Use Inappropriate Gestures.** Never point with a finger (use an open palm for gestures).

- **Interrogate Your Counterpart**. Never ask someone their ethnic, tribal, political or any other affiliation during instruction periods or partnered exercises.

- **Give Orders to Your Counterpart.** Never give orders to any of your counterparts regardless of their rank. Remember you are outside their chain of command, so deal directly with the commanding officer when providing advice or direction. Always make joint decisions.

- **Ignore Your Counterpart.** In particular, never look at the interpreter when you are speaking to your counterparts. Maintain eye contact with your interlocutor (also avoid wearing sunglasses). If possible, position your interpreter to your side and slightly to the rear.

- **Overwhelm Your Counterpart**: Do not schedule long instructional periods. In Islamic societies do not schedule instructional periods at any time on Fridays and only conduct high-priority training during Ramadan (your counterparts are likely to be fatigued and distracted during this time).

RAMSI: An Australian Official and a Lieutenant General listen intently to Inspector Cherry Kimisi, Royal Solomon Islands Police.

A STORY FROM AFGHANISTAN

Afghans are a proud people who place tremendous emphasis on respect. Respect is the foundation for the development of inter-personal relationships which, in turn, serves as one of the backbones of Afghan society. Respect for family. Respect for elders. Respect for friends and co-workers. Even respect for your enemies. So imagine how our Afghan partners must feel as I relate the following story...

Not long ago, I was talking with an Afghan Colonel from one of the ANA brigades operating in Regional Command South. I asked him how he thought our partnering efforts were going and he told me he was a bit disappointed. He acknowledged that ISAF forces offered his troops tremendous training opportunities and that they appreciated the support they received during combat patrols, but there was something he just couldn't get past. On a daily basis, this high-ranking Afghan officer observed ISAF forces saluting their seniors. They saluted seniors from their services, seniors from their home nations, even seniors from partnering nations; but almost no one saluted him. Then he watched closer. ISAF forces offered common military courtesies to almost everyone – everyone except their Afghan counterparts. He didn't know if this was because ISAF forces didn't understand Afghan rank structures or if they just thought less of their Afghan partners. Either way it had the same impact. On a nearly daily basis this Afghan officer felt snubbed by the same troops he was attempting to partner with. He felt that both his personal respect and professional credibility were under attack. To him, when ISAF soldiers failed to render him the same military courtesies they would their own seniors, his authority and legitimacy were being called into question in front of his own troops

LT COL Gilbert Overmaat (RNLDA),Chief of Staff, ISAF COIN Advisory & Assistance Team (CAAT)

An Austrlian Corporal explains HF Radio settings to East Timorese soldiers Private Noemia Hornai (centre) and Sergento Armelindo Da Cruz. International Stabilisation Force (ISF) signallers are literally helping their East Timorese counterparts to spread the word across their country.

WORKING WITH HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

"It is now understood that it is not just the culture of the host country that we must be cognisant of, but those of other nations' peacekeepers, the institutional cultures of the UN agencies and increasingly, of non-government organisations, and how Australian behaviours may impact on others."

- LT GEN Ken Gillespie, Chief of Army

The Difference Between Humanitarian & Development Assistance

408   *Humanitarian assistance* is focussed on the immediate relief of suffering following a crisis. *Development*, on the other hand, is directed at longer-term poverty reduction and the drivers of instability. For the forseeable future, it is likely that the ADF will be deployed on operations in which it will share the operating environment with humanitarian and development agencies. On some of these operations the ADF may be asked by government to conduct a humanitarian assistance mission, or to assist in the implementation of a development program.

Sisters from the Teniru Women's Shelter Mary Lulo and Daisy Gooka talk with a Warrant Officer during maintenance work being carried out by RAMSI.

The Relationship Between Aid and Conflict

409   The relationship between aid and conflict is complex; poverty can be both a cause and effect of conflict and should therefore be addressed as part of a comprehensive approach to conflict. However, if delivered inappropriately, aid can also exacerbate conflict. Although the intentions behind the delivery of aid may be neutral, the impacts of aid rarely are. Aid given in the context of conflict becomes part of that conflict. It may be appropriated by combatants, distort local markets, benefit some groups and not others (thereby exacerbating tensions), substitute for local resources (thereby freeing them up for war) or legitimise the cause of competing factions.

As with military lessons, the development community have established several best-practice principles for avoiding the negative impacts of aid. By understanding and applying some of these within projects that the ADF implements progress can be made toward ensuring effective working relationships between security and development practitioners.

ADF working with locals to rebuild a Pakistani school.

Principles of Development Best Practice Applied to Conflict Situations

410   The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is an international agreement to which many countries and organisations are committed (including Australia). It is grounded on five mutually reinforcing principles: *local ownership, alignment, harmonisation, results-based management and mutual accountability.* In order to comprehend both the culture and operating practices of these development organisations, it is recommended that the ADF be aware of these principles.

- **Local ownership.** Under this principle host nations should exercise effective leadership, prioritisation and co-ordination over international assistance, rather than be subject to externally-driven agendas.

  'Use localized development and economic support to bring community leaders and people together for their own success. Listen, share and get buy-in. Build local ownership and capacity… As the Afghans say, "If you sweat for it, you will protect it".'

  - GEN Stanley McChrystal COMISAF, August 2009

- **Alignment.** International actors should ensure that their support matches with the host nation's development strategies. Whilst the ADF response is likely to be focussed on

the drivers of conflict, it should also create entry points for longer-term, sustainable social and economic development.

- **Harmonisation.** This principle goes beyond coordination of effort to development of an understanding of the tensions that emerge between different approaches, principles, priorities and agency cultures.

- **Results-based management.** Managing for results means managing and implementing activities in a way that focuses on the desired results, looking to longer-term outcomes rather than short-term outputs. In this way it is similar to effects-based operations.

- **Mutual accountability.** This principle states that both donors and host nation partners are accountable for results.

411   In addition to the Paris Declaration, recent experience in stabilisation and counterinsurgency operations has yielded a number of additional best practice principles. These include:

- **Conflict sensitivity:** understanding the local culture and politics and avoiding adverse unintended consequences of projects in the battle space.

- **Delivery:** focusing on process as well as product. It is the 'how' and not just the 'what' you do that matters.

- **Legitimacy:** facilitating good governance and restoring state-society relations.

- **Security:** prioritise freedom of movement and broad human security for the local population before attempting to 'win hearts and minds' through development activities.

- **Experience:** deploy experienced field personnel who are well-prepared for the cultural context in which they will be operating.

- **Sustainability:** in all activities ensure that you have a plan for dealing with recurrent costs following transition to local responsibility.

Working with AusAID

412　The key partner in the delivery of in-theatre development assistance is likely to be Australia's Agency for International Development (AusAID). It is therefore important to understand the way in which AusAID does business in-theatre in order to enable effective cooperation.

THE IN-THEATRE LAYDOWN OF AUSAID

AusAID is likely to be represented in-theatre by a Country Office comprising 2-4 Australian staff, a handful of locally employed staff and additional specialist advisors for specific short-term projects. Where the ADF are also deployed it is likely that the number of AusAID staff will increase to include field personnel in district centres and, possibly, stabilisation and development advisors attached to the ADF task force.

AusAID will normally try to work through host government ministries. Where host government capacity is weak the Country Office will channel support through other implementing partners such as international or regional agencies, NGOs (both international and local) or civil society groups.

The ADF can therefore expect AusAID to have a good understanding of the key development actors in-country. They are also likely to have a good network of contacts and may be helping to coordinate the international development assistance to the country or province (as is the case in Timor Leste). In addition they will likely have conducted assessments that can help identify the dynamics and underlying causes of conflict. Even where access for international civilian staff is limited, AusAID may, through their local implementing partners, have a perspective that reaches beyond the capital city and to elements of society other than the ruling elites.

AusAid supplies are loaded onto a Hercules C-130H at RAAF Base Richmond bound for Fiji.

Working with Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

413　In addition to development practitioners, the ADF is likely to find itself operating alongside a range of international organisations (IOs), inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This disparate array of actors are increasingly operating in a co-ordinated and complementary style through offices such as the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

"In the acronym-laden world of international affairs, an IO, or international organisation, is any institution that operates in more than one country. An IO might thus be either a nongovernmental entity or an

intergovernmental organisation – hence the use of two other, more specific, acronyms, NGO and IGO, to distinguish between the two types".
- United States Institute of Peace (USIP) Guide to IGOs, NGOs and the Military

414   IGOs are likely to be willing to engage with the ADF. This includes the major UN agencies and several non-UN organisations such as the World Bank and IMF. NGOs, however, may be more hesitant as it is important for them to be seen to maintain their impartiality.

Distributing emergency aid in Pakistan.

415   Most NGOs are signatories to the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief* or *the Humanitarian Charter* which lay down the core principles governing humanitarian assistance. ADF personnel engaging with NGOs in-theatre should become aware of the standards and principles in these documents and the rationale for their adoption (see text box next column).

THE HUMANITARIAN IMPERATIVE

The right to receive, and obligation to give, humanitarian assistance unconditionally, wherever and whenever it is needed. This is primarily the responsibility of indigenous governments.

CORE HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES

Humanity

Save and protect life and dignity and prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it is found.

Impartiality

Help based solely on need. Non-discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, political affiliation or social status.

Independence

Separate from political, military, commercial or other objectives.

Neutrality

Without taking sides, politically or militarily.

Potential Areas of Discord when Working with NGOs

416   **Humanitarian Space:** For humanitarian organisations this refers to the intervention space governed by the core humanitarian principles. NGOs use the term to distinguish between the politically-motivated interventions of donor governments and the apolitical provision of humanitarian relief. NGOs view the maintenance of this distinction as essential for allowing them safe passage through conflict zones in order to distribute relief. Where the humanitarian space has been compromised the effectiveness of NGOs

is reduced and their staff endangered. In the field this may lead to a reluctance to engage openly with the ADF or to accept ADF logistics, transport or security support. It may also lead to conflict over the ADFs involvement in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Red Cross in Solomon Islands.

417   Political Agendas: Whilst deployed the ADF will be implementing government policy in support of Australia's strategic interests. However, NGOs will typically prioritise their activities based on need and are often critical of politically-driven "consent winning projects" aimed at generating a quick "hearts and minds" impact.

418   Humanitarian Implications of ADF Operations: It is important to recognise that there will be humanitarian implications of ADF actions, despite the extent to which the ADF will attempt to minimise those consequences. Where ADF activities are seen to contribute to civilian casualties or suffering it is likely that relationships between the ADF and NGOs will be strained. The ADF should always consider the humanitarian implications of all activities.

Even seemingly innocuous activities such as poppy crop eradication have typically caused suffering to impoverished farmers and left the wealthy drug barons unaffected (due to subsequently higher opium prices).

419   Use of Language: The use, or misuse, of humanitarian language by the ADF is often the source of friction. Such words as 'humanitarian', 'impartial' and 'security' typically have different meanings between the military and humanitarian communities.

SECURITY VERSUS HUMAN SECURITY

Security has traditionally been understood by the ADF in reference to territorial integrity, threats to the institutions and interests of the state, and freedom of movement for ADF operations. NGOs have a broader notion of (human) security, encompassing freedom from fear of persecution, intimidation, reprisals, terrorism and other forms of systematic violence as well as freedom from want of immediate basic needs.

Here the culture gap between the two communities could be better addressed by emphasising the **population protection and population support** lines of operation within Army's Adaptive Campaigning, which in combination constitute Army's contribution to the relief of human insecurity.

420   Engagement Strategies for Working with NGOs

In the past there have been a number of fair criticisms levelled against NGO activities within conflict zones which has led to an increase in professionalism across the entire humanitarian sector. These days most NGO personnel have extensive experience in dealing with situations of conflict and fragility and the ADF is encouraged to both acknowledge and utilise this wealth of experience.

In post-conflict situations it is likely that there will be a profusion of NGOs in theatre, but the largest

and most significant programs will be delivered by only a small percentage. Do not feel that it is necessary to engage with every single NGO present. Rather, identify and focus on the key players. Engagement may occur through an NGO forum set up in-country, the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator or the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

421   While there are distinct cultural and institutional differences there are several commonalities between aid workers and the military. These include a vocational drive, high motivation, strong work ethic, desire to improve a situation, sense of adventure, risk tolerance and willingness to endure separation from family and other hardship. As an ADF member it is worthwhile exploiting these similarities to enhance the working relationship.

"There are 4 ways to engage with the military: front door, back door, UN and the bar!"

- NGO worker

Chapter 5

Conclusion

501   Culture is acquired through socialisation, remaining independent of biology and personality. It is neither static nor immutable and is in a constant process of change as members of 'in groups' generate new ideas and respond to different 'out groups'. Despite this, how we interpret and make meaning of the world is inextricably linked to the cultures in which we are embedded at any one point in time. Accordingly, it is useful to try to analyse the way in which your own culture affects your perceptions, prejudices and behaviours and how this may impact on successful interactions with people of other cultures.

Ethnocentrism is the evaluation of other cultures according to preconceptions originating from one's own culture.

502   Remember the success of your mission (whether it be providing aid, maintaining peace, stabilising widespread violence or countering an insurgency) is likely to be dependent on the support of the local population. Analysis of relationships, beliefs, motives, perceptions, interests and expectations is crucial to understanding your operating environment.

503   However, regardless of the quality of your self and cultural analysis, your efforts will only be successful in the long-term if they involve the local population in planning, implementation and on-going monitoring. Locals need to feel that they are a valued part of the process. After all, it is the locals who will ultimately live with the effects of our endeavours long after the ADF has returned home.

Good luck, stay safe, enjoy your deployment and take the opportunity to experience another culture.

A Corporal relaxes with local children outside the Australian Defence Force Primary Health Care Facility in Seigeringging.

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19. ABSTRACT

This Handbook provides information that will assist in understanding the complex environment that is the Solomon Islands. The research and analysis supports a range of contingencies that might see the Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel operating in the Solomon Islands in support of the Solomon Islands Government. These include bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises, stabilisation and capacity building missions and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.