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14. ABSTRACT Established June 3, 2019, Marine Corps Advisor Companies (MCAC) can expect deployments in counter-terrorism, counterinsurgency, security, and stability operations world-wide. How will these new reserve units contribute to the broad scope of Security Force Assistance (SFA) in support of the National Defense Strategy? This research paper suggests MCACs will be significant contributors to the National Security and National Defense Strategies in two distinct ways: 1. MCACs will provide an experienced work force to evenly distribute Security Cooperation (SC) missions that have been tasked to Individual Augments (IA) advisors, Marine Special Operations Command teams (MARSOC), and Civil Affairs Groups (CAG). 2. Acting as both warriors and diplomats, MCACs will facilitate increased partnering with other nations by attracting new alliances, building a stronger coalition, and creating an atmosphere of interoperability through development in the human domain of warfare.						
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Future Security Infrastructure: Marine Corps Advisor Companies

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Master of Military Studies Requirements for the Degree

Executive Summary

Title: Future Security Infrastructure: Marine Corps Advisor Companies

Author: Major Wynton M. Smith, United States Marine Corps.

Thesis: MCACs will be significant contributors to the National Security and National Defense Strategies in two distinct ways:

1. MCACs will provide an experienced work force to evenly distribute Security Cooperation (SC) missions that have been tasked to Individual Augments (IA) advisors, Marine Special Operations Command teams (MARSOC), and Civil Affairs Groups (CAG).
2. Acting as both warriors and diplomats, MCACs will facilitate increased partnering with other nations by attracting new alliances, building a stronger coalition, and creating an atmosphere of interoperability through development in the human domain of warfare.

Discussion: Established June 3, 2019, Marine Corps Advisor Companies (MCAC) can expect deployments in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, security, and stability operations worldwide. How will these new reserve units contribute to the broad scope of Security Force Assistance (SFA) in support of the National Defense Strategy?

Conclusion: As the Department of Defense directs strategy toward competition against Great Power adversaries, the Marine Corps will continue to face fiscal austerity and ill-forecasted emergent threats. The implementation of MCACs across the broad scope of SC missions will provide an economy of force to yield desirable returns in future operating environments across all domains of war.

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Preface

Having served the last fifteen year in the United States Marine Corps, both as an enlisted Marine and officer, I thank God for providing me with a variety of rewarding opportunities and experiences through all endeavors. I would also like to thank Dr Claire Metelits for advising and mentoring me throughout the research, analysis, and writing process. Without Dr Metelits' academic guidance, expertise in the global strategic studies, and composed positivism, I could not have designed, attempted or completed such an arduous project. Her willingness to mentor me has helped me develop my capacity to learn. I also need to thank my second advisor, LTC Jeremy Glauber, who time and again provided me with the motivation to move forward in the research and writing process. Whenever my thinking had culminated, LTC Glauber was there to provide an alternative perspective that unmarred my track-pads. His influence was immense throughout the school year, even before I began this undertaking. Finally, CDR Stephen Kelley has constantly challenged me to elevate my approach to learning and has been instrumental throughout this school year.

Through service and exposure, an uncommon education in global affairs, as well as the distinct chance to lead the world's most disciplined and dedicated warriors will be a lifetime achievement. Working by, with, and through our allied partners has given me a clear understanding of how tactical achievements lead to strategic objectives. My assignments as a Foreign Security Force (FSF) Advisor have been high-points in my career and because of this, I feel it is important to ensure the Marine Corps continues investing in future advising missions to strengthen the national security frameworks and build the strongest coalition the globe has ever known.

Master of Military Studies Requirements for the Degree

INTRODUCTION

After nearly twenty years of continuous conflicts in the Greater Middle East, the current United States National Defense Strategy and National Security Strategy (NSS, NDS) shift focus from counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations toward Great Power competition.¹ Because the contemporary threats faced have not been large-scale, standing, uniformed military formations or easily identifiable actors, United States military forces have increasingly deployed advisors to work by, with, and through partners and allies in places where adversaries seek to retain power and project influence. Advising has become a core competency for contemporary military professionals where total war is less common and activities below the level of armed conflict have increased. The demand signal for United States Marines capable of training, advising, and assisting partners has increased so much so that in June of 2019, formal Marine Corps Advisor Companies (MCAC) became a new unit within the service's table of organization. In preparing for future conflicts, it is important the service retains competency and invests in the development of new advisor companies to grow into Marine Corps Advisor Regiments (MCAR) that will expand and strengthen the global security networks that provide stability for the world's population.

The formalization of dedicated advising units indicates the Marine Corps' resolve in meeting the nation's strategic objectives. Findings in a 2012 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report highlighted several areas for improvement to existing Department of Defense (DoD) advising functions and recommended the DoD clarify the intent and purpose of various Security Force Assistance (SFA) missions.² In 2013 the Joint Chiefs of Staff would publish Joint Doctrine Note 1-13, *Security Force Assistance* and directed the services to take deliberate steps in training and tracking global SFA efforts. This guidance would prove to be the forcing function

leading to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) directing the service to establish a formal organization of advisors.

Now that MCACs are standing units, how will they mature and contribute the strategic objectives detailed in the NDS? This research provides background information and defines the security cooperation construct. It also explains where the implementation of MCACs will complement and enhance the existing infrastructure. After defining the key terms and organizations, I present evidence of past advising success and discuss how they are linked to the unique capabilities' advisor companies provide. Counter-arguments will be made that highlight deficiencies and focus areas where the new institution should look to develop in the future. The conclusion will review the key arguments for sustaining MCACs and provide suggested direction for the future functions the organization will perform as an enduring component of the national security framework.

DEFINING ADVISING IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL SECURITY

Advising missions are not novel concepts, nor are they unfamiliar to the DoD or the Marine Corps. The Nation's history is filled with a variety of advisory missions dating back hundreds of years. From the earliest days even before the US constitution was ratified in 1789, Marines were called to act in advisory capacities that augmented conventional military forces and their traditional naval infantry/police duties. It was then- General George Washington and the Continental Army who first requested the expertise of Marines as advisors after being pushed out of New York. Seeking to defend territory in New Jersey, Washington sent for Major Samuel Nichols and his battalion of Continental Marines to advise and assist the army regulars.³ Although, the nature of the mission was domestic during the dawn of the nation, the Marines'

non-standard approach to warfighting was recognized and valued as a detrimental advantage in war against the encroaching British forces.

Another instance where Marines acted in an advisory capacity in early American history came in 1805 during the First Barbary War. Diplomatic Consul William Eaton and First Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon led a small detachment of eight Marine advisors along with 500 Greek and Arab mercenaries who successfully defeated a much larger force to secure the city of Derna.⁴ This decisive victory gave the US a strategic advantage to create diplomatic solution to end to the conflict and the event has become a staple in the folklore that defines today's Marine Corps. Further involvement in engagements such as the Seminole Wars of 1835 and Mexican-American War from 1846-48 provide several historical accounts⁵ during that period when Marines provided stand-in forces to further US objectives in an "at-request" nature, but it was not until the early twentieth century that Marines acted as advisors in a continuous manner.

The early 1900s marked a time when US Marines were deployed to Latin America in various constabulary functions to provide counsel and education to local security forces. The lessons learned, unit organizations and strategic approach to limited warfare was captured in the FMRP 12-15 *Small Wars Manual*⁶, first published in 1935 and revised in 1940. This doctrinal publication would go on to become a milestone for limited warfare and special operations later in the twentieth century, describing in detail the technical aspects of advising during conflict short of total war. The *Small Wars Manual* is commonly referenced in professional military educational institutions and provides baseline methods for military actions in combatting insurgencies, terrorism and otherwise criminal activities that threaten state sovereignties. The development and use of the *Small Wars Manual* have been built upon in the years following its

initial publication. However, several aspects of advisory functions have remained unchanged and the education of today's advisors often begins with study of this seminal document.

Security Cooperation

The strategic context is important when discussing shared global security networks and should be grounded in firm understanding of the purpose and role of advising. Security Assistance (SA) is authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976. It includes a group of programs with Title 22 USC appropriated funding to enable various direct engagements.⁷ United States Security Sector Assistance (SSA) includes those military and civilian institutions designed to help Partner Nations (PN) build capacity to address transnational security challenges, promote partner support for US interests, promote universal values such as good governance, and strengthen collective security and multinational defence arrangements and organizations.⁸ Advising activities are tools that can provide the ways and means to meet specified ends when looking to improve multinational security networks.

A basic definition of functional advising is simply "relevant and timely" opinions and recommendations to foreign counterparts.⁹ Security Cooperation (SC) is the DoD activity that provides those ways and means to meet strategic ends through engagements with foreign security forces (FSF).¹⁰ Through a variety of programs, SC aligns US strategic objectives with those of the partner nations to create or strengthen security networks. SC activities can be conducted at the tactical, operational and strategic levels of war and are not limited to military to military engagements. Inter-agency and inter-governmental cooperative efforts provide a whole of government approach that synchronizes efforts of multiple agencies. While various military advisors perform SC functions, they are not the only contributing parties.

SC can be understood as representing nine categories including military-to-military contacts, personnel exchanges, combined exercises and training, train and equip functions/provision of defense articles, defense institution building, operational support, education, international armaments cooperation, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.¹¹ Each category has a related authority that allows for the execution of Congress appropriated funding. Regardless of the primary agency managing the SC function, all efforts are designed to build security relationships, increase partner capacity, and gain/maintain access in locations of interest. The SC missions MCACs are currently tasked to conduct are those activities conducted by the Geographic Combatant Commander's (GCC) that achieve goals set in the Theater Cooperation Plan (TCP).

Security Force Assistance

Security Force Assistance (SFA) is a suite of options nested in SC and is designed to contribute to the development of capacity and capability of FSF and their supporting establishments. Historically SFA has provided conventional means to organize, train, equip, rebuild, and advise (OTERA) PN forces at their request. SFA activities can be performed inside or outside of the requesting/host nation.¹² The SFA mission is to develop partner abilities in providing defence to internal and transnational threats, maintain sovereignty, and create lasting stability through shared strategic objectives.¹³ SFA missions are normally expeditionary in nature, maintaining a forward presence outside the continental US. Deployable FSF advisors contribute directly to SFA by conducting security force assistance across the spectrum of conflict to enable partner capability in support of Service and joint force requirements.¹⁴ The military

advisors tasked with SFA missions are widely sourced from conventional military forces. After conducting an SFA deployment, they return to their normal duty assignments.

MCACs are now the designated primary organization the Marine Corps uses in sourcing SFA missions. The units reduce the previous need for manpower managers to seek out individual Marines who may or may not have previous experience or desire to perform in the SFA realm. In the past, Operating Force contributions to meet SFA requirements disrupted unit cohesion when individuals were pulled away from their primary assignments. However, with standing advisor units being sourced from the reserve component, the burden of the Operating Force is reduced and global SFA missions received dedicated and qualified FSF advisors to perform the rigorous missions abroad.

Foreign Internal Defense

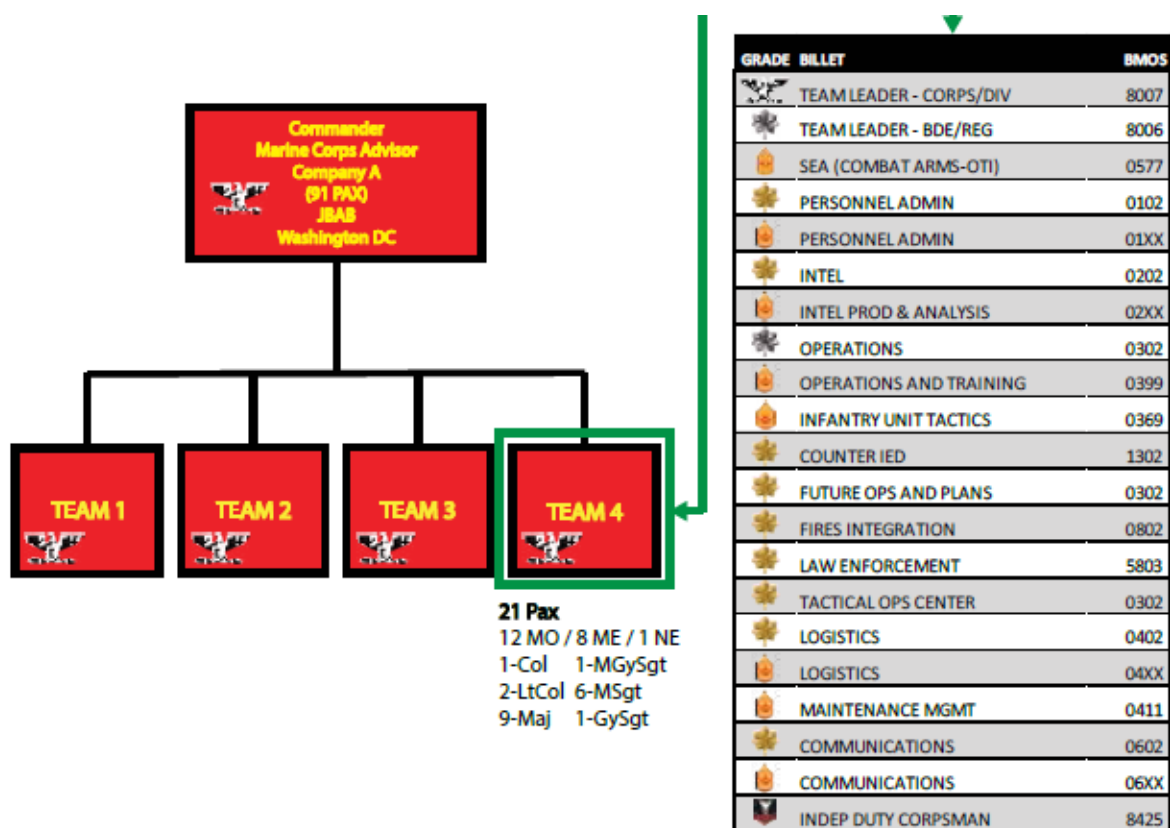
Foreign Internal Defense (FID) is the host of civilian and military SC packages offered to PN security forces that directly impact security threats inside that nation's borders.¹⁵ FID can be categorized into three types: indirect support, direct support, and combat operations.¹⁶ Examples FID missions include the deployment of advisors to countries in direct support of the HN forces to defeat internal threats while meeting US strategic objectives of defeating associated terror networks. FID missions are often conducted by Special Operations Forces due to their unique training, background and primary mission. This is not to say advisors who have not been through a Special Operations qualification course are not trained and capable of performing FID missions, but are not normally deployed in that function. Interagency coordination and support are required when supporting FID with a PN government's security forces as the US is not leading the efforts.

UNCONVENTIONAL FORCES FIGHTING IRREGULAR WARFARE

The task and purpose of Marine Corps FSF advisors place them into an irregular position on the battlefield. This position, known as Unconventional Warfare (UW), consists of activities to enable a resistance movement or insurgency. These activities can be conducted unilaterally by a resistance movement or insurgency or can be enabled by external sources. It is important to note that the US has provided assistance in support of unconventional warfare around the world in places like India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.¹⁷ Conflicts against groups like Hezbollah, the FARC in Colombia, or other subversive organizations have placed US military forces in direct engagements in the context of UW.¹⁸

The ability of the FSF advisor to imbed with resistance forces to organize, train, equip, advise, assist, and in some cases, lead said guerilla forces relies on the ability to connect with indigenous peoples on a personal level where trust is built and leveraged. The challenge to understand the mission in context of a foreign culture is one that advisors are required to embrace and seek innovative ways and means to meet directed strategic objectives. However, while advisors are well-trained and experienced in the technical aspects of warfare, it is not enough for them to be skilled tacticians.

MARINE CORPS ADVISING COMPANIES (MCAC)



MCACs are designed to provide scalable teams of FSF advisors capable of performing SC missions across the globe as directed. There are currently two active MCACs, with the intent of initializing two more companies in the future. These companies will be in the Reserve Component; there is no plan to source MCAC personnel from the Active Component. These advisor companies are part of the Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR) and are designed to mobilize or deploy to perform SFA missions the Marine Corps has historically sourced with individual augments. MCAC Alpha is located in Washington, DC and MCAC Bravo is in Concord, CA. Both fall under the Force Headquarters Group (FHG) at Marine Forces Reserve Headquarters (MARFORRES) in New Orleans, LA. The principle MCAC unit is led by a command screened Colonel and will consist of four teams also led by Colonels. Each of the four teams is designed to provide regionally focused and trained military advisors. The higher ranks

held by individuals on the team is done by design to draw upon experienced Marines capable of standing-out through cultural expertise, linguistic aptitude, and geographic knowledge to make relevant and strong partner alliances. While Marine Advisors have provided such individuals unofficially for many years by pulling IAs from the Total Force to fill SFA requirements, the inception of MCACs has the potential to provide qualified and effective advisors on a sustainable basis.

By making the 0570/0571 FSF Advisor designation a standing prerequisite for all Marines assigned to a Marine Security Cooperation Team (MSCT), the overall quality of the advisor is increased. Being awarded the 0570/0571 MOS ensures that a fundamental level of training and relevant experience has been achieved.¹⁹ This comes as the result after years of Marines training and deploying as advisors without receiving any further designation of to acknowledge their enhanced capabilities. Now with the addition of the FSF Advisor designation, sourcing for future SFA missions is as simple as a manpower or data query for Marines holding the MOS.

The second way MCACs increase the effectiveness of global security alliances is by delivering sustainable and recurring relationships to partners at a relatively low risk and cost to the Marine Corps. By mobilizing one of the standing MCSTs every 365 days, there is a reduction in the manpower cost of activating reservist to do missions tasked to the total force. A deployed 21-Marine advisor team in country reduces the burden of the AC.

Advisors work directly with PN security forces and act as a conduit for the flow of vertical and horizontal information to all relevant parties. According to the 2019 Commandant's Planning Guidance, the Marine Corps needs to return to being a force that is inherently naval in posture and design.²⁰ In the future operating environment, Marines are likely to be deployed in

expeditionary advanced base operations and may need be prepared for working in environments within the adversary's weapons engagement zones. The nature of the advising mission is one that requires continuous engagement to achieve the desired end-state of strengthened security networks. Now that MCACs are standing units, continuity of existing relationship for PN forces will likely increase.

MCACs are assigned to geographic regions, therefore develop expertise in the region overtime. MCACs will deploy into environments where the culture may be far different from their home of origin. The ability to understand different cultures has long been a key aspect in successful advising missions²¹ and will continue to be one of the strengths standing advisor companies will exhibit in the future. Deployed advisors will function both as warriors and diplomats to host nations and their cross-cultural competence will be a determining factor in attracting new alliances, building a stronger coalition, and fostering interoperability for within these security networks.

Professionalizing the Advising Curriculum

The training pipeline for today's FSF advisors involves more than simple language aptitude and understanding local cultural norms. The formalization of MCACs is the product of incremental advancement toward the professionalization of the advising skill set. In the advent of the GWOT, the demand signal for trained advisors spread quickly throughout the DoD. Initially, in Marine Corps, those deployed as advisors were selected for their availability, not necessarily their existing acumen. Conventional unit military deployments normally include approximately six-month pre-deployment training cycles which prepare and certify units for twelve-month deployments. This block of training included many of the basic military skills required to deploy,

but failed to focus on mission specific nuance that would better prepare advisors according to their regional assignments. Starting in 2006, the Marine Corps Advisor Training Group (ATG) was formed to develop and train advisors for Embedded Transition Teams (ETT) missions in Afghanistan and Military Transition Teams (MTT) missions Iraq. The curriculum was designed around counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency training that would improve the effectiveness of advisors working with PN security forces at the local, regional, and national levels. The Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group (MCSCG) has since taken the lead role in enabling global SC missions.²²

MCSCG became the lead organization and consolidated advisor training in October 2012. Future Marine Advisors learn a combination of hard, soft, and interpersonal skills at the five-week initial Marine Advisor Course (MAC) in Fort Story, VA. The focus is on developing hard skills for the tactical actions Marines are likely to conduct during the execution of an advisor mission. The majority of hard skills are traditional military actions, which some basic level of proficiency has been achieved when students arrive. The intent is to refresh and improve competency, create efficiency, and reach the level of mastery before deploying to teach partners and allies the correct way. The soft skills of the MAC focus on the environmental elements of military operations that affect the outcomes of missions. Understanding elements such as politics, religion, the economy influences individual advisor's perception of the operating environment to help them make better decisions during duty execution.²³ This environmental understanding contributes greatly to the success of advisors during their assignments. Developing interpersonal skills during the MAC is perhaps the area of the school-house training that gives future advisors the most beneficial skill. By increasing their ability to relate to people on a basic level, advisors learn to influence the behavior of partner forces in alignment with

strategic imperatives. MCSCG prepares Marines to deploy globally and the training packages offered in addition to the MAC can be tailored to meet specific mission needs. MCSCG is capable of adjusting course programing for students from the operating forces. MCSCG is structured to train approximately 540 Marines and sailors each year, a capacity that exceeds the baseline requirements for MCACs and accounts for IAs deploying on missions outside the MCSTs.²⁴

Advisors need to be capable of understanding the culture and environments within which they operate. Developing regional proficiency is an inherent and enduring responsibility of advisors and must be sustained through iterative engagements to build upon achievements. Admiral Eric T. Olson, Commander, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), stated, “Understanding the operational context of the environments in which we operate is a hallmark of SOF... and understanding the value of ‘micro-regional expertise allows SOF to succeed.’”²⁵ While MCAC will not full under USSOCOM, their purpose is driven by the same requirement to develop and maintain regional proficiency and expertise.

Marine Corps Civil Affairs Groups (CAG)

As the new MCACs grow, they are likely to fill their ranks with Marines who were previously assigned to the Civil Affairs Groups (CAG), formally conducting civil-military operations (CMO). CMO has long inserted Civil Affairs Marines into operations abroad working with USG interagency partners, non-governmental organization (NGO) and host-nation coordination cells in to directly supporting the attainment of objectives relating to the reestablishment or maintenance of stability within a region or host nation.²⁶ Similar to the advising functions of FSF advisors, CMO can affect all levels of war, and during all military operations, help in the coordination and the diplomatic, economic, and information instruments

of national power, particularly in support of stability, counterinsurgency, and other operations dealing with asymmetric and irregular threats.

Marine Special Operations Command (MARSOC)

With the addition of MCAC to the table of organization of the Marine Corps, such units are positioned to undertake missions which have historically been assigned to another relatively new component of the Total Force, the Marine Special operations Command. Activated in February 2006, MARSOC units are tasked to train, organize, equip and deploy task organized, scalable and responsive special operations force worldwide in support of combatant commanders and other agencies as directed. MARSOC was birthed in response to the continuous demand signal from the Joint Special Operations Command for deployable and capable Marine forces. Designed to conduct lethal and non-lethal actions in the ROMO, MARSOC has developed capabilities not foreign to the mission of MCACs. Unique understanding of regional, cultural, and the linguistic aspects of partner nation security forces is shared between the two organizations, making the additions of MCACs a positive relieving aspect for MARSOC taskings. The additional fact that MCACs are entirely in the Reserve Component creates an economical solution to spread the manpower requirements throughout the Total Force.

The MARSOC force structure was the model for the design of the MCAC with some differences, mainly attributed to the resources allocated to SOCOM forces. MARSOC divides its forces into the operational forces (under a regiment), the support forces, and the training forces. The three Marine Raider Battalions (MRBs) are aligned regionally and each battalion has four Marine Special Operations Companies (MSOCs) in each. Similar to MCACs, MSOCs have four

Marine Special Operations Teams (MSOTs) available to deploy for all for forms of special operations conflict, including both SFA and FID activities.²⁷

Advisor Companies as Economical Force Multipliers

While understanding the SFA framework and types of units that have historically executed the missions, it is important to note that MCACs are in a position to provide an economical solution to future SFA taskings. As the two advisor companies grow with an additional two more companies projected to activate in the near future, the capacity for relatively inexpensive sources of manpower for SFA missions will increase. Maintaining a cadre of sixteen MCST with at least one forward deployed at any given time relieves the need for IAs, CAG, and MARSOC teams to deploy in an ad-hoc fashion. The fact that MCACs originate from within the reserve component adds to the economical solution to sourcing for SFA requirements. MCACs conduct their monthly and annual training using reserve funding while in a regular drilling status. A team mobilizes for a planned, an eighteen-month cycle. Six months are dedicated to pre-deployment training as a team, and twelve months are dedicated to in-theater operations. Immediately following a MCST's deployment cycle, the team drops back into a reserve status. One teams deployment cycle would cost roughly four million dollars, which has the potential to create a lasting return on investment when broadening our SFA engagement capabilities without taxing resources normally derived from Title X authorities.²⁸

Employing regionally aligned MCACs also provides additional efficiencies because advisors will already possess regional proficiency going into their assigned missions. Developed cross-cultural competencies add to the cohesion and effectiveness of deployed advisor units. The Marine Corps Regional, Culture and Language Familiarization (RCLF) program ensures that all

enlisted and Marine officers are assigned geographic micro-regions of educational responsibility.²⁹ This combined with assignment to a regionally aligned MCAC can provide for the greatest level of alignment between an individual Marines professional education and real-world experience. Multiple deployments in an assigned area of responsibility flattens the learning curve during pre-deployment training and can lead to increased measures of effectiveness during deployments.³⁰

With a reduction in the need for Active Component manpower and increased regional expertise and proficiency, MCACs are positioned to positively impact the Total Force. SFA mission relevance is only likely to grow and recurring engagements with global partners will enable national strategic defense objectives. A 2013 Center for Naval Analysis study identified the value in creating a formal Mission Essential Task (MET) for advising functions.³¹ In the years since the recommendation, the Marine Corps has formalized both the MOS and organizational structure that facilitates the training and doctrine that Marine advisors employ.

The continuity achieved through continuous engagements with highly trained and capable forces is a positive of activating MCACs. Strengthening security networks requires persistent and sustainable attention be paid to all actors in the security framework. While many of the function MCACs will perform will be indirect in nature, the effects will be seen further along the conflict continuum. Being involved with partners, specifically in USINDOPACOM and USEUCOM -as the NDS directs³² enable geo-political objectives through tactical engagements.

US participation in multinational security alliances has strengthened collective security during past conflicts, and the training packages provided to multinational security forces should be designed for potential threats that countries face³³. MCACs are scalable and can provide services that PN forces request in response to adversary capabilities. Innovative efforts in

developing allied and partner forces remains a vital function as national strategy pivots toward great power competition. While SFA missions are conducted overtly, competitors may seek to exploit vaguely defined rule-sets and international laws to undermine US or coalition influence. MCAC will need to adjust their approach to engagements on a mission-by-mission basis to match the changing nature of war.

Prussian war philosopher Carl Von Clausewitz famously identified that the nature of war is unchanging, while the character of war is in constant change.³⁴ This assertion remains relevant to Marine advisory assignments in the present day. While the nature of advising remains the same, the character of specific advising missions always change and requires advisors to creatively adapt. Great Power adversaries seek to undermine security in ways that are often covert and untraceable, through proxies or other ambiguous actions. Spreading awareness and providing disruptive methods to contest those vague actions through the FSF network is an opportunity for MCACs to engage and build upon shared regional security objectives. MCACs have the ability to operate with a minimal footprint and apply precise effects with PN security forces that conventional units normally cannot achieve in regular circumstances.³⁵

FSF Advisor Roles in Hybrid and Unconventional Warfare

Nations have a variety of options for exerting influence, whether through diplomatic, military, or economic means. In recent years, adversary nations have shifted to more ambiguous activities of exerting global influence, in attempts to achieve benefits normally obtained through conventional war, but without triggering total war. Different ways of thinking about these ambiguous activities and their implications is required to develop a competitive advantage and may suggest a Marine advisors' role and importance is likely to see an increase in the future with

hybrid wars. Because adversaries have chosen to exploit weaknesses and gaps in international security networks using unclear tactics that often lead to ambiguous conclusions, military professionals operating in the gray zone will have to adapt to these hybrid threats.

MCACs offer packages that inherently have low-political risk with high-military value.³⁶ The fact that MCACs are comprised of small teams of highly trained and capable professional advisors creates a favorable impression on PN security forces and the international community by large. Adversaries are always observing coalition activities, and small teams of advisors imbedded with PN forces is an option that is not inclined to provoke increased interest because of the relatively small footprint when compared to a large standing conventional force.

RISK OF NOT EMPLOYING MCAC TO FULL CAPACITY

It might be short-sighted to think that MCACs are capable of achieving all the required SFA functions without any deficiencies. The improved structure and order that is gained with the advisor companies is not without flaw as critics have identified shortcomings and areas where the Marine Corps should seek to continue improvement. Some critics of MCACs may not see the additional units as effective for the future warfare the nation may face. These critics find it hard to delineate between the missions of FSF advisors and Civil Affairs Marines and often believe that formalizing advisor units does not necessarily add value as a long-term solution.

Some critics cite the MCSCG advisor curriculum as tactically focused and not developed to train advisors to work above the battalion level.³⁷ This is to say that advisors assigned to work in the higher levels of military and government such as the division, brigade, corps or ministerial levels may not be prepared for the scope of responsibility they are tasked to teach their PN counterparts. The main risk associated with sending advisors to teach above their level of

expertise is the loss of faith and confidence from our allies, who may seek different or more capable partner in future engagements. Future curriculum development can address this issue by including higher echelon training for those FSF advisors working at the highest levels of PN governments.

CONCLUSION

To continue contributing to the NSS and NDS, the Marine Corps must field forces capable of deploying, coaching and mentoring our partners and allies to deal with security concerns on foreign terrain before they become domestic problems. Formalizing MCACs improves upon existing advisor functions with an experienced cadre capable of executing multiple SFA missions globally. The expert execution of these functions allows for the continuation of global partnerships that enhance the collective security for all. The nature of continuous engagements increases cohesion over time, developing lasting SFA relationships in Phase Zero operations that can be leveraged in the event of conflict escalation.

MCACs should seek to continue education programs to sustain the experienced advisors core skills. Training plans to support expeditionary advanced operations bases and missions done in a distributed manner will help focus advisors for future mission taskings. MCSCG's approach to training new advisors should also be updated to include these concepts. and maintain a relevant perspective on worldwide SC opportunities. This improvement would immediately benefit the FSF advisors assigned to MCACs, SPMAGTFs and MEUs in support to TSC by building partner capacity.

Investing in MCACs will enable establishing relationships with key partners; building depth, trust, interoperability, and improving PN capabilities, we will be much better positioned

and prepared to operate with our allies and partners should a conflict arise. These professionals employ their extensive skills to build relationships essential to the human domain of warfare. Moreover, they will be in place during the early parts of the competition space phases of maneuver and will therefore overcome our potential foes' anti-access/area denial efforts to prevent the ingress of U.S. forces into partner's countries. Additionally, MSCTs provide the Marine Corps with a potentially decisive strategic advantage if we invest in and employ them properly. This will require a willingness to invest in the necessary language, culture, and operational skills as well as a commitment to employing these Marines habitually in key partner nations before conflict arises.

Transitioning the Marine Corps from two decades of counterterrorism, counterinsurgency and stability operations in the Middle East is difficult for Marines who work to honor historical roots while maintaining relevance for future wars. The result of recent experiences in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, and Somalia demonstrate that the new advisor companies are places where Marines can build upon their training, education, and expertise. Their mission's demand signal is one that could outlast budget cuts and force shaping functions that seek to create economies in the Total Force will continue. And, while the new units are in their infancy, the growth potential through cyclic deployments to a wide array of theaters will broaden their scope of effectiveness. The recommendations stated here are suggestions made with the growth of advisor companies in mind. If nothing else, they serve to initiate dialogue at the strategic level of the Marine Corps to maximize their employment in the future. As with any period following extended combat operations, now is the time to ask difficult questions; the answers will shape the force structure for future conflicts. The goal of advancement of US national security is ongoing

an understanding of the MCACs and their ability to execute SFA missions could be considered as a solution to the hybrid wars moving forward in the twenty-first century.

Master of Military Studies Requirements for the Degree

Glossary from DISAM Security Force Assistance Guide³⁸

Foreign Internal Defense (FID): Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to its security. (JP 1-02)

Foreign Security Forces (FSF): FSF include but are not limited to military forces; police forces; border police, coast guard, and customs officials; paramilitary forces; interior and intelligence services; forces peculiar to specific nations, states, tribes, or ethnic groups; prison, correctional, and penal services; and the government ministries or departments responsible for the above services. (JP 3-05 19 APR 2011)

Host Nation (HN): A nation that receives the forces and/or supplies of allied nations, coalition partners, and/or NATO organizations to be located on, to operate in, or to transit through its territory. (JP 3-57)

Mobile Training Team (MTT): A team consisting of one or more US military or civilian personnel sent on temporary duty, often to a foreign nation, to give instruction. The mission of the team is to train indigenous personnel to operate, maintain, and employ weapons and support systems, or to develop a self-training capability in a particular skill. The Secretary of Defense may direct a team to train either military or civilian indigenous personnel, depending upon host nation requests (JP 1-02).

Security Assistance (SA): A group of programs authorized by Title 22, USC, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services by grant, loan, credit, cash sales, or lease, in furtherance of national policies and objectives. The Department of Defense does not administer all security assistance programs. Those security assistance programs that are administered by the Department are a subset of security cooperation. (DoDD 5132.03)

Security Sector Reform (SSR): The set of policies, plans, programs, and activities that a government undertakes to improve the way it provides safety, security, and justice. (JP 3-24)

Security Sector Assistance (SSA): A collection of the activities that a donor country takes ISO SSR aimed to ensure that all security forces operate within the bounds of domestic and international law, and that they support wide-ranging efforts to enforce and promote the rule of law. (Security Sector Reform paper, USAID/DoD/DOS, Feb 2009)

Security Cooperation Organizations (SCO). Those DoD organizations permanently located in a foreign country and assigned responsibilities for carrying out security cooperation management functions under section 515 of Title 22 USC and under Joint Publication 1-02, regardless of the actual name given to such DoD Component. SCOs include military assistance advisory groups, military missions and groups, offices of defense and military cooperation, liaison groups, and DATT personnel designated to perform security cooperation functions. The term “SCO” does not include units, formations, or other ad hoc organizations that conduct security

cooperation activities such as mobile training teams, mobile education teams, or operational units conducting security cooperation activities. (DoDD 5132.03)

Security Cooperation (SC): Activities undertaken by the Department of Defense to encourage and enable international partners to work with the United States to achieve strategic objectives. It includes all DoD interactions with foreign defense and security establishments, including all DoD-administered security assistance programs, that: build defense and security relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, including all international armaments cooperation activities and security assistance activities; develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations; and provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to host nations. (DoDD 5132.03)

Security Cooperation Activity (SCA): Military activity that involves other nations and is intended to shape the operational environment in peacetime. Activities include programs and exercises that the US military conducts with other nations to improve mutual understanding and improve interoperability with treaty partners or potential coalition partners. They are designed to support a combatant commander's theater strategy as articulated in the theater security cooperation plan. (TSCP) (JP 3-0)

Security Cooperation Planning (SCP): The subset of joint strategic planning conducted to support the DoD's security cooperation program. This planning supports a combatant commander's theater strategy (JP 5-0). Each theater is required to write a TCP, which is supposed to link and coordinate all DoD activity within the theater with national and theater strategic and operational objectives. Every training or advising mission should support the TCP.

Security Force Assistance (SFA): The DoD activities that contribute to unified action by the U.S. Government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions. (JP 1-02)

Notes

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