



HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES FORCES-AFGHANISTAN  
KABUL, AFGHANISTAN  
APO AE 09356

USFOR-A-DCDR-S

6 December 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Training Improvement Recommendations for US Forces Deploying to Afghanistan

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide recommendations to improve training for United States forces deploying to Afghanistan. The recommendations are based on feedback from forces operating in this theater and assessments by the USFOR-A staff. Publishing these training improvement recommendations regularly ensures deploying units and the generating force have current, theater-specific information on trends, developments, requirements and challenges that will allow their training to be tailored to match the needs of the dynamic, population-centric COIN battle in the Afghan environment.

2. The operational situation in Afghanistan is dynamic and fluid, necessitating continual identification and evaluation of training requirements. Feedback from within the theater highlights what practices are working well and which need improvement. In addition, COMISAF guidance on the COIN mindset way ahead in Afghanistan drive new training requirements which address the tactical, cultural, environmental, geographical, and political challenges posed by the Afghan environment.

3. Enclosure 1 contains the specific training recommendations. Within the enclosure, the recommendations appear as follows:

Section 1	Language Skills	Page 1
Section 2	Female Engagement Teams	Page 1
Section 3	Individual Body Armor Wear	Page 3
Section 4	Forward Operating Base Selection	Page 5
Section 5	Indirect Fires	Page 7
Section 6	Deployed Theater Accountability Software	Page 11

4. If you have any questions, my point of contact for these recommendations is COL Kent Hann, USFOR-A J7, Training, at DSN 318-237-1649.

Encl  
Training Recommendations

*Thanks for all  
your training focus  
in 'AFG.HTH'!*  
*John*

JOHN A. MACDONALD  
Major General, U.S. Army  
Deputy Commander, Support  
United States Forces - Afghanistan

USFOR-A-DCDR-S

SUBJECT: Training Improvement Recommendations for US Forces Deploying to Afghanistan

DISTRIBUTION:

US JOINT STAFF, JOINT EXERCISES AND TRAINING DIVISION (J7)

US CENTRAL COMMAND TRAINING AND EXERCISES DIVISION (CCJ7)

US ARMY CENTRAL (G3-TREX)

US JOINT FORCES COMMAND JOINT WAR FIGHTING CENTER (J7)

US ARMY FORCES COMMAND TRAINING DIVISION (G/3/5/7)

US ARMY TRAINING AND DOCTRINE COMMAND

US AIR FORCES CENTRAL LESSONS LEARNED (A9)

US MARINE CENTRAL (G3)

US MARINE CORPS TRAINING AND EDUCATION COMMAND (G3)

US AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND (A3)

US FORCES - AFGHANISTAN

## Training Improvement Recommendations for US Forces Deploying to Afghanistan

1. **ISSUE: Lack of Afghan Language Skills.** Units arriving in Afghanistan do not have sufficient personnel with adequate Dari or Pashto language skills.

a. **DISCUSSION.** Our ability to speak the local Afghan languages is a visible sign that we care about Afghans and their future. Afghans are distrustful of personnel unable to speak their language. Lack of knowledge of the local language conveys arrogance (and perhaps lack of intelligence) to much of the Afghan population. Service members must recognize that every positive interaction with the locals, regardless of how simple, enhances our mission. COMISAF's COIN Training Guidance provides the following guidance on language skills:

(1) Every deployed person should be able to use common greetings and say "thank you". COMISAF's guidance, while simple and direct, conveys the more substantial message that every Soldier is responsible for building relationship with the Afghans. Even the most rudimentary conversational skills, coupled with a sincere attitude, establish bonds that result in significant benefit.

(2) "Each platoon, or like sized organization, that will have regular contact with the population should have at least one leader that speaks Dari/Pashto at least at the 0+ level, with a goal of a level 1 in oral communications". This COIN Training Guidance puts language training into perspective by stating, "This language skill is as important as your other basic combat skills".

b. **RECOMMENDATIONS.** Each platoon, or like sized organization, that will have regular contact with the population should have at least one leader that speaks Dari/Pashto at least at the 0+ level, with a goal of a level 1 in oral communications. Definition of language proficiencies can be found at the following link: <http://www.govtilr.org/Skills/ILRscale2.htm>. Resources to pursue assistance in accomplishing this training include: Defense Language Institute, Rosetta Stone Language Course, and local colleges.

(1) Language training should be stressed at all the service schools, commissioning training programs, officer advanced courses, NCO schools, and professional military education (PME).

(2) Units destined for Afghanistan should begin language training early in their pre-deployment process. Commanders should routinely exercise all unit members in basic conversational Dari or Pashto language.

(3) Pre-deployment exercises at the major training centers should intensify scenarios that interact with the local populace and stress language skills.

2. **ISSUE: Female Engagement Teams (FET).** Units deploying to Afghanistan lack engagement with half of the Afghan population. There is significant information operations benefit to be gained by increasing the use of Female Engagement Teams (FET). A FET is a small, all-female element that has a primary purpose of engaging with the local female

population. The size of the element varies but is typically 4-6 persons, and the embedded team is capable of conducting information operations in a field environment under the protection of maneuver units.

a. **DISCUSSION**

(1) Afghanistan is a COIN conflict, and ultimate success in Afghanistan requires a COIN mindset while seeking new means of engaging the local populace. An imperative for success in Afghanistan, as stated in CDRUSFOR-A/COMISAF's 13 June 2009 Initial Guidance, is to "Protect and Partner with the People." This Initial Guidance highlights that our focus on Afghans' welfare will build the trust and support necessary for success. The security of all segments of Afghan society must be addressed, and the use of FETs is an emerging success in engaging and establishing bonds with the previously unapproachable (female) half of the Afghan population.

(2) CDRUSFOR-A/COMISAF's Counterinsurgency Guidance published 1 September 2009 highlights our need to understand the Afghan people and "see things through their eyes." Interacting with the Afghan populace at both the group and individual level is critical to understanding their concerns and desires. This personal interaction is key to forging mutually-decided solutions to the variety of challenges that face the country, and to stemming the insurgency's influence.

(3) Afghan women (despite their traditional status as second-class citizens) still exert significant family influence, especially on their adolescent sons, a prime Taliban recruiting pool. FETs are able to directly engage with, and influence Afghan women. FETs have the potential to significantly improve relationship-building within Afghanistan, enhance information gathering, and cast US forces in a positive light.

b. **RECOMMENDATIONS.** Increased use of FETs and appropriate pre-deployment training should receive increased emphasis to reap the benefits of this emerging capability. FET training should be tailored to meet the dynamics of COIN operations in Afghanistan. FET utilization in Afghanistan to date has been primarily a Marine effort, but all services should adopt and incorporate this new capability. However, it must be recognized that FETs must remain a commander's option and if used, developed and built from existing "womanpower" within the units. Pre-deployment training of females in preparation of becoming a FET member is key to continued success. The following pre-deployment training is recommended and should be reinforced at pre-deployment exercises at the major training centers.

(1) Culture classes to educate FET members on considerations such as dress, offensive physical gestures, customs, and religion. FET members should receive training in the Pashtunwali code to better understand Pashtun culture.

(2) Search techniques.

(3) Basic Dari or Pashto language training including common greetings and other courtesies to a 0+ level (see Language recommendations section)

(4) Tactical questioning using an interpreter.

(5) Weapons handling, patrolling, immediate actions on contact, and combat marksmanship.

(6) Capitalize on the experiences/expertise of individuals and units previously/currently engaged in FET efforts. Maj Tadd Turczyn (TF Leatherneck's FET OIC) at [tadd.turczyn@afg.usmc.mil](mailto:tadd.turczyn@afg.usmc.mil) or the SNCOIC, MSGT Ryan Parker at [ryan.parker@afg.usmc.mil](mailto:ryan.parker@afg.usmc.mil) have been involved with the FET program and are TF Leatherneck's POCs.

7) A solid, practical example of how FETs have been organized and utilized is highlighted in Task Force Leatherneck's FET CONOPS located at the following SIPR link:

<http://www.lnk.afg.usmc.smil.mil/staff/g3/fecc/fet/Lists/Announcements/DispForm.aspx?ID=3>.

A variety of training classes and AARs describing actual FET operations are available at the following SIPR link:

<http://www.lnk.afg.usmc.smil.mil/staff/g3/fecc/fet/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fstaff%2fg3%2ffecc%2ffet%2fShared%20Documents%2fFET%20introductory%20Classes%206%2d10%20Oct&FolderCTID=&View=%7bFEF99ED8%2dE32D%2d4FCE%2d9870%2dA0F1512A50DC%7d>.

**3. ISSUE: Individual Body Armor (IBA) Wear.** Although wearing IBA can be an appropriate force protection measure, its near-universal application in Afghanistan has become a hindrance to establishing bonds in this personal relationship and trust-based society.

a. **DISCUSSION.** Our forces use IBA as a primary force protection measure. Local commanders are responsible for establishing force protection measures. There is no across-the-board theater mandate to wear IBA "outside the wire". However, we have typically made IBA wear the default standard. We must now place greater emphasis on informed decisions regarding force protection posture. Where threat conditions allow, we must more conscientiously evaluate our IBA wear practices to maximize the benefits of the COIN approach. Current COIN guidance and its applicability to IBA wear is highlighted in the following sections:

(1) COMISAF's COIN Guidance emphasized "we must change the way we think, act, and operate". Inherent in that guidance is the premise that we must change the way we are perceived by the Afghan people. Our physical appearance and our actions impact those perceptions.

(2) COMISAF's COIN guidance highlights that "Afghan culture is founded on personal relationships". Earning the trust of the people is a linchpin in our mission. To Afghans, the wear of IBA conveys the message of distrust or uneasiness. It also gives the impression of superiority and alienates the local population. None of these perceptions promote relationship building, and appearing to be a "fortress" during interaction with Afghan locals is self-defeating in terms of our COIN goals. COMISAF's COIN Guidance re-enforces this notion with the words, "excessive force protection is distancing, not inspiring".

(3) COMISAF has led the way in shedding IBA when interacting with the public. A recent *60 Minutes* television interview captured COMISAF's view that it important to send a message of trust and "I don't think I'm more valuable than he is" to the individuals he is meeting with. A soldier in "full battle rattle" is simply not able to present an image of trust and openness.

**b. RECOMMENDATIONS.**

(1) Units should receive increased training on the conditions that allow removal of IBA to support COIN objectives. Regarding IBA wear, the paradigm of "always err on the conservative side" must be countered with "when will it enhance the trust relationship to not wear it". Every service member must recognize and internalize that we are aggressively pursuing a population-centered strategy in Afghanistan. Our success will result from our efforts to achieve personal connections with the Afghan people.

(2) Commanders at every level must make an informed assessment of their operating environment and consider the risks that may or may not necessitate IBA wear. Leaders at every level must understand the potential long-term tactical, operational, and strategic benefits that can be achieved by accepting a theoretical, yet unquantifiable increase in risk by not wearing IBA in certain situations. Over time, this risk-benefit tradeoff will have a positive impact in how Afghan people perceive us and our willingness to openly engage with them. Making our troops more accessible, personable, and approachable is a key part of garnering the Afghans' support. It is this support that will ultimately reduce the overall risk to our forces and contribute to success in Afghanistan. Forums for training and key aspects of training/leadership that must be instilled include:

(a) IBA wear decisions should be incorporated into service schools, such as the Officer Basic Course, Officer Advance Course, Command and General Staff College, and Advanced NCO school. Course lectures and field scenarios could be utilized where leaders have to make IBA wear decisions.

(b) Pre-deployment unit training should include increased training on threat recognition, risk mitigation, and trade-off between risk acceptance (non-IBA wear) and COIN-based benefits. Units should incorporate situational training that stresses building relationships with local leaders and includes IBA wear decisions.

(c) Situational training scenarios should also be made part of the training scenarios at the joint training centers and MRE/MRX's.

(d) All deploying units/individuals should continue to read, fully understand, and be prepared to implement the COIN-centric approach outlined in CDRUSFOR-A/COMISAF Initial Guidance (13 June 2009), CDRUSFOR-A/COMISAF COIN Guidance (1 September 2009), CDRUSFOR-A/COMISAF Tactical Directive (1 July 2009), and CDRUSFOR-A/COMISAF Counterinsurgency Training Guidance (10 November 2009).

(e) Empowerment of lower-level leaders to make IBA wear decisions. COMISAF's COIN Training Guidance noted, "It is especially important that senior leadership develop a trust in and

empower subordinate leaders to make appropriate, timely decisions.” In many cases it will be the “strategic platoon leader” or squad leader who will have the opportunity to directly impact how Afghans view our forces and our desire to partner with them.

**4. ISSUE: Proper Forward Operating Base (FOB), Combat Outpost (COP) and Outpost (OP) Selection.** Over 200 FOBs, COPs, and OPs exist in Afghanistan, and new sites are being planned for the future for the potential increase of troops. As these FOBs, COPs, and OPs develop, training is needed to the lowest leadership levels to ensure site selection is done based on the essential COIN mindset.

a. **DISCUSSION.**

(1) Specific examples of FOB/COP/OP selection criteria:

(a) “Why was it decided to build FOB Leatherneck there?” COMISAF asked during his initial assessment. FOB Leatherneck, an important hub, is isolated from the population. This was the beginning of an assessment at the leadership level on the FOB site selection process in Afghanistan.

(b) In another location, the locals requested that the coalition forces build the FOB around a cell phone tower to protect it. A second cell phone tower nearby was destroyed by the Taliban but the one that was protected by the coalition forces remained intact, leaving in place the communications infrastructure used by both the locals and the coalition forces.

(2) FOB/COP/OP selection should consider the following overarching COIN guidance: *Protect and partner with the Afghan people. We are fighting for the Afghan people – not against them. Our focus on their welfare will build the support and trust necessary for success...* COMISAF’s first imperative in his Initial Guidance published 13 June 2009. Key considerations in FOB selection are:

(a) FOBs/COPs/OPs should be built within the population centers in order to secure and protect them. An essential part of COIN is stability OPS, as voiced continuously by the Afghan locals, “Schools or roads won’t do us any good unless we have security”. Other services are desired, but before we provide other services we must provide security. The locals can even provide these themselves, but not under the intimidation of the Taliban. A school or road that is not protected will not be utilized or will be destroyed. Providing Afghans security is our most important operational-level mission and must be a key consideration in FOB/COP/OP site selection.

(b) FOBs/COPs/OPs must be in strategic positions so we can continually be intertwined with the people of Afghanistan. Thinking of Taliban as being in two different groups helps to analyze the problem. Group 1 are the ideological Taliban who will never accept a GIRoA as legitimate. This group must be eliminated. Group 2 are the “upset brothers”, a description in Pashto. When we address and alleviate their issues they will reintegrate with Afghan society. We can affect this goal with the “upset brothers” by using our FOBs to enhance participation with the people.

(c) If possible, FOB/COP/OP site selection should contribute to protecting key infrastructure including cell phone towers, key buildings, and utility facilities, as these structures are targeted by the Taliban. The Taliban has a history of destroying industrial and technological facilities. The Taliban has focused efforts on destroying infrastructure that would promote the population's support of the government. Proper FOB/COP/OP selection will protect these targeted areas, protecting the people and their assets.

(d) Locals have knowledge of the area and can voice the opinions and views of the populace. Also, involving the locals will give them a sense of ownership. As the Afghans say, "If you sweat for it, you will protect it" (COMISAF COIN guidance).

(e) FOBs/COPs/OPs should only be established where they can be defended and held. We are now collocating ISAF forces with the ANSF. They must "live, eat, and train together, plan and operate together, and hold each other accountable" as COMISAF states in his COIN Guidance. It must be stressed that we have shifted our approach from being supported by the Afghans to supporting the Afghans through responsible partnership.

b. **RECOMMENDATIONS.** FOB/COP/OP selection should be a part of COIN training and all other pre-deployment training for leadership to the lowest level. Service schools, officer training basic and advanced courses, and PMEs should incorporate classes on the considerations for locating FOBs, COPs, and OPs in a COIN environment. FOB selection scenarios and exercises should be conducted during unit pre-deployment and train-up exercises at the major training centers.

(1) FOB/COP/OP selection process should be based on ASCOPE (FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency, Chapter 1 Section III*, dated 21 Apr 2009).

(2) Locals should be involved in the decision making FOB/COP/OP selection process. Afghan leaders (both tribal and GIRoA) should be consulted and provide their support for a location under consideration.

(3) FOB/COP/OP selection should enable us to be among the people so the enemy can not "own the night": to stop intimidation and propaganda (often in the form of night letters).

(4) FOB/COP/OP selection should protect key infrastructure.

(5) The FOB/COP/OP should be established only where we intend to hold and build.

(6) Training centers should stress that FOB/COP/OP are built in an inter-layered (partnered) approach and defended in a combined manner. MRXs should include scenarios to test the ability of the FOB/COP/OP to conduct synchronized, combined defense.

(7) In addition to ground requirements, aviation operations must be integrated into site selection training, scenarios, and exercises.

**5. ISSUE: Indirect Fires.** Fires training consists of sensor training, COMMS training, mortar and artillery fires training, fires support training, and repair technician training. All of these elements are critical to ensure that fires operations run smoothly. Based on feedback from troops in the field, specific issues have been identified as needing improvement.

**a. SENSOR TRAINING**

**(1) DISCUSSION.**

(a) Currently, units are deploying without training for lightweight counter-mortar radar (LCMR), which is critical for anti-mortar operations. Units must deploy with personnel trained on the systems, who can then train Tactical Operations Center personnel in LCMR.

(b) Units are arriving with insufficient operational experience in the Air Force Weather Agency's (AFWA) InteractiveGrid Analysis and Display System (IGrADS) and the Army's Meteorological Measuring Set-Profiler (MMS-P) softwares. Units in theater need greater proficiency in both softwares. Meteorological variables affect the flight patterns of artillery and can have an effect on accuracy, especially at longer distances and during variable weather.

**(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.**

(a) Operational battalions should deploy with at least two certified LCMR trainers. These technical experts will train personnel on LCMR in theater as needed. The output goal is to have an increased level of familiarization/expertise so that the time required from fire request to munitions on target is significantly reduced.

(b) Army Field Artillery School, Fort Sill, should provide training in both softwares in meteorological courses. Units should conduct NET/refresher training on both softwares at home station before deploying.

**b. COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING**

**(1) DISCUSSION.**

(a) All personnel (not just communications specialists) require operational familiarity on communications equipment, especially SATCOM and HF. Soldiers need to perform basic operations on COMMS equipment such as loading a frequency, verifying time, and loading crypto. With the heavy focus on data communication, units must understand the set-up and utilization of data COMMS assets. COMMS has proven to be critical in units under the pressure of fire or casualty.

(b) Fire Direction Officers must have a knowledge set beyond technical fire direction. They must convey vital information to the Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC), and must be prepared to extract and transmit this information in a timely fashion.

(c) Programs such as Internet Relay Chat for Windows (mIRC), High Performance Waveform (HPW), or Tactical Chat (TAC Chat) should be included in MRE/MRX's in the same manner they will be utilized in the field. mIRC, HPW, or TAC Chat have been used between Artillery units, JTACs, and other units. FDOs in the field use these tools to provide liaison elements with a variety of information to include: target number, method of engagement, verified target grid, target description, location of closest friendly units, Gun Target Line (GTL), Maximum Ordinate (Max Ord), Time of Flight (TOF), Ballistic Impact Point (BIP), and Canister Impact Grid. These communications modes are used extensively in CJOA-A.

(d) Command Post of the Future (CPOF) software training is required at the watch officer level. CPOF is essential for watch officers to map incidents, track enemy units and communicate battlefield information.

## (2) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**

(a) Ensure personnel outside of the signal MOS are trained and can conduct the basic user-level tasks such as loading a frequency, verifying time, and loading crypto. Additionally, with the heavy focus on data communication, multiple personnel must understand the set-up and utilization of such assets. Units should conduct training and Communications Exercises (COMMEX) at home station and as part of collective training.

(b) mIRC, HPW, and TAC CHAT should be used in training exercises for Artillery FDS both in artillery school and at home station prior to deploying.

(c) Artillery TOCs should deploy with at least two personnel trained in CPOF. These trainers can train other watch standers in theater.

(d) CPOF training should be accomplished at the unit, re-inforced by training at the officer advance course, and exercised at a command post exercise at the schools.

## c. **FIRES TRAINING--MORTARS**

### (1) **DISCUSSION.**

(a) Mortar personnel are trained on smaller guns but lack sufficient training on 120mm tubes. 120mm tubes (especially precision 120mm tubes) are useful in Afghanistan because of their range. However, they require expertise beyond other mortar tubes.

(b) 81mm mobile mortar operations are common in Afghanistan. Moving, setting up, and employing 81mm mortar tubes in battles pace is presenting operational problems. Due to rotation of personnel, mortar teams are short-handed and back fill with non-school qualified soldiers.

(c) Infantry (non-mortar) personnel are using 60mm tubes in hand-held mode. Circumstances often call for non-mortar infantry men to take the 60mm tubes ahead into the

battle field while mortar personnel stay behind. This method has been proven effective in close combat in Afghanistan.

(d) Employment of mortars in combat operations has shown close to target is not good enough. Precision is crucial for operations but is hard to achieve during the stress of actual enemy engagement. Poor precision can lead to civilian casualties or fratricide.

## (2) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**

(a) Mortar sections should conduct additional training on 120mm tubes at home station prior to deploying until proficiency is achieved. Units should receive additional training on airlifting, emplacing, and reconfiguring 120mm tubes. Mortar teams need to enhance both airlift and ground operations familiarity and proficiency to decrease time from fires request received to rounds on target.

(b) Mortar sections should conduct additional 81mm mortar mobility operations training exercises. Mortar platoons should train in manpacking and setting up the 81mm mortar, especially in mountainous terrain that simulates Afghanistan. More infantry soldiers should be cross-trained and proficient in mortar operations to enable effective utilization of 81mm mortars on the battlefield.

(c) Infantry units should conduct training for non-mortar personnel on 60mm tubes in hand-held mode. Every squad should have a soldier with sufficient familiarization to employ 60mm mortars effectively.

## d. **FIRES TRAINING—ARTILLERY**

### (1) **DISCUSSION.**

(a) Units in theatre are employing 2 and 3 gun battery FDC operations. New M777 equipment has not been provided to units in time for adequate training and experience prior to deployment.

(b) Split battery operations include two-tube operations. Artillery units must spread their guns apart to maintain FIRECAP for spacious and mountainous terrain. They may use three platoon batteries with two guns per platoon or they may use three gun platoons depending on the area and mission. They must be flexible to make these changes adapting to the terrain. Each platoon conducts operations autonomously, detached from their organic batteries. Controlled by platoon leadership, the platoon receives technical guidance from its battery Fire Direction Center (FDC) while tactical guidance is provided by the supported Task Force Commander. Missions such as smoke screens often require procedural changes when shooting with four or less guns.

(c) Identifying easily defensible positions and air mobility operations are an important part of artillery warfare in Afghanistan. There have been difficulties both lifting and emplacing Howitzers in theater.

**(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.**

(a) Artillery batteries should receive increased training on M777 Howitzer and M119 Howitzer with the goal of being able to respond quicker and with more accurate fires.

(b) Split battery operations should be trained at home station and validated at major training centers and MRX's. At a minimum, each battery should deploy with two certified Operations Chiefs, as well as two certified Fire Direction Officers. Additionally, FDCs should emphasize split battery operations at artillery school and in reference documentation.

(c) Aviation support units should conduct howitzer airlift exercises with artillery units to increase familiarization with the process.

**e. FIRES SUPPORT TRAINING****(1) DISCUSSION.**

(a) High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) operation is an important part of artillery warfare in Afghanistan because of the extended range of the rockets. Air de-confliction over multiple AORs is not taking place in a timely manner.

(b) The integration of close air support into maneuver operations is done often by the JTAC because ground fires personnel are not sufficiently trained. Training on integration of fires into maneuver plans, especially integration of close air support, which is conducted by JTAC, should be practiced.

**(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.**

(a) Multi-AOR HIMARS de-confliction should be a part of training for artillery units who will use HIMARS in theater.

(b) Air de-confliction should be incorporated into MRX's. Tactical Airspace Integration System (TAIS) Airspace Work Station (AWS) and Airspace Command and Control (AC2) elements should be integrated into training and MRX's.

**f. REPAIR TECHNICIANS TRAINING**

(1) **DISCUSSION.** Lack of generator/diesel engine mechanics is impairing unit ability to perform preventative maintenance (PM), perform basic repairs, determine power loads and understand basic electrical concepts for artillery generators. Generator/diesel engine mechanics are in great need in artillery batteries, and this need is compounded by split battery operations. Having unit generator mechanics and basic generator operators is not enough.

(2) **RECOMMENDATIONS.** Soldiers should be trained to perform maintenance, determine power loads and understand basic electrical concepts (120, 208, 240, 50/60Hz, watts,

amps) of FDC generators. Units should deploy with enough cross-trained, organic mechanics to support split battery operations.

**6. ISSUE. Lack of Deployed Theater Accountability Software (DTAS) standardization.**

Personnel accountability within the Afghanistan AOR suffers from the lack of a standardized tracking system. This lack of a standardized system makes it difficult for commanders to have an accurate picture of theater force levels.

a. **DISCUSSION.** Currently there are several service components and civilians sourcing agencies operating within the theater. However, because a standardized system of accountability had not been previously mandated, many services utilized customized systems to account for personnel. These systems do not “talk” to each other, resulting in an incomplete picture of forces within the theater. ISAF FRAGO 09-022 recently mandated every CENTCOM Service Component, Subordinate Command and Joint Task Force to maintain 100% accountability of every service member, civilian and contractor within the AOR in DTAS. The lack of trained personnel is causing a delay in all units rapidly migrating to utilizing DTAS. A description of various personnel accountability systems currently being used, and their associated challenges, follows:

(1) Air Force: A recent AFCENT memorandum directed that all PERSCOs within Afghanistan account for all non-IA airmen within theater. The memo directed AF PERSCOs to exercise specified ADCON to include, but not limited to, accountability and strength reporting as required. Because of this memo, the Air Force has begun reporting all non-IA airmen in daily JPERSTAT reports to CENTCOM. In addition, subordinate units account for all airmen both assigned and attached working directly for their units. This process resulted in a more than 1,300 double count of airmen within theater. Also, the Air Force uses a separate deployed accountability system called Deliberate and Crisis Action Planning and Execution (DCAPES). It is limited to collecting Air Force personnel data only. It provides the Air Force with end to end personnel accountability in one database and gives PERSCOs the ability to monitor the duty status of deployed Airmen. However, DCAPES is not capable of linking and transferring data with the Deployed Theater Accountability System.

(2) Marines: Currently the Marines report personnel numbers directly to CENTCOM. The Marines do not share any personnel or strength data with USFOR-A or any other units in theater. USFOR-A obtains MARCENT strength numbers directly from the CENTCOM web-based site nightly. USFOR-A is only capable of pulling a roll up of numbers reported by MARCENT as a whole for each location. USFOR-A is unable to provide the Commander an accurate picture of Marine personnel/units because of the lack of visibility of strength. Marine units in Afghanistan currently do not use DTAS but use a Marine –developed classified personnel accountability system called Secure Personnel Accountability (SPA).

(3) Civilians: At this time there is a significant lack of accountability of civilians within the AOR. The majority of the issues stem from civilian contractors unwilling to provide their SSNs to be loaded into DTAS. A mandate is required by the Combatant Commander ordering all civilians to provide the necessary data needed in order to load their information into DTAS.

b. **RECOMMENDATIONS.** Standardize accountability throughout Afghanistan for all US military and civilian personnel. Continue to train new unit personnel on DTAS. Recommend ARCENT continue providing MTTs to all in-theater units for training new personnel thus enabling rapid transfer to DTAS.