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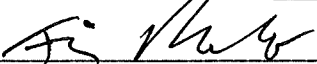
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Table of Contents

Disclaimer.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Executive Summary.....	iii
Introduction.....	01
The Evolution of the Military Police Corps.....	02
A Community and Enemy Focused Force.....	02
Military Police Corps Functions.....	03
Versatility of the MP Corps.....	04
SOF Missions.....	06
Historical MP Support to SOF.....	07
A Packaged Force Capable of Training, Advising, and Analyzing	08
Supporting Whole of Government Approach.....	09
Need for Increased MP and SOF Interoperability	10
PIO in Support of SOF.....	11
Capitalizing on the Human Domain.....	13
Current MP and SOF Combined Missions.....	13
Further Integrating MP into SOF Mission Sets.....	15
Strengthening MP and SOF Interoperability.....	17
Conclusion.....	19
Endnotes.....	21
Bibliography.....	24

Figures

Fig.1 Pipeline of MP Support to USASOC.....	18
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Title: Leveraging the Military Police Corps: Versatility in Support of Army Special Operations Forces.

Author: MAJ Lee D. Monzon, United States Army

Thesis: By creating regionally organized Military Police (MP) units and developing an MP-Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) database, the MP Corps can enhance Special Operation Forces' (SOF) efforts in support of Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) and thus increasing capabilities at a minimal cost.

Discussion: The current emphasis of utilizing SOF captures the way-ahead for the use of the military to support the National Defense Strategy. Forecasted budget cuts have forced a decrease in Conventional Force (CF) personnel, equipment, and other expenditures, but the funding of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), to include ARSOF, remains unaffected. However, SOF will be over-utilized in support of global military efforts because of the increased emphasis with being the force of choice coupled with increased expectations due to continued funding,

The MP Corps can effectively support ARSOF missions, increase their capabilities, and free up SOF to increase partnerships across the globe. The MP Corps has partnered with ARSOF in many countries and conflicts, but many members of ARSOF are not aware of this connection. The MP Corps can provide versatility through support in areas such as Police Intelligence Operations and law enforcement advisory assistance, there allowing ARSOF to focus on other missions. The MP Corps' relationship with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and other law enforcement agencies provides increased skills for MP Corps Soldiers while also mutually benefitting the ARSOF partnership.

It is, however, key that MP support to ARSOF is compatible, habitual, efficient, and interoperable. This must begin prior to execution and continue after mission completion. The current military system to process support requests does not necessarily allow for the most qualified MP in regards to regional experience, training, education and attributes. The requesting organization will normally receive support from an MP unit based on proximity, and does not factor in region expertise, experience, and training that is critical to mission success. The MP Corps should develop a database that is visible to ARSOF leadership to allow for the most qualified and experienced MP personnel to support their missions. In addition, the disbanding of fifteen (15) Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) by the end of FY2017 allows an opportunity to capitalize on a MP force pool. These MPs that were in direct support of the BCTs could be used to generate a battalion size element with companies that are allocated to support respective GCC areas of responsibilities.

Conclusion: In order to better support ARSOF and GCC efforts, the MP Corps should develop a capabilities database and establish a battalion-size element with companies that are regionally aligned. This will allow for continuity of regional experience and enhanced partnerships, while reducing the mission load of ARSOF and increasing the effectiveness of MP support.

Introduction

The United States (US) Army Military Police (MP) Corps has evolved well beyond its initial purpose of regulating Soldiers and corralling deserters. It has developed into an organization that provides critical capabilities for the US Army; it is a key enabler for combat arms units and low density military occupational specialty (MOS) units. MP services can range anywhere from basic military installation security to peacekeeping and stability support during small or large scale combat operations. Few people outside the MP Corps realize the range of capabilities and missions that the MP Corps has. Unfortunately, the current organization of the MP Corps limits its utility to support Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCC) objectives. This limitation applies particularly to MP support for Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF). Improved cooperation between the MP Corps and ARSOF would create additional options for the GCCs. The Army should establish institutional structures and measures to enhance interoperability between the MP Corps and ARSOF. This issue ought to be addressed, considering that MP functions directly tie in with ARSOF missions through official MP doctrines and manuals. However, there is no permanent relationship structure or system that allows for such interoperability to exist.

In order to develop a viable solution to leverage MP capabilities and enhance ARSOF capabilities, it is important to address the constraints and limitations of the military's structure, organization and systems. This paper will explain MP Corps functions, describe past and present MP support to ARSOF operations, and identify the critical gaps that prevent the further enhancement of ARSOF overall. Ultimately, it will prescribe structure and functional changes to effectively and efficiently tie MP to ARSOF. By creating regionally organized MP units and

developing an MP-ARSOF personnel database, the MP Corps can enhance Special Operation Forces' (SOF) efforts in support of GCCs, at a minimal cost.

The Evolution of the Military Police Corps

Formerly known as the Provost Corps, the US Army MP Corps have evolved significantly since it was first established in 1778. Initially created to deter or round up deserters during the Revolutionary War, the MP Corps now performs more comprehensive security and investigative duties in garrison and combat environments. The current mission of the US Army MP is:

“in coordination with Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, trains Soldiers, Civilians, and Leaders in the core competencies of Soldiering, Policing, Investigations, and Corrections; develops collective training for the Joint Force; executes personnel development functions; develops and integrates concepts, doctrine, organizations, materiel, and nonlethal scalable effects, in order to develop agile and adaptive Soldiers, Civilians, and Leaders who are recognized professionals in the disciplines of Security and Mobility Support, Police Operations, and Detention Operations.”¹

MP are trained in basic combat skills; they are a hybrid of policemen and infantrymen. The US Army MP 2020 Strategic Vision states that Military Police are the most demanded enabler for major combat operations, stability operations, expeditionary operations, civil assistance, and homeland consequence management.² The MP 2020 strategic vision, MP mission, and recent historical combat support and garrison law enforcement missions demonstrate that the MP Corps is a versatile force multiplier for combat arms units and ARSOF missions.

Community and Enemy Focused Force

LTG David Quantock, a senior US Army MP leader, bestowed the name Warrior Police on the US Army Military Police Corps.³ The name Warrior reflects the roles MP have fulfilled

in the current wars in Afghanistan and pre-2011 Iraq. They are infantry and cops, destroyers and builders, eliminators and facilitators.⁴ The MP roles in a combat environment range from supporting the capture or kill of High Value Individuals, to general combat support, to Host Nation (HN) government reconstruction support. These tasks and their garrison law enforcement mission, show the versatility and ability to immediately transition from community to enemy focus. Lieutenant Colonel (RET) Gordon Cucullu, a retired US Army Special Forces (SF) Officer, identifies MP as having the ability “[t]o deploy into combat realizing that one day they will be called upon to shoot, the next to extend a helping hand. Only the Army’s SF, in its dual role as warriors and teachers, includes such a diversity of missions.”⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Cucullu is correct in his assessment. The MP Corps has proven its ability to change its mindset and approach, going from garrison security missions to supporting contingency operations.

Military Police Corps Functions

The MP Corps is the expert of five mission essential tasks: Law and Order, Maneuver Mobility Support Operations, Police Intelligence Operations (PIO), Internment/Resettlement (IR), and Area Security (AS). Each of these functions provides critical enabling characteristics to supported forces. The Law and Order function entails law enforcement services, support to HN law enforcement, police and criminal investigations, and HN police training and development.⁶ The Maneuver Mobility Support function includes straggler and dislocated civilian control, route recon and surveillance, main supply route regulation and enforcement, support to breaching operations, and support to river crossing and passage of lines.⁷ The function of Internment/Resettlement covers detainee operations, dislocated civilian processing, population and resource control, and US military prisoner handling.⁸ Area Security is comprised of reconnaissance operations, base/air base defense, response force and tactical combat force

operations, critical site security, and high value asset security.⁹ The last function is Police Intelligence Operations, which provides information and intelligence collection and dissemination, active and passive police information collection, situational enhanced awareness, and police and criminal information assessment.¹⁰

MP provides security for the continental United States and overseas military installations. Within the continental United States in a garrison environment, MP are utilized routinely in a law enforcement capacity. These mission sets provide MP the opportunity to interact with the local community on a daily basis and this builds rapport, and develops their interpersonal skills. These opportunities are critical in creating an environment where civilians are willing to provide information to MP, therefore not only supporting the LE mission, but also furthering the effectiveness of PIO. These opportunities also allows MP to deter criminal activities or apprehend perpetrators. MP units thus train continuously in the garrison environment, thus honing their skills for warfare. The garrison environment is an unforgiving training ground for MP, with real-life consequences; MP skills are therefore honed to levels where they exceed the standard when applied in a wartime environment.

Versatility of the MP Corps

The moto of the MP Corps is “Assist, Protect, and Defend.” The moto in itself reflects their versatility. *Assist* is the word that captures their combat support role within operational and tactical initiatives. *Protect* is the outcome from security efforts conducted to ensure people, infrastructure, and equipment, are unharmed. *Defend* showcases the MP Corps’ capability and willingness to engage adversaries in order to defeat an advancing threat, whether in peacetime or

war. Their versatility is due to their directed mission essential tasks, training opportunities in and outside of the Army, and the operational environment they are continuously immersed in.

MP acquire marksmanship training from their assigned unit and have the opportunity to attend the Special Reaction Team course to increase their skills. Advanced marksmanship training is a must because of the MP LE requirement to respond to immediate threats such as active shooters and hostage and barricade situations. MP are also trained on the use of non-lethal weapons such as pepper spray, conducted electrical weapons, and less than lethal projectiles. In addition to the above mentioned tactical skills training, the MP Corps is partners with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Each year, a number of Army MP officers undergo a selection process and are offered an opportunity to attend the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA. The FBI National Academy offers undergraduate and graduate level courses in law, behavioral science, forensic science, terrorism/terrorist mindsets, leadership development, communication, and health/fitness.¹¹ Attending the academy increases MP capabilities with an improved understanding of threats and how to implement proactive measures to defeat or deter threat activities. Functional MP skills coupled with FBI training opportunities, increases the added benefit for SOF when MP are called upon to support their missions.

There are also many broadening opportunities offered to the MP Corps that are not open to other Army branches. Many of these broadening opportunities are focused on organizational management, law enforcement/correctional programs, and lethal/non-lethal skills. Training opportunities for MP coupled with basic combat skills creates a versatile force with unique capabilities that SOF missions can benefit from not feasible for other branches to provide.

SOF Missions

ARSOF is composed of unique organizations, such as SF and Civil Affairs that possess similar qualities as MP. Both ARSOF and the MP Corps normally accomplish their mission with small teams unlike other branches. This similarity facilitates ARSOF-MP congruency and compatibility.

The mission of United States Army Special Forces Command (Airborne) is to organize, equip, train, and validate forces to conduct full spectrum special operations in support of United States Special Operations Command, GCCs, American ambassadors, and other governmental agencies.¹² SF units commonly operate in small teams, partnering with and training HN military forces to combat threats internal or external to their country. They are experts in blending in with the local population and building rapport, which is essential to motivate and convince their partnered forces of the actions needed to defeat the opposition. They also have the ability to identify and establish the right ways and means to generate an effective HN security force. They depend on receiving accurate and timely information.

To be a member of SF, a Soldier must apply and be accepted to the Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) course. The SFAS is a thirty day course that tests the Soldier's mental and physical capabilities through rigorous real-world SF mission scenarios. Completion and selection to continue the hiring process into SF is not guaranteed. A Soldier can physically pass all the events, but will not be selected if he does not possess certain attributes. Critical attributes that enhances a SF Soldier to accomplish the mission are working well with others, adaptability, and comfort with operating in an environment of ambiguity and uncertainty. These attributes are also necessary for MP mission success, whether executing the law

enforcement mission in garrison or conducting advisory assistance with HN police. This similarity enhances the ability of MP to subsequently allow for MP to work congruently with SF personnel.

The 95th CA BDE helps HNs assess local needs, bring together local and non-local resources to ensure long-term stability, and ultimately degrade and defeat violent extremist organizations and their ideologies.¹³ The 4th MISO Group performs information support operations intended to convince enemy, neutral, and friendly nations and forces to take action favorable to the United States and its allies.¹⁴ The 95th CA and 4th MISO would also benefit from direct MP support because of MP abilities to gather information that would support MISO messaging and CA's attempt to assist with tasks that support the HN government.

Historical MP support to SOF

MP have been supporting various SOF mission sets for many years. MP are not a burden to SOF elements and are capable of maintaining themselves. In 1989, MP were involved in the intervention to overthrow Noriega. Their role showcased the importance of MP operations in direct support of SOF and was even labeled as a *Special Forces* MP unit. According to the Mr. Andy Watson, a Military Police Historian, explained that the 550th SF MP Detachment (Det):

“Concentrating on instruction and advisement over installation police work, the 550th Military Police Det differed from other U.S. Army military police units in Panama, such as the 534th Military Police Company at Fort Clayton and the 549th Military Police Company at Fort Davis. The mission of the 550th was to “provide command, control, and supervision of military police training and related subjects.” In addition, the detachment was also to provide “advisory assistance to indigenous paramilitary, military, and community forces in all phases of military police subjects.” Areas of expertise for the 550th included civil disturbance, area control, traffic control, provost marshal duties, military police duties, criminal investigation, physical security, and unarmed defense. The detachment also provided instruction in non-branch-specific subjects such as map reading and first aid.”¹⁵

Present MP units are skilled in providing the same capabilities and personal attributes, due to the evolution of their mission sets and training and their overall global experiences. During Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, MP has supported SF with Criminal Investigation Command (CID) officers, HN police trainers, Internment and Resettlement and K9 handlers.

A Packaged Force Capable of Training, Advising, and Analyzing

The current US National Security and Defense Strategy coupled with the forced DOD sequestration warrants actions to capitalize leveraging MP capabilities to support ARSOF. The limitation of the military budget in conjunction with the current US military strategy warrants for increasing the number of Security Force Assistance trainers. The ability to train HN security forces is important to continue efforts in support of US objectives and security. Iraq and Afghanistan are current examples of conflicts in which MP have assisted with training and advising the local police forces. While US Special Forces units embedded with indigenous forces or trained HN armies and national police, MP trained local civilian police forces to enforce the law within the local communities and deterring terrorism from operating in their country. In Basra, Iraq in 2008, the 21st MP Company (Co) was the first MP unit deployed to the area to provide assessments, assistance, training, and mentoring to the Basra Police Force.¹⁶ The 21st MP Co and other MP units provided advisory assistance on how to develop administrative systems that would eliminate corruption within the police stations and trained on tactical individual/collective tasks. MP are also capable of providing training on effective community policing and information processing to identify and arrest known or suspected insurgents within the communities. Their ability to execute or train on community policing highlights their skills within the human domain.

MP can also train SF Soldiers and their HN counterparts such as paramilitary police. The paramilitary police force is normally used in a direct action capacity while also providing law enforcement to their communities. The National Police force can be compared to US SWAT police; the difference is that SWAT is reactive to criminal activities, whereas National Police plan kinetic activities not with the sole intent to arrest, but either to arrest or eliminate. An interview with a Special Forces officer and former Operational Detachment Alpha team leader with numerous Middle East deployments, stated that “If I had access to an MP squad while in Afghanistan, they could have assisted my team in the training of Afghan Special Police with which I was integrated. My SFODA understood how to train for war, but was not experienced with law enforcement techniques. An MP attachment would have alleviated this problem.”¹⁷

Supporting Whole of Government Approach

MP can assist a US whole of government approach to stabilize the environment and enable civil authority. They would be of great use for SOF in Phases IV and V of military operations. Phase IV of military operations is *stabilizing the environment*. This phase is required when there is no fully functional, legitimate civil governing authority present.¹⁸ Forces may be required to perform limited local governance, integrating the efforts of other supporting/contributing multinational, international government organizations, non-government organizations, or US government agency participants, until legitimate local entities are functioning.¹⁹ Phase V is *Enabling Civil Authority*. This phase is predominantly characterized by joint force support to legitimate civil governance in theater.²⁰ The goal is for the joint force to enable the viability of the civil authority and its provision of essential services to the largest number of people in the region.²¹ Many SOF elements, aside from Special Forces, are deployed

to these environments to assist in Phase IV and V of military operations. MP have the ability to advise and train local civilian police, and this assists the HN government in gaining legitimacy.

MP can work with US Army Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological Operation elements. Tying in with the US Army CA's Civil-Military Engagement program would allow MP to assist in addressing local grievances that could be utilized by threat groups as opportunities for recruitment. The successful execution of CME identifies the causes or drivers of instability or popular grievances that violent extremist organizations could exploit.²² US Army CA are tasked to focus on immediate or near-term issues such as health service infrastructure; movement, feeding, and sheltering of dislocated civilians (DCs); police and security programs; promoting government legitimacy; and coordination for CMO support to tactical commanders.²³

Legitimate governments have functional and effective law enforcement; MP can provide a small footprint to tie in with CA elements to assist with government development during Phases IV and V of military operations. MP can also assist CA elements during contingency and non-combat environments. Since local police fall under civil authorities, MP can tie in with CA in efforts towards working with the civil government. MP and SOF elements currently cooperate through informal channels or through formal requests; however, it is imperative that they develop a more permanent relationship to create timely assistance and regional expertise. A regional partnership would allow efforts from the MP and SOF to be congruent with one another and do not negatively affect the overall endstate or goal of the mission.

Need for Increased MP and SOF Interoperability

The application of police intelligence capabilities to collect, analyze, and disseminate information regarding police organizations and criminal threat elements in the operational

environment and the rapid proliferation of technologies supporting biometric data and forensic evidence collection, analysis, and dissemination to the Soldier and the tactical unit level, have greatly increased the effectiveness of U.S. forces combating evolving threats.²⁴ The ability for MP to provide intelligence support to conventional and SOF elements can greatly increase the success in the kill or capture of threat groups. This ability is greatly enhanced because the US Army Provost Marshal General is the executive agent for biometrics within the Army. MPs have the ability to conduct biometric collection with advanced systems and technologies. A critical requirement related to the development and sharing of battlefield intelligence is having a common data base.

Having individual MP Soldiers and units dedicated to a SOF unit, would provide them with increased intelligence gathering and additional combat enablers. For example, in 1989, American Special Forces provided security to U.S. Air Force radar sites, assisted in the tracking of aircraft, and shared information with the Colombian military.²⁵ SF helped Colombian police and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency assemble target packages on drug laboratories.²⁶ This mission shows how MP can support SF with both the training of police and assisting with intelligence procurement and analysis.

Police Intelligence Operations in Support of SOF

MP have played significant roles and have proved effectiveness in supporting combined arms operations. This is all in part of their ability to apply PIO skills during combat arms and combined arms planning sessions for kinetic and non-kinetic operations. PIO is a military police function, integrated within all military police operations that supports the operations process through analysis, production, and dissemination of information collected.²⁷ MP use PIO to

develop matrixes to predict the times, locations, and activities, ultimately preventing hostile actions. MP leaders and units often relegated PIO to USACIDC elements and select Military Police Soldiers who recognized the value of linking individuals with locations, events, and objects to identify patterns, trends, and associations.²⁸

The MP Corps has provided SOF with CID Agents that possess increased-PIO capabilities. In October 2013, Special Agent Joseph Peters, who was an MP Soldier assigned to the 286th Military Police Detachment (CID), was killed by an improvised explosive device while conducting combat operations in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, working alongside 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment and Cultural Support Team Soldiers.²⁹ Special Agent Peters' military education included Criminal Investigation Division Agent Course, Protective Services Training Course, Human Intelligence Collector Course, Joint Analyst Interrogator Collaboration Course, the Advanced Crime Scene Investigative Technician Course and the Warrior Leader Course.³⁰ All these schools and training were conducive to supporting the task force with intelligence and investigative capabilities, which Special Operations leveraged to support their mission. Special Agent Peters showcased what MPs can bring in terms of analysis and investigation increasing both the analysis/preparation phase in conjunction with the execution of the mission.

According to the US Army Military Police Intelligence Operations Handbook, "police information flows continuously through the interpersonal information network established during the conduct of military police operations in support of full spectrum operations and during LE operations in support of posts, camps, and stations. Information can originate from a multitude of sources and may be obtained through deliberate collection efforts or passive collection resulting from police engagement and observation."³¹

Aligning MP with SOF elements will generate significant support such as providing information derived from effective community policing, rapport building, and investigative

processes. ARSOF can use information provided by MP, by integrating within their analysis process during their intelligence preparation of the battlefield process; it can also support ongoing assessments, accurately develop the situation and adjust courses of actions when necessary.

Capitalizing on the Human Domain

The versatility of the MP Corps and the tactical and technical specialties it can provide, makes it a critical enabler for ARSOF; MP can increase interoperability between SOF and their partnered international military forces, especially with HN civilian law enforcement. They can be employed to partner with identified military and indigenous forces that are tasked to provide civil security for that country. The ability of MP to build rapport derived from their experience with community policing and police intelligence operations allows them to effectively gather information solve complex criminal problems. The positive community relationship built through rapport would assist ARSOF intelligence collection, especially since MP derives information from first hand sources and observations. MP strive on developing this attribute not only because it provides positive public relations, but that it is the foundation to gather trustworthy and accurate information to solve criminal activities in a garrison and deployed environment.

Current MP and SOF Combined Missions

A current example how permanent relations between MP and SOF elements benefit from one another is the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P). This mission provides the Philippine military and police force with training in order to better defeat insurgent and terrorist activities. This approach utilizes a whole of nation strategy between the military

and police to ensure security to its populace. Since the implementation of the Internal Peace and Security Plan, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines has experienced a marked increase in security gains across the region in the Philippines.³² These successes have buoyed the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the National Police, and thus reinforced the hope that lasting peace will be achieved through stability, development and investment.³³ This mission involves not only SOF, but also US Army MP. Elements under the 8th Military Police Brigade based out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii and the 793rd Military Police Battalion have been used to support the Philippine mission. JSOTF-P forces typically liaise at the military-brigade and police-battalion level while maintaining close relationships with subordinate units.³⁴

Another mission where MP are nesting efforts with SOF is on the war against drugs in South America. For example, the partnership between US Special Forces and Honduran Special Operations Forces provides a mission set where MP can be incorporated to focus on the law enforcement aspect, overall increasing the effectiveness of the overall objective. US Special Forces provide targeting and narcotics trafficking prevention training to Honduran security forces. COL Ross A. Brown was the Joint Task Force-Bravo Commander in Honduras during 2012. He stated in an interview with *New York Times* that, “by countering transnational organized crime, we promote stability, which is necessary for external investment, economic growth and minimizing violence; we also are disrupting and deterring the potential nexus between transnational organized criminals and terrorists who would do harm to our country.”³⁵ The US Army MP is also part of Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF-Bravo); this task force provides humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and facilitates multilateral efforts to prevent narcoterrorism. The role for MP in JTF-Bravo is to serve as advisors to the local Honduran police force. They work in conjunction with ARSOF trainers supporting the same task force.

Further Integrating MP into SOF Mission Sets

In order to enhance their ability to operate with HN forces, SOF operators and units specialize in a specific geographic region; MP have regional focus by units, however does not allow for an MP to develop longevity operating in a specific region. Although MP can be assigned to the task force that US Special Forces trainers are supporting, there is a gap in ability for MP to develop regional expertise and provide continuity. Unlike the 7th Special Forces Groups based out of Eglin Air Force Base, FL, operators can be assigned and spend the majority of their career with that unit focused in operating in one specific region. This allows for area of responsibility expertise to develop amongst the operators. Unfortunately, MP do not have that opportunity and can spend their time in service focusing on supporting numerous areas of responsibilities. Although MP are not regional careerists, this irregularity provides MP the opportunity to be globally versatile. However, it also prevents long-term regional experience and continued continuity between the MP units that were part of a shared joint task force.

The Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) headquartered in Fort Bragg, NC currently has a team of MP assigned to increase the opportunity to leverage MP support towards SOF missions. Known as the Law Enforcement Advisory Team (LEAT), they support JSOC with MP assistance on deployed mission sets, including identifying requirements for MP support to SOF.³⁶ Support provided to JSOC can range from training HN police forces to training SOF elements on tasks that are MP Corps specialties.

ARSOF can garner added benefits by implementing similar MP elements within their task organization in a non-permanent, but semi-organic arrangement to allow the MP Corps to still administratively manage their Soldiers. In order to generate the maximum amount of

benefit, MP elements tasked to support ARSOF should be tactically and operationally controlled by the supported unit. Administrative control must remain with the parent MP unit to ensure proper oversight of career management. Having designated MP elements allows the requesting organizations to task organize and utilize MP personnel as needed per their skill set. It would reduce requisition and training time for MP going to specific regions. Because MP personnel would train with the SOF teams they were assigned to, building cohesion and assure units of effort.

Giving USASOC operational control of supporting MP elements would not interfere with routine MP activities in garrison. Previously, a platoon of forty two MP Soldiers were dedicated to each Army Brigade Combat Team (BCT), but as of recent, these platoons have been returned to direct control of MP brigades. These disbanded MP platoons form a pool from which MP elements can be assigned to regionally support ARSOF.

On June 25, 2013, Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN Raymond Odierno, announced that the US Army will disband ten Army BCTs in addition to the two Germany-based BCTs; this will reduce the number of BCTs from forty five to thirty three by the end of fiscal year 2017.³⁷ The number of BCTs being deactivated leaves a total of twelve MP platoons or an average of five hundred MP Soldiers available to support USASOC.

Prior to the downsizing of BCTs, MP Brigades have not had any issues meeting their Red, Amber, and Green cycles. These cycles allow units to work the garrison law enforcement mission (Red), train on individual and collective tasks while concurrently reserved to support taskings (Amber), and train collectively as a platoon without interference that would disrupt training plans (Green). Therefore, allocating a minimum of 250 MP Soldiers equivalent to

twenty squad-size elements (squad of twelve Soldiers), in a supporting role with tactical control and operational control would not hinder current MP mission sets. This would also allow the MP Corps to have an additional 250 Soldiers remaining to be used to fill any unforeseen operational request for forces or support.

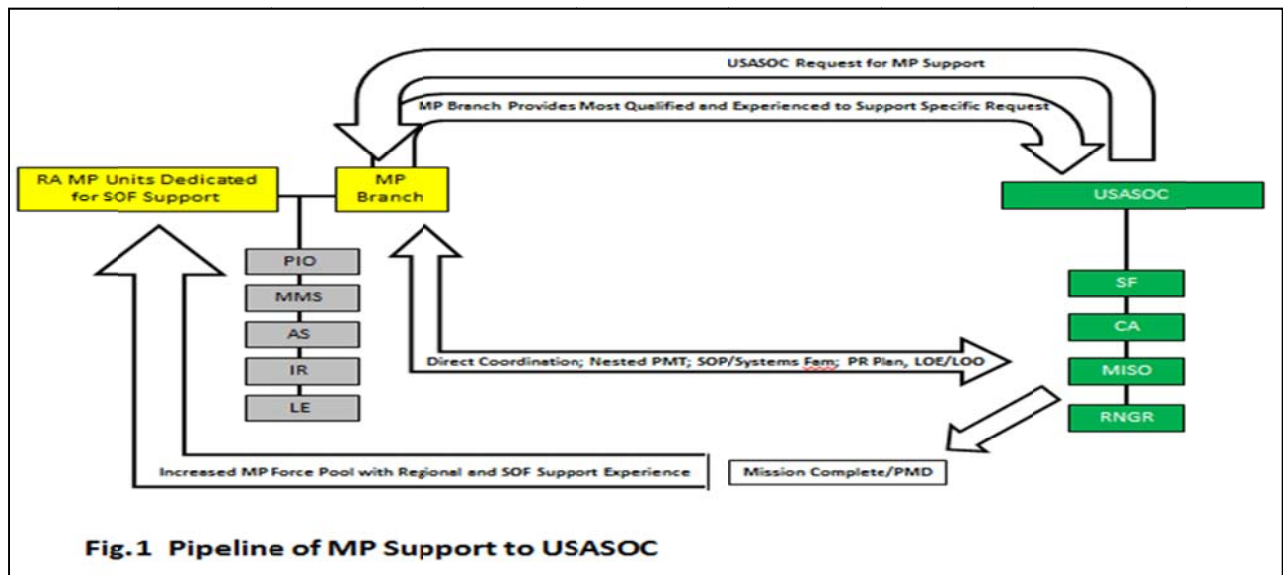
Although MP platoons were deleted from the BCT organization chart, they still support BCTs through the Army division regional alignment. They are not organic to the division, but they are prepared to align and support the division and their BCTs during deployment. The MP Corps' goal is to have an MP company supporting combat arms divisions and its BCTs by regional areas of responsibilities. According to LTC Alex Murray, commander of the 97th MP Battalion at Ft. Riley, KS, "The MP Corps continues to establish relationships with BCTs, with the current way-ahead focused on MP companies to be linked and habitually aligned with BCTs."³⁸ The concept that LTC Murray explained provides MP with an opportunity to develop regional global expertise, but does not address the continuity because the MP will still have to eventually move on to a different duty station. The regional expertise that was gained may be lost and not leveraged, especially if their next unit is supporting a different combatant command's area of responsibility.

Strengthening MP and SOF Interoperability

Although USASOC can formally request MP support through the US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), it does not necessarily resource the correct MP Soldier(s) for the mission tasked to support. The current formal request system does not account for MP background experience and leaves the decision making to the commander who will decide which Soldiers will support the tasking. Most MP Commanders do an exceptional job in vetting and

ensuring that the most viable Officer(s) and Soldier(s) is chosen to support the asking unit, but the current vetting system still allows for subjectivity on whether a soldier has the experience and capabilities to support the tasking.

Creating a file system that lists MP Soldiers by accordance to experience (area and mission), training, capability, and administrative information will allow for the most qualified Soldier(s) to be chosen for specific missions. It should be irrelevant, for example, if a SF Group located at Fort Bragg, NC requests MP support from FORSCOM, that the tasked MP Soldiers are derived from the 16th MP Brigade. In order for the most qualified MP Soldier to be considered for the respective tasking, MP branch managers should be able to access a MP personnel data base and assess the viable personnel options. It would not be of any consideration if the most qualified MP Soldier is currently stationed at an overseas location outside of the requesting unit’s duty station, if she/he is the most viable candidate for the job. Generating a system that allows requests to be fulfilled by regional experience and skill set would increase the probability of mission success. Additionally, the system would accelerate necessary coordination between the supporting and supported units (see Fig.1).



Conclusion

The US Army Military Police is a capable and versatile force. Throughout their history, MP have been proven to be effective in providing LE within the garrison environment. MP are able to do this through community policing and being proactive in being able to deter crimes or apprehend suspected criminals. A key component of being able to have these outcomes is tying PIO within all assigned MP tasks. Incorporating PIO with the LE mission allows MP to be proactive in analyzing gathered information through community policing, evidence collection, or investigations, and in turn, developing feasible measures or garrison law enforcement operations. MP also apply these skills in a combat environment. Whether they are training a HN police force during stability operations or assisting civil authority, these skills are essential in supporting both kinetic and non-kinetic mission planning. Their versatility also comes in the form of being able to be a force multiplier.

MP are trained in combat skills and tasks and are proficient in being able to shoot, move, and communicate. They would not hinder supported units, but would actually serve as a versatile force multiplier. They can be used for patrol base operations, screening and blocking positions, area security (MP function), and training advisors. Similar to SOF elements that operate in small size elements, MP can also be effective in operating independently in permissive or semi-permissive environments in element sizes ranging as small as a squad size element. This is essential if supporting a SOF mission where a small footprint in country is a limitation imposed by US Ambassador country teams. The current downsizing of force and deactivation of twelve (12) BCTs within the US Army's force structure has freed up enough MP Soldiers that would be able to support SOF in a regional permanent structure. With major combat operations dwindling down in Afghanistan, but with threat groups continuing to prevail and affect

populations around the globe, it is imperative to utilize MP to train civilian police forces. MP can deploy a small force with ARSOF elements to provide HN countries with a low-cost high-payoff solution in combating internal and transnational threats. It is critical to strengthen the interoperability between MP and ARSOF, therefore providing increased capabilities and options for the combatant commands within a specific region.

Endnotes

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