

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

*Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188*

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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 14-04-2021	2. REPORT TYPE Master of Military Studies (MMS) thesis	3. DATES COVERED (From - To) AY 2020-2021
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4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Alone and Unafraid: Advisors and Risk Across the Spectrum of Conflict.	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER N/A
	5b. GRANT NUMBER N/A
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER N/A

6. AUTHOR(S) Anderson, Michael G. (Major)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER N/A
	5e. TASK NUMBER N/A
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER N/A

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) USMC Command and Staff College Marine Corps University 2076 South Street Quantico, VA 22134-5068	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER N/A
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9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) N/A

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release, distribution unlimited.

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT
The current structure and employment of the United States Army professional advisory formations is hindered by the confluence of a risk aversion in their use and lacking organic organizational structure. The result negatively affects the readiness of other units, impacting training and use while failing to maximize their full contributions to defense strategies.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
Advisors; Security Force Assistance Brigade, SFAB; Readiness; risk aversion; conflict spectrum

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			USMC Command and Staff College
Unclass	Unclass	Unclass	UU		19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code) (703) 784-3330 (Admin Office)

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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

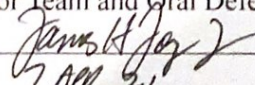
TITLE: Alone and Unafraid: Advisors and Risk Across the Spectrum of Conflict

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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AY 2020-21

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Executive Summary

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Thesis: The current structure and employment of the United States Army professional advisory formations is hindered by the confluence of a risk aversion in their use and lacking organic organizational structure. The result negatively affects the readiness of other units, impacting training and use while failing to maximize their full contributions to defense strategies.

Discussion: Army combat brigade readiness remains negatively impacted by fulfilling out-of-design advisory missions even after the creation of advisory-specific formations and providing support to Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) deployed in non-permissive, combat theaters for additional protection. In an era of growing great power competition, the maximizing of building and holding readiness is paramount, emphasizing the need to resolve the impacts to readiness through the effective and efficient use of advisory formations. The question of how to resolve the issue of combat brigade impacts from advisory missions and support is encapsulated in a discussion of risk to force and risk to mission management by the theater commanders. Three broad solutions present themselves including accepting greater risk to advisory operations by not providing additional force protection and emphasizing reliance on partner force support and relationships; creating additional force structure brigades designed to specifically support advisory missions; or adding identified additional force structure organically to the advisor organizations directly addressing the risks.

Conclusion: In a fiscally limited environment with no indication of new force growth, acceptance of elevated risk to the highly selective, trained, and experienced advisory teams is necessary. This would allow combat forces to focus on training and conserve readiness for core functions. The joint force benefits with units focused on great power competition, with an ancillary benefit of advisory teams able to build stronger rapport through trust and deeper relationships based on shared dangers.

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Table of Contents

	Page
DISCLAIMER	iii
PREFACE	v
SETTING	
Introduction	1
The Role of Advisory Efforts Across the Spectrum of Conflict	4
Global War on Terrorism Advisory Experiences	6
THE REMAINING IMPACTS	
The Current Army SFAB/SFAC Design	9
SFAB Deployments and Residual Readiness Impacts	11
IMPROVING THE FUTURE	
The Question of Risk in Employment	15
Service Force Structure Adjustments to Support Advisory Formations	19
Organizational Changes to the Advisory Structure	24
CONCLUSION	25
BIBLIOGRAPHY	27

Preface

Advisory missions play an integral role across the spectrum of conflict. Unfortunately, their structure and employment continues to negatively influence traditional combat formation's readiness in theaters of active conflict by their additional requirements, most notably in security forces. In an era of tighter fiscal restrictions, intensification of improved advisory formations allows for continual engagement throughout the competition and war, making it important to understand how to amplify the use of these formations in support of the service and national strategies. With a renewed focus on great power conflict and large-scale combat operations, maximizing these advisory formations' as combat multipliers for partner forces while not negatively impacting the readiness and training of traditional combat formations is imperative. This paper provides a starting point for increased discussion of various possible solutions to the issues associated with the proper and maximized use of these important forces.

In the development of this study, it required and benefited from a team of support. Thanks are due to the thesis advisory committee members, Dr. James Joyner and Colonel Matthew Neumeyer, and many thanks to the advisor practitioners past and present who took the time to share their insight with me, as well as the readiness and plans team members who provided critical analysis of readiness impacts to the force. The help, assistance, and encouragement provided by all unquestioningly made this study a better product than otherwise possible.

Introduction

The current structure and employment of the United States Army professional advisory formations is hindered by the confluence of risk aversion in their use and lacking necessary organic organizational structure. The result negatively effects the readiness of brigade combat teams, effecting their training and use while failing to maximize their full contributions to defense strategies. Security Forces Assistance Brigades (SFAB) were intended to formalize and focus institutionally the Army's advisory efforts and relieve the pressure of breaking up traditional combat units for advisory missions which reduced combat forces' training and readiness needed for peer competition focus. Even with the implementation of the SFAB, there remains a negative readiness impact to the Army during competition, and most notably with use in non-permissive, combat theaters. However, even in semi-permissive theaters after the creation and implementation of the SFAB construct there remains impacts to other traditional combat units' readiness. The analysis comes from examination of the SFAB current design structure and use, with insights from historical employment of ad hoc type advisory formations, and current reports from SFAB deployments.

Framing the problem is an analysis of risk. Assessing risk to mission, consuming combat brigades building readiness for great power competition for advisory missions and security, and the risk to force, the protection of the advisors, guides the discussion on possible solutions. Three options present themselves to improve the implementation of the SFAB concept and reduce readiness impacts on the traditional combat forces, to include a reassessment on risk mitigation and employment of the advisors without embedded security teams, balancing risk to force and risk to mission; creation of a new type of combat arms security brigade-type formation to be

comprised of combat arms security battalions aligned to each SFAB for habitual training relations and familiarization; or adding of a security battalion directly into each SFAB's organic structure providing the advisors their own security structure. In a flat, even possibly declining budgetary environment without expectation of force structure growth balanced with risk to mission and risk to force, the acceptance of more risk to advisory formations presents the most beneficial solution available within the limitations faced.¹ This approach maximizes the current force structure in line with its primary purpose through focused readiness building and training that fully supports service strategy across the spectrum of conflict. Additionally, it multiplies the effectiveness of the advisors through building stronger rapport through more shared risks and reliance, narrowing the contrasts between advisor and partner.

This study focuses on the Army's SFABs within the Security Forces Assistance Command (SFAC) currently headquartered at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.² While the Navy and the Air Force have conducted advisory missions over the years, they are normally, as an institution, focused more on technical advice and assistance to other nations, being more equipment and technology-based, whereas the land components fill the spectrum from direct combat advise and assist, through basic staff training, to ministerial-level advisors. As such, this study focuses on the operational and relationships-focused advisory roles which most directly affect strengthening alliances and building partner relationships.

Security Force Assistance (SFA) is a "key strategic activity" as identified by a National Defense University 2015 study.³ This study also noted, "U.S. advisors can only train what they know," and determined that "the ad hoc approach to preparing advisory and assistance forces should not be our primary methodology."⁴ SFABs are designed to fill this SFA mission that historically had been an ad hoc requirement placed on the Army to create advisory formations

“out of hide,” impacting the readiness and training of the combat formations as they had to shift training focus and expend readiness in advisory deployments or support to such advisory efforts. Either by breaking up units, draining them of critical, skilled senior experienced leadership to form advisory teams, or by reorienting the focus and training and deploying an entire modified unit for filling an SFA requirement, the decisive action, core competency readiness of these combat formations is impacted. Additionally, other combat units have seen their readiness affected by taking them from their traditional missions and breaking them up into smaller security elements to protect the advisory teams, thereby consuming their readiness built for peer competition. SFABs, by filling the enduring SFA needs, are meant to alleviate that demand, allowing those combat units to maintain focus and readiness for their core tasks without being diverted or expended on advisory missions.⁵

Although the emphasis remains with ongoing advisory efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, across the African continent, Europe, Latin America, and throughout the Pacific advisory efforts play a critical part in great power competition wherever American interests exist. Both SFAB deployments and ongoing out-of-design advisory missions for conventional combat brigades continue to impact the conventional combat forces in more active combat theaters. In the Afghan theater, SFAB advisors have deployed to bolster Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) but consume conventional combat arms units to provide additional security for the advisory teams. In Iraq, there are advise and assist efforts where Army combat brigades modified themselves into Advise and Assist Brigades (AABs), forming the nucleus of train-advise-assist teams. The AAB concept is still ongoing in Iraq, consuming the readiness of a combat brigade in a nontraditional, out-of-design advisory mission even though there now exists formal, professional advisory brigades with the implementation of the SFAB. In Europe, the Joint Multinational Training

Group–Ukraine (JMTG-U) mission is currently filled by a combat brigade headquarters required to reorganize itself into an advisory and training formation.

Based on this study’s focus and scope special operation forces (SOF) traditionally involved in advisory roles, specifically the Army’s Special Forces are not covered for two reasons. First, SOF units whose advisory mission is but one of many missions do not meet the parameters of this study focused specifically on large-scale security force assistance efforts. For example, the Army’s Special Forces also have core mission sets including Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance which do not involve advising or training partner or local forces. Even Army Special Forces are not a solely advisory force. Secondly, as the U.S. military advisory efforts emerged since September 11, 2001 within the advisory mission SOF forces have largely transitioned to supporting local forces and allies’ own versions of special operations forces or irregular forces, shifting the onus of building enduring and institutional partner conventional forces advisory mantle to American conventional forces, which are the focus of this study.⁶

The Role of Advisory Efforts Across the Spectrum of Conflict

The range of military operations spanning the conflict continuum can be divided into three groups. These operations range the spectrum from peace to war: the low end including military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence as part of the shaping and into competition; middle of the continuum during competition includes security cooperation and deterrence below the threshold of armed conflict; and the high end of the spectrum being conflict in large-scale combat operations (LSCO) with direct, high-intensity military engagements. The mid-level of the continuum is where crisis response and limited contingency operations fall.

While in some cases this includes small-scale combat, these operations are largely still in the shaping and competition environment. The emphasis of this level being to mitigate the possibility of escalation to open, large-scale conflict. The upper level of military operations is where LSCO is found, traditionally the Western nation's understanding of what constitutes "war".⁷

Advisory missions run the full gamut of this spectrum; however, they do so in differing roles and ways. While they serve across the full spectrum of conflict, advisory missions maximize their use in the competition phase, below the threshold of conflict with military engagement, security cooperation, and deterrence. This is where developing and strengthening allies and partners plays to advisory formations' strength and directly to deterrence.

While advisors have limited applicability to crisis response, they play a large role in certain contingency operations, mostly in their combat advisory role to local forces, notably in counter-insurgency.⁸ Moving along the continuum towards war, in the shape and deter phase the involvement grows from episodic to persistent, and then as it shifts into the conflict phase the entire SFAB could be fully employed to deter and influence the security environment.⁹

The advisory formations in LSCO could be employed in their entirety in its core advise and assist role to allies and partners, with one SFAB capable to provide support to an ally or partner division, providing U.S. combat multiplier capabilities to the partner increasing its capacity to fight.¹⁰ During LSCO, when traditional combat formations and their training and readiness are at a premium, the advisory mission still negatively impacts the rest of the force with the current employment methodology of advisory teams' receiving additional security. In most contingency operations during shaping and competition phases, the impacted readiness of traditional combat brigades can be absorbed without substantial risk due to relative low demand

to availability of forces. However, this acceptable cost associated with consuming combat brigade readiness to support or fulfill advisory roles in shaping and competition provides a false sense of security to the service as it becomes less acceptable when contingencies become enduring and in non-permissive, LSCO environments that under the current employment model consume traditional combat arms forces for SFAB security. This becomes an unacceptable drain on traditional combat brigades in high-intensity conflict when as many brigades as available will be needed for their core combat missions.

Global War on Terrorism Advisory Experiences

By 2015, the coalition forces, led by American forces, built over 350,000 Afghan National Security Forces and over 625,000 Iraqi security apparatus.¹¹ While a significant accomplishment, the methods by which they achieved this were inconsistent and at times ad hoc. The process undertaken to support security force assistance was unsustainable for the long-term with the return of great power competition and conflict, leading to the creation of the SFABs as a permanent advisory formation.

Prior to the implementation of the SFAB, the Army applied two broad approaches to providing advisory forces to Afghanistan and Iraq.¹² The methods included the formation of individuals into ad hoc teams built to support one deployment, or the conversion and temporary re-design of a standing unit, typically a combat brigade, into an advisory formation for a specific deployment. While they operated under various terms throughout the war and in the different theaters, the training or transition teams started within the Army as a collection of individuals.¹³ A combination of volunteers and assigned individuals formed these teams in the early years of

the war, from across the active and reserve components of the Army and often with sister-service personnel and even allies.¹⁴ Units internally sourcing teams, an “advisor tax” so to speak, as well as the externally sourced individual ad hoc teams were gathered and sent overseas.¹⁵

As the Army identified inconsistencies in advisor performance, a distinct shift came to provide more specific advisory preparation and training to these composite teams of individuals. This training, first instituted in Fort Riley, Kansas, created a formal, pre-deployment advisor course.¹⁶ Through this effort, the Army presented a standard, centralized pre-deployment advisor-training curriculum over a sixty-day course on small unit tactics and advisor techniques. During this period, 8,000-12,000 U.S. military personnel passed through the training annually. In September 2009, the training mission passed from Fort Riley to Fort Polk, Louisiana. At Fort Riley the training was conducted under the auspices of First Brigade, First Infantry Division. When the course moved to Fort Polk it transitioned to the 162d Infantry Brigade.¹⁷ In October 2014, the 162d Brigade deactivated, with the training devolving to a battalion at Fort Polk’s Joint Readiness Training Center. Later training for advisors diverged with the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) at the Army’s War College training joint and interagency individuals for peacekeeping operations and the SFAC overseeing the training management for the combat advisors of the SFABs.¹⁸

The other method included the process of temporarily converting a conventional unit into an advisory mission-based structure for a single deployment. As an early example of a unit-based conversion to an advisory formation for a deployment was the United States Army Reserve (USAR) 98th Division (Institutional Training), serving as one of the first units rebuilding of the Iraq army. This division deployed elements as part of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, setting a pattern for future similar rotations.¹⁹ As the advisory efforts intensified

in the waning years of Operation Iraqi Freedom/New Dawn in conjunction with the withdrawal, this method of taking one unit and transforming it from its typical role to that of an advisory formation for a deployment became the primary method. This technique applied in Iraq during the later years was a similar solution as employed earlier in Afghanistan for Task Force (TF) Phoenix. For TF Phoenix, the Army took an Army National Guard combat brigade and restructured it to serve as a training headquarters and security force with additional individual advisors attached to fulfill the ANSF advisory requirements for fulfilling the advisory mission.²⁰

In particular, this method focused on the temporary remodeling of singular combat brigades into advise and assist brigades (AABs). While these AABs were built around advise and assist teams, composed of senior field grade officers paired with an Iraqi senior officer or ministerial level official, like the SFABs, these formations also had the additional “advisor tax” of security forces attached to them for their protection, which came from the restructured combat brigade team’s infantry battalions.²¹ This AAB structure is most recently employed during the counter-Islamic State Operation Inherent Resolve mission in Iraq and Syria, and still brings with it the addition of individuals to fill the field grade advisor positions and additional security and support structure even with the current use of SFABs.²²

All of these methods taxed the service, impacting unit readiness, complicating personnel management, and producing inconsistent advisory effort results from each method and deployment to another. To remediate this impact, the Army instituted the SFAB concept. It codified and structured a permanent and specialized advisory formation, designed expressly to improve consistency in advisory mission results and to alleviate the strain of advisory mission requirements on the conventional force.

The Current Army SFAB/SFAC Design

Noting the impacts to the force from the ad hoc use of volunteers in the early stages of the Global War on Terrorism and then the impacts on conventional brigade combat teams as they were converted to advise and assist brigades for specific deployments, the Army's answer turned to a formal, organized, standing advisory formation. The SFABs emerged within the Army's formal organizational structure in 2018.²³ This idea, a cadre of experienced, professional officers and NCOs, was not out of the blue. The idea of an "advisory corps" had been proposed before, most recently by retired Army Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl, and the concept in multiple variations debated on different stages and venues, but the SFAB would be the first to materialize in the Army as a formalized unit with the sole purpose, structure, and intent to advise foreign forces.²⁴ In contrast to other previous Army advisory formations that were temporary, ad hoc, or, like Army Special Forces, supporting multiple missions in addition to advising, SFABs are dedicated solely to advise and assist missions.²⁵ Another critical purpose behind the creation of these formal advisory formations was to support service readiness and aid traditional combat formations' focus on near-peer competition and conflict. Then-Secretary of Army Mark T. Esper's congressional report said, "SFABs reduce the demand on conventional Brigade Combat Teams enabling them to focus on high-intensity conflict against near-peer threats."²⁶

Secretary Esper testified to the Senate Armed Forces Committee in 2019 that the U.S. Army established the SFAC, which initially included six SFABs, to support U.S. allies and partners.²⁷ The SFAC oversees the SFABs for coordination, management, and training oversight.²⁸ To achieve this, the SFAB's "core mission...is to assess, organize, train, advise, and assist foreign security forces in coordination with joint, interagency, and multinational forces to

improve partner capability and capacity and facilitate achievement of U.S. strategic objectives throughout all phases of conflict".²⁹ Each advisor maneuver battalion currently has 175 maneuver advisors, the artillery battalion has 39 advisors, while the engineer battalion has 65 advisors to include engineers and military police, and the support battalion has 95 logistics advisors. The SFAB headquarters has 92 advisors to balance higher-level advise and assist to allied and partner staffs and ministerial offices while balancing its role as the command and control of the subordinate advisor battalions.³⁰

The SFAB advisory battalions have nine advisory companies. Each company has three maneuver advisor teams (MATs). Advisors are second-time leaders, meaning the advisor company commander is a major instead of the typical captain, and has already served as a company commander in a traditional formation. Advisory platoon leaders are captains instead of the typical lieutenants and have already served as platoon leaders. This trend is carried on throughout the SFAB positions to ensure advisors have already shown successful leadership at the level at which they will be advising.³¹ Successful leadership in a traditional unit is a prerequisite to becoming an advisor, as is the volunteer aspect and successful completion of the required training. Advisory teams typically are made up of twelve-man teams with a breakout of specialties across the range of combat arms maneuver, engineers, artillery, support and staff functions.³²

The Army conducts Advisory training at Fort Benning's Military Advisor Training Academy (MATA) in Georgia, through the Combat Advisor Training-Course (CAT-C).³³ The foundational CAT-C training for the combat advisor is 54-days long, centrally occurring at Fort Benning as part of the MATA. This training, though, follows a 3–5-day selection and assessment course, typically conducted at Fort Bragg, designed to determine if individuals already possess

the requisite experience and maturity to operate as a small team advisor. The CAT-C training includes topics such as basic advising techniques, planning, foreign weapons, culture and negotiation fundamentals, air and ground fires training, and survival techniques.³⁴ SFABs are regionally aligned to allow them to become regional experts, and have reoccurring deployments to the same areas assisting in building enduring relationships.³⁵ This supports their ability to develop deeper cultural understand, language familiarization, and relationships, which are all identified as critical to advisory success and maximize impacts.

SFAB Deployments and Residual Readiness Impacts

As the SFAB conducted operations in Afghanistan, the theater command weighed the risk to force and requested additional force protection for the advisory teams. The request resulted in the Army providing the addition of a conventional infantry battalion to support the advisory operations. Each SFAB rotation required one infantry battalion, broken up into smaller company, platoon, and even squad-size elements divided up among the SFAB contingents scattered across the theater to provide “guardian angel” teams to accompany the advisors wherever they went as a protective detail. This consumed the readiness of the 32d IBCT (Wisconsin Army National Guard) over three rotations adversely influencing its readiness and training focus.³⁶

One combat brigade fills the requirement for an AAB in Iraq to support the ongoing counter-ISIS mission in Operation Inherent Resolve, meaning two or three brigades are affected annually. These units work with regional partners, building them up to not only counter immediate threats such as the Islamic State, but also to fortify relationships, perform deterrence,

and counter influence of other regionally actors opposing American vital interests.³⁷ It is another example of the drain on traditional combat forces - conducting an advise and assist mission instead of training, preparing, and establishing readiness for their core missions. Instead, combat brigades are breaking up and reforming with non-traditional training and deployments in support of advising and assisting the Iraqi security forces. The theater commander assessed threat-level for the advise and assist mission in Iraq requires an enormous footprint of the combat brigade to provide the advisory teams across the entire brigade structure (combat, combat support, and combat service support specialties) along with security similar to those applied to the SFABs when they deployed to Afghanistan.³⁸ Thus far, the Army has continued to meet the Iraq advise and assist mission with traditional combat brigades, even with the implementation of the SFAB concept. The Army has met this demand with a rotation of two active component infantry brigades for every one Army National Guard combat brigade.³⁹

Even outside of conflict theaters, the structure and current employment of these advisory formations still have residual impacts on the readiness of the force. While in Europe, deterrence efforts occur beyond the traditional North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance to include strategic partners like Ukraine.⁴⁰ For Ukraine, this manifests in the Joint Multinational Training Group – Ukraine (JMTG-U) Army advisory efforts to support “up to five battalions of Ministry of Defense forces per year...The training is focused at partnering at the brigade-level and below, building professional and capable Ukrainian units to defend Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.”⁴¹ One traditional combat brigade headquarters was deployed to Ukraine with the brigade leadership running the JMTG-U advisory and training mission to the Ukrainian forces, based in southwestern Ukraine. This mission consumes one combat brigade each year, which deploys in a non-traditional structure, for an out-of-design mission, one for which it is not

habitually trained, staffed, or prepared for. Instead, the combat brigade was broken up with its senior officers and NCOs reorganized to staff advisory and training teams in support of JMTG-U. This mission requirement became filled annually by an Army National Guard combat brigade, which came at a cost of the brigade's limited training time and focus diverted from its traditional combat role to that of advisors.⁴² This is an ideal mission for an SFAB to assume, thereby relieving the conventional combat brigade formations from expending their readiness and redirecting their training and focus from their core mission tasks to reorient for an advisory mission to conduct a one-off non-standard deployment.⁴³

In the Indo-Pacific region, the Army conducts the Pacific Pathways initiative, a program that annually deploys Army units across Asia to various allies and partners supporting training and exercises intended to deepen relationships and improve interoperability. Recently, SFAB advisors participated in Pacific Pathways highlighting multinational training across the region, which emphasized Army training partnerships and the importance of close relationships in key areas. This is typically conducted by several combat brigades broken up into smaller teams from both the active duty Army and the Army National Guard, and in the current employment the SFAB is in addition to many of these traditional combat brigade still attending. However, the SFABs are designed to take over the advising and assistance portions while the combat forces still conduct their joint training and multinational integration events without any additional burden of providing advisory or training teams.

In addition to the high-profile advisory efforts in combat theaters and the direct employment of them in theaters of great power competition, these formations also support partners and allies and contribute to pursuing American interests and spreading influence in less developed theaters of conflict. In Africa, the SFABs have partnered with local forces across the

continent, addressing terrorist threats in Africa while also supporting American attempts to counter competitors' influence.⁴⁴ The SFAB formations have been selected to take over the counterdrug mission in Latin America with its rotational deployments beginning in Colombia.⁴⁵

When the SFABs deployed to other theaters to conduct operations in a permissive environment, additional security was not required. In this manner, when the SFABs deployed to Africa, Latin America, and recently to the Pacific, it did not consume the readiness of traditional combat formations the way it did in its Afghanistan deployment or would if it took over missions like that of the AAB in Iraq. In these environments, below the threshold of war in more safe, permissive environments, the SFABs succeed in preserving combat brigade readiness and training focus on their core functions while these designated advisory formations take over those assistance missions. However, it leaves a much-needed solution to mitigate the remaining impacts from supporting advisory efforts in non-permissive, combat theaters where SFABs still negatively impact combat brigade readiness and training. In the contemporary active and fluid global environment, an SFAB conducting assistance missions even in a permissive theater could quickly find itself in an environment that rapidly escalates to war, involved in a security condition more like Iraq or Afghanistan. They must be prepared for operating in such dynamic and contested environments, and the joint force must be prepared to address the question of risk to force while maximizing the use of these advisory units. When the theater is violently contested is precisely when the finite amount of combat brigades are most needed to be trained and ready for their core, traditional combat tasks. In this environment, it is riskier for their readiness to be used in an out-of-design, or ad hoc manner for advisory role, or be diverted from combat missions for advisory security and support missions.

The Question of Risk in Employment

If the Army accepts a degree of higher risk to force to reduce the risk to mission, then a cultural and institutional shift is required. To embrace more risk with the employment of advisors in non-permissive, combat environments mitigates the additive forces drain on the rest of the force to provide force protection and support. This directly addresses risk aversion prevalent in the employment of advisors compared to risk mitigation measures, determining what level of risk is appropriate. Over the course of the Global War on Terrorism the approach to embedded advisory teams grew more restrictive with evolving theater risk assessments. The initial Special Forces teams into Afghanistan to topple the Taliban were unaccompanied by any additional security force.⁴⁶ Similarly, the early conventional military transition and advisory teams in both Iraq and Afghanistan initially did so without additional protection.⁴⁷ However, as these wars dragged on, evolving risk aversion led to additional security for embedded advisors in both theaters and for both special operation and conventional advisory teams.⁴⁸ This risk adverse practice culminated in the SFAB and AAB approach to combat advising. This method resulted in the burden to combat brigades' readiness to provide the additional security to advisory teams, as in the SFAB in Afghanistan model, or transform to a temporary advisory formation themselves, as in the Iraq AAB model.

Advisors accepting a higher level of risk supports the mission better by strengthening the connection with the partners. U.S. Army historical examples of this include Korea, the first large-scale American advisory effort in war, and Vietnam, America's largest wartime advisory effort, where Army advisors, singly or in small groups, were embedded with their South Vietnamese partners, living, eating, moving, and dying with them.

Though this concept comes with notable risk, there is historical precedence for U.S. military advisors to undertake elevated levels of risk while operating largely isolated with their partners. In Korea, the Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG) advisory effort grew from only 500 in 1949 to advise eight Republic of Korea (ROK) army divisions to its max over strength of 2,866 with 1,918 authorized to support three ROK corps.⁴⁹ In many cases during the early reversals, the combat field advisors faced isolation, cut off from American support or communication in response to the initial invasion in June 1950 and collapse of the South Korean defense, and again after the reversals of the Chinese communist intervention. At times these advisors took direct control of ROK units in an effort to stem the tide of rout. KMAG advisors did this through threats and by force to make the South Koreans take up defensive positions and continue to delay the communist advance. Once the retreat had stabilized in the Pusan perimeter on the southern end of the peninsula, the KMAG advisors assisted the influx of U.S. and UN forces and returned to their role of advising and assisting the ROK army.⁵⁰ At other times these advisors were isolated with their partners and unable to convince them or make them do anything due to the KMAG advisor's rank and questionable status as a combatant.⁵¹ This was also an occurrence later in the war, notably when the Chinese communist assault rolled over the advancing forces. The advisors not only found themselves isolated with their partner Korean forces and out of contact with American forces, but also in many cases taking command of local forces in emergency circumstances.⁵² In one instance, on 29 October 1950 along the Yalu River the Chinese surprise assault destroyed 75% of the ROK 7th Regiment overnight and captured or killed all its KMAG advisors.⁵³ While these risks seem shocking, it must be remembered that these losses occurred in a war that saw American battalions destroyed as well, in places such as

the Chosin Reservoir. Serving as an advisor alone attached to a ROK unit was not necessarily that much riskier than service in an American combat unit.

During the U.S. advisory effort in Vietnam, from 1945 to 1973, 66,399 Americans served as combat advisors of a total advisory effort of 115,427, with 378 killed and 1,393 combat advisors wounded. Eleven received the Medal of Honor.⁵⁴ In the Marine Corps zone, the Marines implemented the Combined Action Platoon (CAP) concept, which stationed small teams or squads in an isolated village. The Marines combined action company (CAC) and its smaller derivative within the CAP program embedded small Marine teams with local forces, which provided the South Vietnamese forces training, additional firepower and access to capabilities through the Marine teams, as well as a living example of what an effective, disciplined small tactical unit looked and acted like.⁵⁵

In addressing risk and decision-making, the Army's discourse on critical, creative thinking and problem solving, states "Some barriers to creative thinking include...hierarchal structures, emphasis on uniformity and training standards, and a predilection for risk avoidance due to the potential for severely negative outcomes of flawed decisions."⁵⁶ These barriers are why an institutional shift from risk avoidance to risk mitigation is critical to addressing the problem of SFABs and their impact on combat brigade readiness and training. A change in risk analysis and acceptance achieves two things relative to alleviating the burden for combat brigades support to the SFABs in more dangerous environments. First, by choosing to accept more risk to the advisor teams it outright eliminates the additional overhead of the additive security teams. This directly relieves the pressure on combat brigades providing these out-of-design security missions that interrupt their training and readiness focus for traditional combat duties necessary for growing great power competition. Secondly, it provides additional benefits

by forcing the advisors and their partners to emphasize shared responsibility and developing deeper trust in advisor internal and partner-provided protection and support. This forcing function drives advisor and partner to develop a closer rapport based on reliance rather than convenience.

With relationship bonds being the critical factor to a successful advisory effort, it is imperative to support the development of trust between advisor and partner. Some leaders have an approach to SFA missions with a risk adverse mentality, as one advisor put it, “probably need to remember why you are paid for hazardous duty pay and qualify for tax exempt status.”⁵⁷ Infantry soldiers receive the requisite training and proper equipment to conduct their assigned missions, and receive compensation for associated risks – the hazards of their duty – when overseas. Likewise, the administration clerk does, and so does the advisor, receive compensation to take the associated risks with their military occupation overseas. The clerk does not receive additional security forces to support their assigned duties for which they are trained and properly equipped, neither does the infantrymen receive additional security forces to reduce their risk conducting their assigned missions. In this manner, the advisers’ maturity, experience, and abilities leading to their selection, coupled with their training to operate in small groups can facilitate more risk without catastrophic consequences for greater mission impact. These advisors could go without accompanying security forces, relying on their own training and experience, professionalism and emphasizing their trust in their partners for protection, sustenance, transportation, and support. This keeps a measure of honor and feeling of responsibility for their guest and partner protection on the host force rather than allowing them to disregard it with the presence of additional American security forces present to protect the advisor.

The message would be clear: the advisors are treated no differently, their conditions no more enhanced than their partners. What message is sent when advisors accompanying their partner forces need outside security and protection? Their presence undermines relationship building, the sense of shared exposures between the counterparts, and can be overbearing for the advisor to try and work with.⁵⁸

In addition to the physical risk it would entail, as outlined above, it also comes with a distinct risk that such independent, isolated advisors may lose their way, “going native”, or suffer exposed character flaws. Advisors can be susceptible to the “snap threshold” of response to multiple deployments and high stress, of which advisory missions can be extremely stressful. This can manifest itself in poor decisions out of the ordinary, indicative of breakdowns in discipline standards.⁵⁹ One advisor, possessing both Special Forces and Civil Affairs qualification, encapsulated the warning with, “Do not violate that duty [to American ideals] in hopes of gaining greater acceptance into the [foreign security forces] mindset...value as an American advisor is more prized than any desires of complete acceptance into the [foreign security forces] culture.”⁶⁰

Service Force Structure Adjustments to Support Advisory Formations

If the Army chooses to continue providing additional security to SFABs, the solution leads in some manner to a new force structure designed to protect the advisory teams. In a time of more restricted fiscal and manpower limitations, new structure must come at the expense of cutting current structure in some manner.

The six SFABs, five active duty and one Army National Guard, are a high demand capability for the combatant commanders.⁶¹ Even with these brigades, there is a continued use of combat brigades used in advisory roles, being broken up and readiness lost as they conduct missions, which SFABs could take, such as the aforementioned JMTG-U and Iraq AAB missions. The use of combat brigades to fill advisory missions in place of SFABs detracts from the combat readiness of the component that expends its combat brigade in a broken up, advisory-type deployment instead of holding or employing that ready and trained combat formation in its intended and designed mission set. A primary purpose of the formal advisory formation creation in the Army was to provide relief to traditional combat units from having to either lose individuals to man ad hoc teams or to expend their readiness when reformed into an advisory specific deployment. This is still happening, impacting the readiness of the force as a whole.⁶²

An option to address this impact on the traditional combat forces is to have a dedicated infantry advisor security brigade (for ease of reference an IASB) assigned for advisory support. This is similar to a traditional infantry brigade combat team structure, slightly modified to remove the cavalry squadron, leaving only three maneuver battalions (either infantry or cavalry in designation) task organized as combat arms security battalion (for ease of reference this formation could be called a CASB). This allows for a coherent command and control and support apparatus inherent in the brigade combat team structure to oversee the training and management of the additional forces. With three battalions, this IASB could support three advisor brigades simultaneously in a high-demand environment, assigning one battalion to a specific advisor brigade, or manage a rotation of battalions for advisor brigade security. Likewise, the artillery battalion in the IASB could support the advisor formations with its artillery batteries. With this structure, the current SFAB inventory of six advisory brigades requires two IASBs to provide

habitual aligned security battalion coverage to each active duty SFAB and one CASB assigned to the Army Guard SFAB.

The IASBs would assign each CASBs to a specific, regionally aligned SFAB. Assignment the CASB and one direct support artillery battery to a specific advisor brigade comes with distinct benefits in reoccurring, habitual training, commonality and familiarization of key leader relationships, reporting, and standard operating procedures as well as allowing for rudimentary regionally aligned familiarization for the CASB personnel. This regional familiarization does not exist if the Army continues to randomly pull a traditional infantry battalion from a combat brigade to support an SFAB only for a specific deployment. These benefits can be gained through rigorous pre-deployment training, consistent training and sharing same deployment cycle as each other, the habitual relationship increases ability to develop strong institutional bonds between the aligned CASB and its SFAB.

These IASBs could come from either the active duty Army's conversion of infantry brigade combat teams, or they could come from the Army National Guard's infantry brigade combat team conversions, or a mix of the components similar to how the SFABs are cross component. However, it is readily apparent with the current policy of taking Army National Guard brigade combat teams and breaking them up to provide a task organized infantry security battalion leads to the distinct possibility that the Army National Guard could take the mission of creating the IASBs. This approach allows the active component Army's brigade structure to wholly focus on their combat missions. While this is a distinct possibility, it is an important factor to consider having an entire type of formation isolated in one component involves accessibility risk. By not having an element in the active component these formations would lack

an active, fulltime formation to serve as the flagship and proponent of the formation and immediate, ready access as reserve component units inherently require mobilization time.

Aside from a directly dedicated IASB structure as outlined above, another possibility, which equally supports the mission but allows for additional employment of the infantry formation is the idea of a counterinsurgency (COIN) brigade. This COIN brigade would have soldiers trained and educated in COIN tactics and strategy, while also having them mentally oriented towards the proper mindset to work alongside advisors and their partners.⁶³

Appropriately manned, equipped, and trained, these forces could be deployed in a COIN environment as a whole organic brigade as needed, but also possess the training, mindset, organization, and structure to support advisor formations, allowing one new force structure to address two service deficiencies, as opposed to the singularly focused IASB concept addressing directly only one service need.

The institution of a COIN brigade also brings with it the economy of dual-purpose mission. In an increasingly fiscally restrained environment for the U.S. military, there is minimal room for force structure growth, in contrast, any new capability comes with a trade – some formation is lost for a new one to exist. By converting a minimum of two infantry combat brigades to a COIN formation the Army could have a COIN trained and prepared formation already ideally trained and structured immediately for those contingencies, but simultaneously a formation readily applicable to support advisory efforts, inherently similar in environment to COIN atmosphere. Again, these formations could come from the active duty or the Army Guard, or ideally a combination of both. They also serve as the flagship formations for preserving and promoting the service's institutional knowledge and experience in COIN operations while also ideally suited to support advisory efforts across the spectrum of conflict. Whereas the IASB

concept solves the problem for supporting the SFABs it does not fully resolve the readiness issue. Since there is no room to grow the force, converting IBCTs in either component to IASBs the force is losing those IBCTs to create advisor support specific IASBs. While this does assist the SFABs with more aligned and habitual support structures, and it also helps the force better focus training by identifying better which forces will do which missions (IBCTs for decisive action and IASBs for advisor support), however, it still reduces the IBCT force overall.

An additional benefit of having an infantry security force and artillery is these formations provide the partners a conventional American combat force parallel for comparison. This was common in the early days of the Korean advisory effort, when Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAG) teams sometimes “borrowed” nearby American infantry squads or individual soldiers “for demonstration purposes”.⁶⁴

While either new brigade concept provides a tailored solution to the risk to force focus on SFAB employment, it does so still at a cost to the combat brigade community. Without room for growth in size, the Army would have to take from its current force structure to create either brigade-type designed specifically to support SFABs in non-permissive, combat theaters. A residual benefit though, would be though this costs the force traditional brigade combat power through converting some of the force to these new advisor support brigades, it limits readiness impacts to training to these converted formations. With these formations, the combat brigades’ training and readiness is not impacted by advisory missions, allowing them to consistently focus and prepare for their traditional missions.

Organizational Changes to the Advisory Structure

Another option incorporates the elements the advisory formations take from outside their formation and directly add them into their force structure, growing the advisory formation to organically include all that it needs. This includes a dedicated security force, roughly an infantry battalion per advisory brigade, a dedicated artillery battalion, roughly a battery in direct support to each advisory battalion, and a more robust command and control and support element now that the brigade manages diverse, additional forces. This solution provides the most direct and consolidated command and control relationship between the SFAB and its additional security force.

Adding these additional security capabilities to the SFAB eliminates breaking up and modifying combat brigades to serve as the Operation Inherent Resolve AAB used in in the counter-ISIS fight and the requirement of the additional of infantry battalion to the SFAB as done for the Afghanistan SFAB deployments. More robust SFAB organizations with inherent self-protection and support allow for these ready and trained combat brigades to remain prepared and consolidated for their designed mission sets while the SFABs undertake these more dangerous combat advisory missions previously filled by modified combat brigades.

While this provides an applicable solution to mitigating the risk to force for the SFAB employment by providing additional security to the advisory teams, it still requires a distinct change in force management. Without room for additional force growth, these infantry battalions would come at expense of the current standing combat units. Virtually two combat brigades would be dissolved to provide the requisite infantry battalions to be added to the SFAB formations. Also, these infantry battalions being organically incorporated into the SFABs would

be even less flexible for use than the IASB or COIN Brigade solution for supporting joint force emerging requirements since they are not standalone formations but individual battalions incorporated into the SFABs.

It creates an organic element to the SFAB that, though critical to the risk to force calculation, is only applicable to SFAB employment during non-permissive, combat theater deployments. All SFAB deployments in competition and in semi-permissive and permissive environments would not have a need for additional security force protection, leaving these assigned infantry battalions without an active mission for the majority of the SFAB use.

In both cases, even with creating additional brigade-types tailored to support the SFABs or directly adding traditional combat forces into the SFABs for organic security support, there remain some elements still coming from outside the advisory organization, namely theater-level assets, such as aviation, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets, and theater sustainment support. To fully make the advisors self-contained with organic elements would be both unrealistic and unsustainable with force structure limits and demands, and there are currently no units at the brigade and below-level that are supported in perpetuity in such a manner, rather they are task organized specifically for deployment. Advisory formations would be treated likewise based on mission requirements, these recommendations focused on the additional security aspect demand on the combat brigades to address a risk to force focus on the SFAB impact to combat brigade readiness and training.

Conclusion

Army combat brigade readiness remains negatively impacted by fulfilling out-of-design advisory missions even after the creation of advisory-specific formations, and through providing

support to SFABs deployed in non-permissive, combat theaters for additional protection. In an era of growing great power competition, the maximizing of building and holding available readiness is paramount, emphasizing the need to resolve the impacts to their readiness through the effective and efficient use of advisory formations. The question of how to resolve the issue of combat brigade impacts from advisory missions and support is encapsulated in a discussion of risk to force and risk to mission management by the theater commanders. While three broad solutions present themselves including accepting greater risk to advisory operations by not providing additional force protection and emphasizing reliance on partner force support and relationships; creating additional force structure brigades designed to specifically support advisory missions; or adding identified additional force structure organically to the advisor organizations directly addressing the risks, the assumption of more mitigated risk is best. In a fiscally limited environment with no indication of new force growth, working with what the service already has is the most effective. With acceptance of elevated risk to the highly selective, trained, and experienced advisory teams, this allows the current combat structure to focus training and conserve readiness for core traditional functions. Both formations benefit, with the combat forces undistracted focus and preparation for great power competition and the advisory teams able to build stronger rapport through trust and deeper relationships based on shared dangers and reliance between advisors and their partners.

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¹ Theresa Hitchens, "DoD Budget Cut Likely As \$4 Trillion Deficit Looms", *Breaking Defense*, April 27, 2020, <https://breakingdefense.com/2020/04/dod-budget-cuts-likely-as-4-trillion-deficit-looms/>, accessed March 6 2021.

² Due to the similarities between the land component advisory efforts the United States Marine Corps experience does not differ greatly from the Army, as the Corps faces similar issues, though on a relative smaller scale commiserate to the different sizes and operational tempo of the branches.

³ *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*, Richard D. Hooker, Jr. and Joseph J. Collins, ed., (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2015), 15.

⁴ *Lessons Encountered*, 16.

⁵ Colonel Curt Taylor, commander 5th Security Forces Assistance Brigade, "Security Force Assistance in an Era of Great-Power Competition", Modern Warfare Institute, podcast audio, July 7, 2020, and "Security Forces Assistance Brigade Force Design Update Brief: Includes MOS and Grade Plate Bill Payer Strategy", ACM-SFAB, slide deck, dated 14 May 2020, author's files.

⁶ Joshua J. Potter, *American Advisors: Security Force Assistance Model in the Long War*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2011), 38 and Taylor, "Security Force Assistance in an Era".

⁷ Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 *Joint Operations*, 17 January 2017, Incorporating Change 1 22 October 2018, V-4.

⁸ Taylor, "Security Force Assistance in an Era".

⁹ "TCM SFAB Operational Concept", and JP 3-0 *Joint Operations*, V-5.

¹⁰ Taylor, "Security Force Assistance in an Era".

¹¹ T.X. Hammes, "Raising and Mentoring Security Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq", in *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*, Richard D. Hooker, Jr. and Joseph J. Collins, ed., (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 2015), 277.

¹² The USMC followed a near identical process for creating their advisory formations in almost a near flip of approaches. They started earlier in the war with converting standing units into advisory formations for a deployment, and later in the war shifted to building advisory teams from individuals pulled from across the fleet. Their lessons learned mirrored the Army's, resulting in the USMC creating a standing advisory formation similar but not identical to the Army's SFABs in the Marine Corps Advisor Companies (MCAC). For USMC advisory historical assessment, see William Rosenau, Melissa McAdam, Megan Katt, Gary Lee, Jerry Meyerle, Jonathan Schroden, Annemarie Randazzo-Matsel with Cathy Hiatt and Margaux Hoar's *United States Marine Corps Advisors Past, Present, and Future*, Alexandria, Virginia: CNA Analysis & Solutions, 2013.

¹³ The most common names of these formations included the Afghanistan theater's Embedded Training Teams (ETT), and the Iraq theater's Military Transition Teams (MiTTs), and later the more universally applied Security Force Advise and Assist Teams (SFAATs) within Advise and Assist Brigades (AABs) prior to the codification of the SFABs. See, Hammes, "Raising and Mentoring Security Forces".

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- ¹⁴ Hammes, "Raising and Mentoring Security Forces", 279-282, and see *Eyewitness to War – Oral History Series*. Vol. III, *US Army Advisors in Afghanistan*, edited by Michael G. Brooks, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010.
- ¹⁵ Potter, *American Advisors*, 38.
- ¹⁶ Steven E. Clay, *Iroquois Warriors in Iraq*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2007), 204.
- ¹⁷ Potter, *American Advisors*, 38-40.
- ¹⁸ Richard W. Duncan, "3rd Battalion, 353rd Armor Regiment Assists Units with Security Cooperation and Security-Force Assistance Training", in *Armor Magazine* (January-March 2016), 64; for PKSOI see "Background and History", PKSOI, <https://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/background-history/>, accessed March 6, 2021; for SFAC see "TCM SFAB Operational Concept Brief", TCM-SFAB, slide deck, dated October 2018, author's files.
- ¹⁹ Clay, *Iroquois Warriors*, 3, 37, 203, and 208-209. Structured to provide individual and staff training to Army reserve component units, this division formed ad hoc teams from across the division and sister USAR units to form advisory teams for its mission to Iraq, while still having to meet the annual training requirements in the United States for its institutional training support to the rest of the Army.
- ²⁰ Hammes, "Raising and Mentoring Security Forces", 279-282, and 321-323
- ²¹ Potter, *American Advisors*, 33 and 43.
- ²² Mosul Study Group, *What the Battle of Mosul Teaches the Force*, No. 17-24, (United States Army Combined Arms Command, September 2017), 24.
- ²³ With the USMC facing similar problems with their advisory programs, the Corps followed similar path of the Army in establishing formal advisory specific formations. The USMC formal advisory structure intent includes four companies, currently only two are formed, the first ones in 2019, and they are all in the USMC Reserves. In contrast to the Army structure of hand-selecting specialists from among the forces to man the SFABs, the first Marine Corps Advisor Company (MCAC-Alpha) was formed by the nucleus staff of the recently deactivated 2nd Civil Affairs Group (CAG). See Serine Farahi, "Marine Corps Activates Advisor Companies," *DVIDS News*, 6 July 2019.
- ²⁴ John Nagl, *Knife Fights: A Memoir of Modern War in Theory and Practice*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2014), 158-160. referencing his own article "Institutionalizing Adaptation: It's Time for a Permanent Army Advisory Corps", *Center for a New American Security*, June 2007.
- ²⁵ John Nagl, *Knife Fights*, 158-160, referencing his own article "Institutionalizing Adaptation: It's Time for a Permanent Army Advisory Corps", *Center for a New American Security*, June 2007.
- ²⁶ Secretary of the Army Mark T. Esper and Chief of Staff of the Army Mark A. Milley, *United States Army Posture Statement*, (Washington, DC: 26 March 2019), 10.
- ²⁷ Esper and Milley, *Army Posture Statement*, 10. 1st SFAB is out of Fort Benning, Georgia; 2d SFAB stationed in Fort Bragg, North Carolina; 3rd SFAB is in Fort Hood, Texas; 4th SFAB is out of Fort Carson, Colorado; and the 5th SFAB is based on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, while the 54th SFAB is in the Army National Guard with the brigade headquarters in Indiana and portions of the unit's advisory formations are in Texas, Florida, Ohio, and Georgia.
- ²⁸ "TCM SFAB Operational Concept Brief", TCM-SFAB, slide deck, dated October 2018, author's files.
- ²⁹ Jeff S. Hackett, (Commander, 54th Security Forces Assistance Brigade), "SFAB BCT Readiness", correspondence with Author 11 December 2020. Organize – create, improve, and integrate doctrinal principles, organizational structures, capability constructs, and personnel management. Train – create, improve, and integrate training, leader development, and education at the individual, leader, collective, and staff levels. Equip – integrate material and equipment solutions into the foreign security forces; includes procurement, fielding, accountability, and maintenance through life cycle management. Rebuild or create – create, improve, and integrate facilities and supporting infrastructure. Advise – provide subject matter expertise, guidance, advice, and counsel to foreign security forces while carrying out the mission assigned to the unit or organization. "TCM SFAB Operational Concept".
- ³⁰ "Security Forces Assistance Brigade Force Design Update Brief: Includes MOS and Grade Plate Bill Payer Strategy", ACM-SFAB, slide deck, dated 14 May 2020, author's files.

³¹ This is in contrast to the Army Special Forces which take soldiers from any branch or military occupational specialty background and then train them in Special Forces core competencies. For example, in most cases, Special Forces captains have never commanded a company of any sort, and Special Forces are not required to even have a combat arms background, receiving specialized training during their qualification course instead of relying on direct experience in the level and military role for which they are providing advice and assistance as the SFAB does in its conventional manner.

³² Hackett, "SFAB BCT Readiness". For the Marine Corps, the primary formal advisory formation is the MCAC, which is composed of Marine Corps Advisor Teams (MCATs). The MCAC and there subordinate MCATs are far more limited than SFAB in scope and support. The MCAT is designed to advise partner forces at the brigade or higher level, and the MCATs are structured to replicate a standard Marine Corps battalion staff structure to provide the command and staff section advisor pairs to their partner force command and staff. See Serine Farahi, "Marine Corps Activates Advisor Companies," DVIDS News, 6 July 2019.

³³ Hackett, "SFAB BCT Readiness". For the Marine Corps the training is conducted at the Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group (MCSCG) in Fort Story, Virginia in a four-week long Marine Advisor Course. The MCSCG was established in 2012 to train Marines preparing to conduct advisory missions in skills including culture, foreign weapons handling, and rapport building interpersonal relations, in addition to providing courses on foreign military training and cooperation. See Shawn Snow, "Counterinsurgency is here to stay: Marines plan to double foreign military training adviser group," *Navy Times*, 10 October 2018 and "The Marine Corps Advisory Company (MCAC)," *Small Wars Journal*, 13 June 2019 originally posted in SOF News.

³⁴ Hackett, "SFAB BCT Readiness".

³⁵ Taylor, "Security Force Assistance in an Era".

³⁶ Timothy McCormic (Army National Guard Theater Security Officer for Central Command and Africa Command, previously Army National Guard Global Force Manager, Readiness and Plans Division, G-3), "MMS Response", correspondence with Author, 20 December 2020.

³⁷ Tim Ellis, "Most of Fort Wainwright's Stryker Soldiers Deploy to Iraq for 'Train-Advise-Assist' Mission", KUAC, 9 September 2019, <https://fm.kuac.org/post/most-fort-wainwright-s-stryker-soldiers-deploy-iraq-train-advise-assist-mission>, accessed 13 September 2020.

³⁸ Mosul Study Group, *What the Battle of Mosul Teaches the Force*, 58.

³⁹ McCormic, "MMS Response", correspondence with Author.

⁴⁰ United States Department of State, "U.S. Relations With Ukraine", Bilateral Relations Fact Sheet, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, dated 10 October 2019.

⁴¹ JMTG-U Official Webpage, Seventh Army, <https://www.7atc.army.mil/JMTGU/>, accessed 13 September 2020.

⁴² McCormic, "MMS Response", correspondence with Author.

⁴³ As the SFABs fully come online and gain more credibility in proof of concept, there is discussion that the European regionally aligned SFAB may take on the JMTG-U mission from the conventional combat brigades. While this is not formalized at the time of this study, it would be most applicable use of the SFABs while benefiting the combat force.

⁴⁴ Kyle Rempfer, "Army sets end-of-year window for SFABs to deploy outside Afghanistan", *Army Times*, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2020/01/16/army-sets-end-of-year-window-for-sfabs-to-deploy-outside-afghanistan/>, accessed 13 September 2020 and Matthew Fontaine, "1st SFAB begins advising mission to Africa with vehicle maintenance training in Senegal", *Army Times*, https://www.army.mil/article/235353/1st_sfab_begins_advising_mission_to_africa_with_vehicle_maintenance_training_in_senegal, accessed 13 September 2020.

⁴⁵ U.S. Embassy Bogota. "SFAB Mission arrives in Colombia." News Release, 28 May 2020, and Steve Balestrieri, "Army Chooses Security Forces over Green Berets for Counter-Drug Deployment to Colombia", *SOFREP*, 1 June 2020. With the SFAB replacing the Army Special Forces who had previously fulfilled that mission, the high demand, low density Special Forces gained additional bandwidth to fulfill other missions, assisting in balancing their ever-increasing diversity of operations.

⁴⁶ Charles H. Briscoe, et al, *Weapon of Choice: U.S. Army Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2003), 117, 122-127, 155-158; Donald P. Wright, et al, A

Different Kind of war: The United States Army in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) October 2001-September 2005, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010), 73-82, 93-107.

⁴⁷ Clay, *Iroquois Warriors*, 122, 127-186; Wright, *A Different Kind of War*, 264-266; *Eyewitness to War Volume III: US Army Advisors in Afghanistan – Oral History Series*, edited by Michael G. Brooks, (Fort Leavenworth KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010), 94-95, 223, 276.

⁴⁸ SOF advisory efforts in Afghanistan supporting the Village Stability Platform (VSP) program included additional conventional security teams attached to the special operations teams as they embedded within local villages throughout the country. As exemplified with the evolution of the early transition and training teams to the SFATs which predated the SFAB teams, the SFATs began to be surrounded by additional security forces for their advise and assist missions.

⁴⁹ Robert D. Ramsey III, *Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18. Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 10.

⁵⁰ Robert K. Sawyer, *Army Historical Series. Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War*, (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2000), 140.

⁵¹ T.R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War: 50th Anniversary Edition*, (Dulles Virginia: Brassy's Inc, 2000), 38, 41.

⁵² Ramsey III, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 8, 18-19, 24.

⁵³ Ramsey III, *Advising Indigenous Forces*, 7.

⁵⁴ Worthington, *Under Fire with ARVN*, 1.

⁵⁵ Worthington, *Under Fire with ARVN*, 63-65. For a classic account of CAP operations see Bing West, *The Village*, (New York: Pocket Books, 1972).

⁵⁶ Training and Doctrine Command G-2 Operational Environment Enterprise, *The Red Team Handbook: The Army's Guide to Making Better Decisions*, Version 9.0 (Leavenworth, KS: University of Foreign Military and Cultures Studies), 57.

⁵⁷ Potter, *American Advisors*, 50.

⁵⁸ Joseph M. Miller LTC (ret.), (former AF/PAK Hands and Afghanistan SFAAT advisor to TAAC-South and Corps-level), "Advisor Interview", correspondence with Author, 16 December 2020.

⁵⁹ Potter, *American Advisors*, 62.

⁶⁰ Potter, *American Advisors*, 71.

⁶¹ Taylor, "Security Force Assistance in an Era" and Hackett, "SFAB BCT Readiness".

⁶² Kathleen McDill (Deputy Chief, Army National Guard Readiness and Plans Division, G-3), "SFAB BCT Readiness Impacts" correspondence with author, 23 October 2020, and McCormic, "MMS readiness", correspondence with Author, 12 November 2020.

⁶³ Ryan P. Hovatter, "The Need for an IBCT (COIN): Maintaining Focus on an Almost Forgotten Mission," *Infantry Magazine*, January-March 2018, 11.

⁶⁴ Sawyer, *Military Advisors in Korea*, 25.