

Improving Security Force Assistance Capability in the Army's Advise and Assist Brigade

**A Monograph
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Abstract

Improving Security Force Assistance Capability in the Army's Advise and Assist Brigade by
Major Brennan F. Cook, US Army, 57 pages.

The U.S. Army's renewed emphasis on developing organizations to conduct Security Force Assistance (SFA), particularly the Advise and Assist Brigades, is indicative of both increased operational requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan and renewed interest in developing defense capacity in allied and partner nations. With over 255,000 soldiers deployed worldwide in 2009, the Army needs to develop a more effective conventional SFA apparatus to train indigenous forces to manage their own internal security requirements. By properly selecting, training, and utilizing quality conventional force personnel to fulfill SFA requirements, the Army can meet its current operational commitments while improving its ability to respond to emerging needs. Previous attempts by the French in Algeria and the U.S. Army in Vietnam and Korea to incorporate advisory missions into conventional operations highlight the need for developing highly skilled advisors capable of managing SFA tasks within Full Spectrum Operations. Current selection, training, and utilization models used by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) program, the U.S. Marine Corps' Training and Advisor Group (MCTAG), and the U.S. Army's transition teams provide comparative analysis tools for developing a way forward. What is missing from each of these programs is a centralized identification and selection process, robust yet efficient training regimen, and a utilization mechanism to ensure highly skilled and trained advisors are serving where the Army needs them most, at the brigade. Historical precedents and current training programs suggest that though the U.S. Army has vastly improved its conventional advisory efforts since the Korean War, it still requires a new approach to Security Force Assistance. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review reemphasized the importance of assisting partners and allies with their own internal defense. By creating a functional area for advisors, the Army could better enable Advise and Assist Brigades to manage Full Spectrum Operations by providing the commander with advisors specifically selected, trained, and educated for SFA missions. The U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps will bear the brunt of providing such assistance, and the advisor functional area program could better prepare brigade-sized units for conducting those operations in both combat and non-combat environments.

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Introduction

Historically, there is much evidence of conventional forces conducting Security Force Assistance (SFA),¹ Foreign Internal Defense (FID),² Security Assistance (SA),³ and Security Cooperation (SC),⁴ particularly since the Second World War; however, Security Force Assistance is as old as the nation itself. General George Washington employed his inspector general and Prussian Baron von Steuben in an SFA role during the Revolutionary War. The French Army provided conventional forces in an advisory capacity in Algeria and Vietnam. The British Army provided Security Force Assistance in Malaya and Kenya, and it continues to conduct SFA in Sub-Saharan Africa countries such as Gambia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Nigeria. The U.S. Army has provided conventional forces in support of armies in China, Lebanon, Colombia, Angola, Cambodia, South Korea, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Georgia, and it currently provides support to The Philippines, Iraq, and Afghanistan, among others. Therefore, conventional force involvement in substantial advisory efforts is certainly not without precedent. Yet the empirical evidence of the necessity of such operations has not inspired the Army to effect adequate change in preparation for the current or future operational environments. The applicability

¹ *Field Manual (FM) 3-07.1* defines Security Force Assistance as “the unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority.” U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-07.1: Security Force Assistance*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009.

² *Joint Publication (JP) 3-07.1* defines Foreign Internal Defense as “participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency.” U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-07.1: Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense (FID)*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004.

³ *JP 3-07.1* defines Security Assistance as a “group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services, by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives.” Ibid.

⁴ *JP 3-07.1* defines Security Cooperation as “all DOD interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific US security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide US forces with peacetime and contingency access to a HN. Ibid.

of these historical examples must be understood in order to provide context for future involvement in SFA. Additionally, the necessity for conducting SFA with partner countries has assumed higher importance since the release of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). It states specifically that the United States military must “strengthen and institutionalize general purpose force capabilities for security force assistance...[and] although special operations forces will be able to meet some of this demand, especially in politically sensitive situations, U.S. general purpose forces will need to be engaged in these efforts as well.”⁵ The criticality of properly preparing conventional forces for SFA is implicit in the QDR, and the institution’s response to this imperative must consider both the capabilities extant within the current special operations force structure and, more importantly, improve upon the existing system of generating conventional advisory forces.

Economy of force operations are certainly nothing new to Special Operations Forces (SOF), particularly the US Army’s Special Forces, and their thorough preparation for SFA and FID⁶ activities has increased the Army’s reliance on that very specific population of soldiers to conduct those missions. The Special Forces’ selection process, training pipeline, and adherence to strict standards of acceptance all serve to limit the number of soldiers with that specific skill-set. Undoubtedly, their robust processes have enabled the Army’s Special Forces to remain quite elite, but their frugal selection and limited organizational structure means conventional forces must be capable of conducting SFA when SOF is incapable of meeting an SFA mission’s demands. The training of Special Forces personnel, with its focus on language and human interaction, sets them apart from their conventional counterparts in respect to preparation for SFA. However, their involvement in so many other aspects of special operations, such as

⁵ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), 28.

⁶ *JP 3-07.1* states “the focus of all US foreign internal defense (FID) efforts is to support the host nation’s (HN’s) program of internal defense and development (IDAD)...The US will generally employ a mix of diplomatic, economic, informational, and military instruments of national power in support of these objectives. Military assistance is often necessary in order to provide the secure environment for

direct action, strategic reconnaissance, and unconventional warfare as well as their relatively small size, limits their capacity for large SFA missions. Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations Forces describes SOF's primary role in SFA as "assess, train, advise, and assist [host nation] military and paramilitary forces with the tasks that require their unique capabilities,"⁷ leaving to the conventional forces the task of training all other military forces. As the U.S. National Defense Strategy⁸ and the 2010 QDR focus heavily on training indigenous forces to manage their nation's security requirements, there is likely an enduring requirement for conventional forces to properly select, train, and utilize forces for the SFA mission.

Recent examples demonstrate the Army's reliance on conventional forces for robust advisory efforts. Upon dissolution of the Iraqi Army in 2003, it became apparent that SOF did not have the capacity to conduct SFA on the scale required and conventional forces would have to develop and prepare new Iraqi Army, National Police, and Border Patrol forces to eventually assume responsibility for that country's defense. The U.S. Army was reticent in developing this capacity and hastily identified and selected soldiers,⁹ many of whom were improperly suited for an advisory role.¹⁰ That training manifested itself initially through 1st Army's various Training Support Brigades (TSBs), which previously served as the Army organizations responsible for training reserve component forces for mobilization. The TSBs set

the above efforts to become effective."

⁷ U.S. Department of Defense *Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations Forces* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2003), 28.

⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2008), 8.

⁹ Retired Army General Jack Keane stated the Army is "transitioning from an endeavor that has been less than a high priority to one that is of the highest priority." Michael Gordon, "Army Expands Training for Advisors Who Will Try to Improve Iraq's Security Forces," *Army Times*, November 25, 2006.

¹⁰ Major General Carter Ham stated "The selection of individuals for duty on transition teams was probably more haphazard than any of us would have liked. The training was not standardized across the various training locations. It does not appear that it was well-resourced across the force. I think that was what led to some of the earlier criticisms, and in my view the criticism was fair and justified." Michael Gordon, "Army Expands Training for Advisors Who Will Try to Improve Iraq's Security Forces," *Army Times*, November 25, 2006.

about preparing advisory teams at various locations specifically for tactical tasks, a minor component of their multi-role mission. Focusing on weapons qualification, convoy procedures, and other seemingly worthwhile force protection responsibilities, the training failed to prepare advisors for the more complex duties of working through interpreters, influencing counterparts, and developing a cultural understanding of the nuances of the Iraqi army system.¹¹ Additionally, the training was largely provided by soldiers who had no experience in an advisory capacity. Thus, the tactically-focused training fell short of effectively preparing advisors for the complex task at hand.

In 2006, the Army centralized the advisory training program at Fort Riley to solidify, if only temporarily, the Army's acceptance of a conventional advisory mission. Later, the Chief of Staff of the Army's directive that the Department of the Army select advisor leaders centrally, just like battalion and brigade commanders, solidified the Army's recognition of the necessity of selecting the best conventional force officers for the advisory mission.¹² However, selection for the remainder of the advisory positions has generally followed a less discriminating model. More specifically, the Army selected individuals based on availability without regard to experience, capability, or suitability. As indiscriminate as such selection and identification criteria may have been, it followed previous models used by the Army to populate and train advisory teams, particularly for the wars in Korea and Vietnam.¹³ Arbitrarily selecting personnel for advisory duties in those wars and in the current operational environment has not optimized the Army's capacity for generating capable advisor forces.

The Army has recognized the importance of training a host nation's forces for advancing that nation's security apparatus in a given country or region. The 2009 Army Posture Statement noted that

¹¹ The author attended advisory training conducted by First Army at Fort Hood, Texas from January to February 2006.

¹² David Gurney, "Interview with George W. Casey, Jr.," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 52 (October 2009): 17.

¹³ Cao Van Vien et al., *Indochina Monographs: The U.S. Adviser* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center

“[i]ndigenous governments and forces frequently lack the capability to resolve or prevent conflicts. Therefore, our Army must be able to work with these governments to create favorable conditions for security and assist them in building their own military and civil capacity.”¹⁴ The necessity to train foreign security forces to secure their own borders and advance the security interests of the United States requires conventional forces capable of training host nation military forces to manage internal and external threats. With over 255,000 U.S. Army soldiers deployed in over 80 countries worldwide in 2009,¹⁵ its personnel systems are strained by America’s commitment to international security and U.S. interests abroad; therefore, the Army requires a new, more effective Security Force Assistance apparatus to assist in dealing with complex problems abroad by training indigenous forces to manage their own internal security requirements. By properly selecting, training, and utilizing quality conventional force personnel to fulfill SFA requirements, the Army can meet its commitments in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and elsewhere while improving its ability to prepare for emerging needs.

To analyze the U.S. Army’s ability to field a capable SFA force with suitable personnel, this paper identifies and dissects relevant historical security assistance missions conducted by the U.S. Army in Vietnam and Korea and by the French Army in Algeria. The U.S. Army’s involvement in Korea and Vietnam are used to highlight historic identification and selection processes. The French Army in Algeria provides an example of an advisory mission that embedded well-trained advisors with local government and militia forces yet suffered because of the difficulty in integrating advisory efforts with conventional operations. These three specific cases were chosen because in each case an army conducted advisory missions in conjunction with conventional operations. The research then focuses on current training programs in use, specifically the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Operational Mentor and

of Military History, 1980), 2.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, “2009 U.S. Army Posture Statement,” United States Army, <http://www.army.mil/aps/09/index.html> (accessed September 22, 2009).

Liaison Team (OMLTs) training programs, the U.S. Marine Corps Training and Advisor Group (MCTAG), the U.S. Army's training program at Fort Polk, Louisiana, and the recently developed and constituted Advise and Assist Brigades (AABs) to provide a comparative, qualitative, and quantitative analysis of the viability of the various programs. Finally, the research concludes with a proposed model for selecting, training and preparing advisors in the U.S. Army's conventional forces who are capable of meeting the standards as outlined in FM 3-07.1 while limiting the impact on the Army as a whole.

¹⁵ Ibid.

A History of Conventional Forces in SFA

Precedence for conventional advisory efforts is evident throughout the latter half of the 20th Century, but relatively few were conducted concurrently with conventional operations. The U.S. Army contributed significant numbers of advisors in Korea and Vietnam while conventional and special operations forces simultaneously conducted combat operations. Advisory efforts in Korea began immediately after the unconditional surrender of Japan in 1945 and continued throughout and beyond the Korean War. Advisory efforts in Vietnam commenced shortly after the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and continued throughout the war, reaching an apex in 1970.¹⁶ However, other nations, particularly the French, have conducted SFA to varying degrees of success as well. The French Army is well known for its advisory efforts to both indigenous Vietnamese and Algerian forces. This section analyzes previous efforts to train indigenous forces, focusing particularly on how the armies selected advisors, trained them, and how they conducted operations vis-à-vis conventional forces operating in the theater of operations.

The U.S. Army in Korea

Advisory support to the Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) began immediately after the Second World War and continued throughout the Korean War. Emerging initially as the Provisional Military Advisory Group (PMAG) and finally as the Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea (KMAG), the U.S. Army supplied 500 officers and soldiers to the ROKA with the task of “advising, assisting, and ensuring US military assistance was used effectively.”¹⁷ The requirement for advisors blossomed during the war and KMAG was eventually populated with 2,866 advisors in 1953 from the battalion to the corps

¹⁶ Robert Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CSI Press, 2008), 31.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 5.

level.¹⁸ Even with the robust requirement for advisors to the ROKA, the advisor assignment was never particularly popular with Army officers or soldiers. Officers selected for the assignment were dubious about the career benefits and, when possible, chose instead to serve with U.S. units, particularly after the conventional war began in 1950. The Army never properly equated the advisory mission with traditional career progression, poorly managed the selection and identification of advisors, and poorly utilized and integrated the advisors in country. The effort suffered as a result.

Traditional career progression for an Army officer, then and now, required the completion of key positions the Army deemed necessary for advancement to the next rank. In Korea, completion of duty as an advisor fulfilled none of these requirements, though the Army attempted to rectify this in 1954 by integrating the requirement for service as an “instructor/advisor” to either U.S. Army Reserve or foreign forces within an Army officer’s career development.¹⁹ On the other hand, combat command did meet the requirements for advancement and could result in multiple promotions during the course of a combat tour. Advisors gained no such privilege and often left Korea with the same rank as when they arrived, regardless of their level of performance. Records show that 81% of KMAG advisors were sourced from the Army’s reserve components, which further underscores the zeal with which active component officers sought assignments elsewhere.²⁰ The Army’s reluctance to identify advisory duty as developmental or career enhancing and its outsourcing of advisors to the reserve component cemented the place of advisory duty as a superfluous assignment. While the Army was reticent in designating advisory duty as key for advancement, its selection and training mechanisms further compounded the problem of raising an effective advisor force.

¹⁸ Ramsey, 10.

¹⁹ Alfred Hausrath, *The KMAG Advisor: Role and Problems of the Military Advisor in Developing an Indigenous Army for Combat Operations in Korea* (Chevy Chase, MD: Johns Hopkins University’s Operations Research Office, 1957), 110.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 109.

Selection and training of advisors for service with KMAG was haphazard, at best. Officers were usually matched by branch and rank with a requirement in KMAG and then sent forth to be an advisor. Officers were generally two or three ranks below the ROKA officer they advised, greatly diminishing both their effectiveness and their credibility. For example, majors and lieutenant colonels advised ROKA major generals, a task for which they were underprepared. Even after the 1953 decision to place former U.S. battalion and brigade commanders in ROKA divisional advisory positions, little effort was made to increase the quality of subordinate advisors. Worse, the Army made no concerted effort to train advisors in the United States prior to deployment and provided very little training upon arrival in Korea. Even as late as 1953, the training regimen was limited to an overview of KMAG and the responsibilities and duties of an advisor in a ROKA unit.²¹ This lack of training resulted in disparate readiness levels among ROKA units and impacted utilization and trust among KMAG advisors, U.S. commands, and ROKA.

KMAG advisors to ROKA units endured pressures not only from the KMAG hierarchy, but from the Eighth United States Army, as well. Advisors were in the difficult position of advising rather than commanding, but felt many of the same pressures for their counterpart's unit performance as actual commanders in adjacent American units. With ROKA units under Eighth Army, as ordered by ROK President Syngman Rhee on 15 July 1950, KMAG advisors were essentially responsible for their ROKA unit's conduct in combat.²² This meant that advisors were responsible for reporting deficiencies in their ROKA counterpart units to the U.S. commands, which could have obvious implications for the advisor's relationship with his Korean commander. Trust between Eighth Army and subordinate ROKA units, particularly after stunning defeats like the rout of the ROK III Corps on May 17, 1951, further eroded relationships between KMAG advisors, U.S. commanders, and ROKA counterparts. The uneasy tensions

²¹ Ramsey, 13.

²² Bryan Gibby, "Fighting in a Korean War: The American Advisory Mission from 1946-1953" (PhD diss, Ohio State University), 148.

created by such defeats damaged already tenuous relationships between KMAG's advisors and U.S. commanders. As illustrated earlier, failure of a ROKA unit was also failure on the part of the KMAG advisor. ROKA successes later in the war can largely be attributed to the latitude offered KMAG by the Eighth Army commander in re-training ROKA forces in the midst of combat operations during the stalemate years of 1951 to 1953.²³ Nevertheless, integration of ROKA and U.S. formations never created an environment of mutual trust and respect between ROKA and U.S. commanders or the U.S. advisors caught in the middle.

Selection, training, and utilization of advisors in support of the ROKA before and during the Korean War were ad hoc, though changes implemented during the stalemate years, as stated above, did improve KMAG's ability to facilitate ROK Army improvement. Efforts during the U.S. Army's involvement in the Vietnam War, as shown later, were markedly improved by comparison. First however, French Army efforts in Algeria warrant analysis as examples of both an effective use of advisors and a poor integration of advisory efforts with conventional operations.

The French Army in Algeria

French Army efforts to suppress an insurgency in Algeria between 1954 and 1962 are well known and have been extensively studied and documented. France's attempts to retain control of its Maghreb protectorates and territories met with resistance from the majority Arab population. The National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria sought independence using insurgent warfare as a method of challenging French control of their government. The French Army responded by providing forces to counter the insurgency, as well as to lead and train indigenous forces to fight the revolutionary movement. Having recently been defeated in Indochina and after early difficulty inculcating French ideals into the

²³ Gibby, 321.

rural Muslim and Berber populations in Algeria, changes in the French Army's campaign led to reforms, particularly in regard to countering the revolutionary ideology. Out of this revision came the reemergence of the use of French Army advisors to local governments and militia formations known as *Section Administrative Spécialisée*, or Special Administration Section (SAS) in Algeria. SAS involvement in raising and training indigenous forces to counter the revolutionary movement while simultaneously assisting local governmental structures provides insight into a well-intentioned program that still fell short of effectively integrating advisor and conventional force efforts.

Developed initially on the Corps of Native Affairs model used by the French in Morocco, the Corps of Algerian Affairs established SAS teams to serve in an administrative and military capacity at the local governmental level by assisting local leaders with administrative tasks. SAS officers also raised and trained local militia forces for protection and operations against the FLN and to counteract FLN influence among the rural Muslim population. The French Army created 400 SAS teams for use throughout Algeria with leaders fluent in Arabic and experts at Arab affairs.²⁴ These teams were trained in managing complex civic action programs and were targeted by the FLN because of their effectiveness in countering insurgent activities in the countryside.²⁵ Though the SAS officers were not strictly advisors to military formations, their efforts to integrate civil and military functions at the local level proved effective in furthering the French cause. By 1956, the French Army's *quadrillage* system²⁶ attempted to ensure SAS efforts at the local level were integrated with the battalion- and company-level static forces permanently

²⁴ Robert Cassidy, "The Long War: Indigenous Forces for Counterinsurgency," *Parameters* 36 (June 2006): 53.

²⁵ Cassidy, 54.

²⁶ "Quadrillage was the French Army term for their system of checkerboard garrisons and fortified posts, designed to impose a network of close territorial control in the greater part of Algeria north of the Sahara." Cassidy, 62.

assigned to the area.²⁷ Still, *quadrillage* never fully integrated SAS and conventional force efforts and mutual distrust persisted.

Like other advisors in other armies, the SAS were often at odds with their conventional counterparts. French conventional forces often looked down upon their SAS counterparts as overly sympathetic to the Muslim and Berber populations, while SAS officers viewed conventional French Army tactics as heavy-handed and detrimental to the mission of pacification.²⁸ As the FLN sought to ignite public furor over French Army tactics, the SAS rightly saw such tactics as counterproductive to winning the “hearts and minds” of the Muslim population, the very people with whom the French Army needed to hold sway to counteract the revolution. Though the French Army itself was largely effective in militarily stamping out the insurgency in Algeria, much was owed to the successful administration of SAS advisors in the Algerian countryside. However, the lack of cooperation between the SAS and conventional forces negated some of the potential benefits that could have been gained by a more effectively integrated effort.

Unlike the American Army in Korea and Vietnam, the French Army selected officers for service in the SAS who had a capacity for learning a foreign language and managing civic action programs. French officers selected for service in the SAS were already fluent in Arabic or Berber, quickly trained, and heavily influenced by the French loss in Indochina. They were generally compassionate toward the Muslim population they sought to inculcate with French values, or at least protect from nationalist influence. The French Army gave SAS officers wide latitude and substantial French government funding to improve conditions in their assigned districts, a heavy burden borne by relatively junior officers of the French Army. They were instructed to “encourage local industry, improve agricultural methods, stamp

²⁷ David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria: 1956-1958* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1963), 39.

²⁸ Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (New York: New York Review, 1977),

out corruption, and win back the confidence of the Muslim population.”²⁹ Unfortunately, the SAS officers and the intransigent French Army forces operating in the same battle space were often at odds over tactics, techniques, and procedures, particularly with respect to decreasing collateral civilian casualties in conventional operations. The heavy-handed tactics of French Army forces worked against the efforts of the SAS to deny sanctuary to FLN insurgents and increase cooperation amongst the Muslim population.

What can be gleaned from the French experience in Algeria is that even properly selected and trained officers who are not effectively integrated with conventional force efforts can negatively impact the overall operation. Separating SAS from conventional forces decreased cooperation, increased friction, and ensured mutual distrust not only between the SAS and conventional forces, but between the French Army and the rural Muslim population, as well as the local governance apparatuses. The lack of integration between advisors and conventional forces provided room for animosity and was deleterious to mission accomplishment. Instead, advisors must be properly selected, highly trained, and effectively integrated with concomitant conventional force efforts to gain the greatest possible utilization from such a small group of personnel.

The U.S. Army in Vietnam

The U.S. Army’s efforts to train advisors for service in Vietnam were vastly improved over previous efforts in Korea and more closely align with the preparation afforded to the French SAS. The genesis of support to the South Vietnamese Army following the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu was the Training Relations and Instruction Mission under the auspices of the Military Assistance Advisory Group

173.

²⁹ Edward Behr, “The Algerian Dilemma,” *International Affairs* 34, no. 3, (1958): 286.

(MAAG).³⁰ The Training Relations and Instruction Mission's charter was the 1954 Geneva Accords which allowed US Army advisors to train South Vietnamese forces south of the 17th Parallel.³¹ Beginning in 1962, three years before the first conventional units were sent to Vietnam, the United States Army Special Warfare School, the precursor to today's John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, conducted the Military Assistance Training Advisor (MATA) course for conventional and SOF advisors supporting the MAAG, and later the Military Assistance Command – Vietnam (MACV), operations in South Vietnam.³² The training, though largely tactically focused, was an improvement over efforts to train advisors for duty in Korea. Most obvious was the increased focus on understanding Vietnamese culture with 46 hours of Vietnamese language training and 57 hours of counterinsurgency training in addition to the tactical training.³³ The addition of language training exemplified the importance the Army placed on advisors developing a deeper rapport with their counterparts through a more meaningful and communicative relationship.

Additional training programs for advisors further underscored the Army's efforts to effectively prepare its officers and soldiers for advisory duties. The Army established two new military advisor courses in 1971 to replace the MATA course at Fort Bragg's Institute for Military Assistance.³⁴ Additionally, the Military Assistance Officer Command and Staff course was extended from 19 to 22 weeks, but was limited to prospective members of the Military Assistance Officer Program (MAOP),³⁵

³⁰ Cao Van Vien et al., 2.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ramsey, 40.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, *U.S. Department of the Army Historical Summary: FY1971* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1972), 35-36.

³⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, *U.S. Department of the Army Historical Summary: FY1971* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1972), 36.

the precursor to today's Foreign Area Officer (FAO) program. The Army's increase in training programs stateside for advisors represented a monumental shift in its view of advisory duty. Nevertheless, the Army's officer corps still never viewed advisor duty as particularly career-enhancing duty, especially later in the war, and selection for advisory duty remained all too random.

Selection of personnel for the training programs remained a difficult task for the Army and did not deviate sufficiently from the KMAG model. Essentially, if an advisor was qualified in his branch at his current rank, the Army assumed him qualified to be an advisor, generally without consideration of temperament, cultural adaptability, or language skill. Even after the Army incentivized various advisor programs with special pay, consideration for advanced civil schooling, guaranteed early consideration for promotion for officers in the rank of major, and command tour credit for captains,³⁶ few officers volunteered for advisor duty. In 1964, the Army commissioned the Rand Corporation to study the advisory effort in South Vietnam. Anthropologist Gerald Hickey conducted over 300 interviews with advisors in Vietnam and observed advisors' interaction with their counterparts to determine best practices.³⁷ His resulting recommendations included selection criteria for advisors, training programs, and changes to administrative procedures to improve the overall program. He proffered that advisors should first be volunteers, when possible, and then should be selected based on professionalism, adaptability to foreign cultures, temperament, language skills, and resistance to culture fatigue from too many deployments.³⁸ Developing critical language skills and cultural understanding in advisors has always required a balance between optimal training and time available, though efforts in Vietnam were a vast improvement over Korea.

³⁶ Ramsey, 39.

³⁷ Gerald Hickey and W.P. Davison, *The American Military Advisor and His Foreign Counterpart: The Case of Vietnam* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 1965), xi.

³⁸ Hickey and Davison, 28.

The Army recognized the importance of developing sound cultural understanding in its advisors, as evidenced by the dramatic increase in the amount of training provided to advisors in Vietnam. The advisors' training program blossomed from a mere four-week course, to six, and finally to 48 weeks for advisors destined for positions within the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program.³⁹ This program became the Army's MAOP and later the FAO program, and laid the foundation for developing culturally astute officers capable of serving in various politico-military officer positions across the Army. As highlighted earlier, efforts to improve advisor language skills were vastly improved as a challenging language regimen was required in each of the training programs. The most robust language training program was reserved for officers destined for CORDS. A future CORDS officer received 1,139 hours of language training at the Defense Language Institute prior to deployment.⁴⁰ By contrast, today's training program for advisors serving in Iraq and Afghanistan contains only 42 hours of language training.⁴¹ Though language training should not be considered the focal point of all advisor training nor can it be considered a panacea for improving the advisor training program, it does provide the future advisor the ability to communicate much more effectively with a counterpart and to better understand a cultural perspective different from his own. Unfortunately, a challenging language program is not enough if the personnel system fails to properly identify and select personnel for the program, particularly in selecting those with the aptitude to learn a foreign language.

Identification of the personnel necessary to populate an advisory effort generally met with a negative reaction from the U.S. Army's officer corps, particularly when major combat operations were concomitant. In 1967, Paul Gorman, a counterinsurgency expert and future Army four-star general,

³⁹ James Laughry, "Know Before You Go: Improving Army Officer Sociocultural Knowledge" (master's thesis, U.S. Army War College, 2008), 12-13.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 13.

⁴¹ Ibid, 20.

examined the U.S. military's foreign internal defense apparatus through a personnel, doctrine, materiel, and organization framework. He highlighted a reluctance to participate in advisory efforts by "main line" U.S. officers, even at the early stages of the Vietnam War. Further, he showed that the impetus for reform consistently met with resistance from the services because of "the inertia of three wars and two generations of oceanic and Europe-centered military policy... and public misunderstanding of the U.S. role in Latin America, Africa, and Asia."⁴² Gorman argued that the lack of priority given to advisory missions has symptomatically, among other things, led to a "scarcity of linguistically competent officers for assignment to overseas positions."⁴³ Gorman concluded by arguing that SFA was a complex and formidable task for which we were unprepared in 1967. He further suggested that the Army continued to inadequately prepare our personnel and programs for managing the complexity of SFA. General William Westmoreland identified the importance of the U.S. Army's advisory efforts in Vietnam in 1969 when, as Chief of Staff of the Army, he announced the establishment of the Military Assistance Officer Program (MAOP). He said that the Army needed "a fresh approach to meeting the challenges of this new dimension in warfare...I emphasized the necessity for action before the fact – prevention, not cure."⁴⁴ The program unfortunately was short-lived and suffered from lack of interest from the very officer corps it sought to train. Instead the FAO program was relegated to a minor functional area after the war.⁴⁵ Other studies sought to ascertain the efficacy of the American advisory effort from the foreign military forces' perspective.

⁴² Paul Gorman, "Internal Defense and the Less Developed Countries," from *Issues of National Security in the 1970's: Essays Presented to Colonel George A. Lincoln on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Amos A. Jordan and George Lincoln (New York, NY: Praeger, 1967), 130.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ William Westmoreland, (lecture, Annual Conference, Military Government Association, April 26, 1969).

⁴⁵ In 2009, there were 883 authorized FAO billets for Army officers in the ranks of major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel. The Army is authorized 69,000 officers; therefore, the FAO population represents approximately 1.3% of the Army's officer corps strength. U.S. Department of the Army, "2009 U.S. Army Posture Statement," <http://www.army.mil/aps/09/index.html> (accessed September

In 1963, Brigadier General Edward Lansdale commissioned a survey of foreign officers to identify qualities in American advisors they saw as necessary for successful interaction with their militaries. The survey identified key traits expected of U.S. advisors by the surveyed foreign officers. In order of importance, the foreign officers identified professional competence, language skills, accessibility, empathy, knowledge of the country and its politics, directness, enthusiasm, adaptability, patience, humor, and temper as personal characteristics desirable in advisors.⁴⁶ Additionally, the study identified tour lengths (minimum of two years) and accompaniment of dependents when feasible as desirable in a U.S. advisory program. Though two-year advisory tours are undoubtedly unsavory to most military personnel today, it could lend a sense of dedication to the mission heretofore unknown in advisory missions. Nevertheless, a robust element populated by knowledgeable and dedicated advisors would serve to address many of the shortcomings identified by these foreign officers. Improved identification and selection criteria, longer tours, and professional and cultural development inevitably leads to discussions of standing up an advisory element within the U.S. military capable of managing the complex task of advising indigenous forces. That argument quickly followed the drawdown from Vietnam and continues today.

Modern Theoretical and Doctrinal Advancements in Advising

Contrary to what critics have often suggested of the post-Vietnam Army, counterinsurgency and the concept of a standing, conventional advisory corps have remained topics of professional discourse. In 1970, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, U. Alexis Johnson, said that the Army is “going to have to assist in, and guide, the training of local forces to a degree that we have not done in the past... Having been associated with military assistance advisory groups over the years, I’ve often felt that one

22, 2009).

⁴⁶ Edward Lansdale, “Through Foreign Eyes,” *Selected Readings, USAF Counterinsurgency Course*, 7

thing that we needed, particularly on the ground, is a corps of military assistance advisers.”⁴⁷ The Department of State recognized the emerging requirement for an enduring military advisory capability, and the Department of Defense soon followed by commissioning a study on maintaining such a capability.

In 1975 the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) commissioned the Rand Corporation to “examine what a minimal counterinsurgency capability might look like and whether such a capability could be sustained in the U.S. armed forces.”⁴⁸ The study focused on the likelihood of U.S. military involvement in revolutionary activities in the 1970s, the U.S. military’s performance in past operations, the necessity for preserving or enhancing such a capability, and the reform necessary to effect such a change in the U.S. military’s force structure.⁴⁹ Rand studied U.S. military support to counterinsurgency operations in Asia and Latin America with a focus on the ability of military assistance advisory groups, conventional forces, specialized forces, or key individuals to enhance the capabilities of indigenous military forces. The study concluded that specialized forces were better at advising than regular or even advisory groups, and it otherwise concluded that the establishment of a Security Assistance Command was a better solution for enabling the Department of Defense to institutionalize such a capability. The study again noted the reluctance of individuals to volunteer for such assignment for fear of being labeled “unconventional,” something the Security Assistance Command’s political-military officer career field was meant to address.

October 1963.

⁴⁷ U. Alexis Johnson, “The Nixon Doctrine in the Period of a Decreasing Budget”, (lecture, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, 1970).

⁴⁸ H. Heymann, Jr. and W. W. Whitson, Can and Should the United States Preserve a Military Capability for Revolutionary Conflict (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1975), iii.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Other post-Vietnam era interpretations of SFA necessity were established in doctrine⁵⁰ and the writings of Major General Sydney Shachnow.⁵¹ Field Manual 100-20: *Low Intensity Conflict*, furthered the concept of a Security Assistance Force (SAF), previously labeled a Special Action Force (also SAF), as the nucleus of a US advisory mission in a foreign country. Doctrine and General Shachnow both advocated developing an advisory capacity within each of the U.S. Army Special Forces Groups. Already regionally focused, the Special Forces Groups would incorporate specialty conventional units and more effectively advise host nation forces at the tactical level with specific capabilities not available within the groups themselves, such as engineer or military police units. With the Special Forces Group as the optimal nucleus of the SAF, it could effectively staff a headquarters with assigned personnel and easily integrate units and liaisons from the attached conventional units. This SAF was uniquely capable of “handling the diverse challenges of non-conventional conflict that serve U.S. interests.”⁵² Unfortunately task organizing conventional units under SOF has generally met with resistance from the conventional commanders assigned the task.⁵³ Nevertheless, since FID is a SOF core task,⁵⁴ establishment of SAFs under the auspices of the SFGs has merit. More importantly, the publication of FM 100-20 in 1981 and the writing of MG Shachnow in 1995 show the Army’s more recent efforts to better understand and grasp the difficulties of training indigenous forces and provide plausible solutions for the task within an already established framework.

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 100-20: Low Intensity Conflict* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1981).

⁵¹ Sydney Shachnow, “As I Remember It: Notional ‘X’ Command,” *Special Warfare* Vol. 8 No. 4 (October 1995:15-17), 15.

⁵² David Maxwell, “Support to United Nations Operations: Is There a Role for United States Special Operations Forces?” (master’s thesis, Command and General Staff College, 1996), 27.

⁵³ Linda Robinson, *Masters of Chaos: the Secret History of the Special Forces* (Cambridge, MA: Public Affairs, 2004), 300.

⁵⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-05 *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2003), II-3.

The recommendations of Rand in 1975 and the introduction of the SAF in FM 100-20 established a precedent for later works on SFA institutionalization. In “Institutionalizing Adaptation: It’s Time for a Permanent Army Advisor Corps,” Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) John Nagl advocated for the development of a conventional advisory corps capable of responding to the emerging needs of the 21st Century U.S. National Military Strategy.⁵⁵ In *Building Partner Capacity/Security Force Assistance: A New Structural Paradigm*, Colonel Scott Wuenster further developed the concept of an advisory corps with an outline of the table of organization and equipment necessary to effect such an organization.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, the recognition following the Vietnam War of the necessity for a unified advisory effort never took shape as suggested, and the arguments proffered by Wuenster and Nagl have thus far gained little traction. Nevertheless, the various works’ principle assertions that the establishment of an advisory capability in the conventional force required a new approach to SFA still resonates in the discourse of military professionals today. This discourse persuaded the Army to relook its early advisory efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and develop a more comprehensive solution.

In order to capitalize on lessons learned from each of the previous experiences outlined, an effort to prepare advisors more effectively for overseas duty is warranted. Since U.S. and French advisory efforts abroad have resulted in less than optimal results, particularly regarding integration with conventional forces, it is necessary to develop more effective training mechanisms to facilitate the institutionalization of SFA as more than a task, but a core competency of the U.S. Army at the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) level. To do so, current coalition programs must be analyzed to provide comparative examples for improving the U.S. Army’s training mechanisms.

⁵⁵ John Nagl, “Institutionalizing Adaptation: It’s Time for a Permanent Army Advisor Corps,” *Military Review* (September-October 2008): 21.

⁵⁶ Scott Wuestner, *Building Partner Capacity/Security Force Assistance: A New Structural Paradigm* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), 43.

Current Joint and Coalition Training Programs

The U.S. Marine Corps has a long history of advising indigenous forces, particularly in the early 20th Century. It recently established the Marine Special Operations Advisory Group (MSOAG) as an element with the unique capability of advising foreign military forces. In 2009, the Marine Special Operations Regiment subsequently deactivated the MSOAG and rolled those functions into the 3rd and 4th Marine Special Operations Battalions. The USMC is also providing the Fleet Marine Force with the same capability through the Marine Corps Training and Advisor Group (MCTAG). The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) provided advisors to Afghanistan under the auspices of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) program. Though the various nations' training programs are disparate across NATO, they provide insight into the capability of coalition partners to identify, select, train, and employ advisors in Afghanistan. The coalition and joint programs have relevance to the U.S. Army as both comparative and complementary tools.

U.S. Marine Corps Advisor System

The United States Marine Corps established the Foreign Military Training Unit (FMTU) in 2006 under the auspices of the Security Cooperation Education and Training Center (SCETC) with the mission of preparing Marines to advise, teach, and assist foreign military personnel through the U.S. Department of Defense's mission of Foreign Internal Defense. In May 2007, the FMTU became part of the USMC Special Operations Command (MARSOC) and was renamed the Marine Special Operations Advisor Group (MSOAG).⁵⁷ As such, the resident advisory capacity of the US Marine Corps currently lies within the MARSOC, which works for the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) rather than the USMC. Unlike the conventional U.S. Army or NATO partners, the MSOAG retains an active, solely-

⁵⁷ U.S. Marine Corps Special Operations Command, "Special Operations Command Milestones," U.S. Marine Corps, <http://www.marsoc.usmc.mil/stories.html>, (accessed September 23, 2009).

focused, and dedicated advisory unit capable of conducting SFA anywhere in the world. This resident capacity enhances MARSOC's ability to respond quickly to emerging needs, maintain a cadre of trained advisors within one unit, and provide a standardized selection, training, and utilization mechanism. Unfortunately, that capability, as outlined above, no longer belongs to the Marine Corps, but rather to USSOCOM. In November 2007, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, realizing a lost capacity for advisor support, established the Marine Corps Training and Advisor Group (MCTAG)⁵⁸ at Fort Storey, Virginia, with the mission of training conventional Marine forces for advisor duty. The establishment of the MCTAG provides the USMC with the command and control structure necessary to provide the best training possible to future advisors while maintaining relevance through effective communication with past advisors. However, the MCTAG must still ensure that Marines with the proper knowledge, skills, and abilities are assigned to the organization.

In 2008, the USMC assigned Marines to advisor duty following U.S. Army models. In other words, Marines were assigned in an ad hoc manner without regard to personal or professional suitability for the mission, a deficiency the MCTAG was meant to address.⁵⁹ With 1,300 Marine advisors deployed in 2008,⁶⁰ the challenge paramount in the Marine Corps system is providing effective advisors while limiting the impact on the Marine Expeditionary Forces. By separating the MCTAG from the expeditionary forces, the USMC intends to reduce overhead training requirements on the Fleet Marine Force while providing a resident capacity for advisor support under one headquarters. Although this approach certainly has its benefits (i.e. repository for lessons learned, responsiveness to theater requirement changes, and a single point of generation for advisor forces), it does little to prevent the

⁵⁸ Thomas Grattan, "Marine Corps Training and Advisor Group: the Way Ahead," *Marine Corps Gazette* 92 (April 2008): 34.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

potential divisiveness between advisors and conventional forces in theater, as evidenced in Korea, Vietnam, and Algeria. How the MCTAG will structure advisory teams vis-à-vis other Marine forces in theater and under what command support relationship they will work requires further analysis and consideration. Nevertheless, by placing the onus of training, equipping, and preparing Marines for advisor duty under one command, the MCTAG, the USMC has established a system the Army should further analyze for efficacy.

Until the MCTAG is formally established and operational in FY2012, the Marine Corps' advisor training model continues to be similar to the Army's, in that it includes individual, collective, and advisor-specific tasks for all Marines. Upon completion of training with the advisor team's parent unit, the Marine Expeditionary Force sends its teams to Twenty-nine Palms, California to conduct the final phase of training under the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command's Advisor Training Group. The specific advisor training model is 19 days in length for Iraq-bound and 21 days for Afghanistan-bound advisors and includes a four-day core program with courses on counterinsurgency, rule of law, culture, and weapons training. Additionally, two days of training specific to the individual advisor's duty position in theater are conducted followed by a two-day situational training exercise. The training program culminates with a three-day mission rehearsal exercise.⁶¹ Writing for the Marine Corps Gazette in 2006, two Marine officers, Andrew Milburn and Mark Lombard, noted several deficiencies in the Marine Corps training model. In particular, they identified a lack of language and cultural training, among others.⁶² These advisor skills are outlined specifically in FM 3-07.1 as necessary individual training prerequisites during deployment preparation.⁶³ Milburn and Lombard also noted that the

⁶¹ U.S. Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, "Advisor Training Group 101 Brief," U.S. Marine Corps, <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/base/atg/> (accessed 23 September 2009).

⁶² Andrew Milburn and Mark Lombard, "Marine Foreign Military Advisors: The Road Ahead," *Marine Corps Gazette* 89 (April 2008): 64-65.

⁶³ U.S. Department of the Army *Field Manual 3-07.1 Security Force Assistance* (Washington, DC:

disparate programs for advisors bound for Iraq and Afghanistan and advisors bound for other geographic locations hindered the Marine Corps' ability to standardize training, capture and incorporate lessons learned, and better prepare future advisors, again deficiencies the MCTAG should address.

No collective training program is without its critics. Training programs in the Marine Corps, at least outside of MSOAG, follow a similar training model as the U.S. Army. Both are overly tactically focused, neglecting the more important skills of communication, negotiation, influence, and rapport building. Nevertheless, the focus on individual and collective tactical training provides a generic baseline for all teams to conduct combat operations abroad. This emphasis on enabling skills, as outlined in FM 3-07.1, is necessary in any training program to provide advisor teams the ability to support Foreign Security Forces with artillery, air support, and ground and air combat evacuation, as well as defend and move themselves in theater. The individual and collective enabling skills are also necessary for providing teams with the ability to remain self-sufficient in often austere and remote environments far from other coalition forces. Finding the balance between individual and collective tactical training and other advisor-specific enabling skills will remain difficult in an era of persistent conflict where time, manpower, and resources are in short supply.

The U.S. Marine Corps' limited manpower resources and lean career progression model make filling advisory teams a vital issue, particularly in regard to advancement. In 2008, U.S. Marine Corps Commandant James Conway issued a policy to the Corps' promotion boards that advisory duty would be considered on an equal footing with traditional officer billets.⁶⁴ Unfortunately the perception that advisory duty is not career enhancing still permeates throughout the officer corps. An unnamed Marine Corps field-grade officer recently returned from a transition team assignment in Iraq stated that though

Government Printing Office, 2009), 7-4.

⁶⁴ Kimberly Johnson, "Corps: End Piecemeal Transition Teams," *Marine Corps Times* (February 13, 2008).

“the official stance is that [transition teams] are a positive thing...quite a few of my peers and seniors thought I was leaving the traditional career path and jeopardizing my career when I said I wanted to join a [transition team].”⁶⁵ In both the Army and Marine Corps, board guidance does little to allay the fears of officers over their potential for advancement and command. Though far from expressing the views of the entire Marine Corps officer population, the unnamed officer’s comments elucidate a common view in both the Army and Marine Corps that advisory duty is superfluous or even detrimental to career advancement.

NATO’s Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team Program

The need for advisory teams in the contemporary operating environment led to the establishment of the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) program sponsored by NATO in 2006.⁶⁶ Twenty-seven nations contribute to the program⁶⁷ with various training programs to prepare their advisors for the task of advising the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and more specifically the Afghan National Army (ANA). The OMLT training program consists of three preparatory phases: 1) training provided by the host-nation government to its own forces, 2) training conducted by NATO, and 3) in-country training.⁶⁸ Additionally, relief-in-place training is conducted by the outgoing advisory team. The host-nation training conducted at home station prior to deployment is not necessarily standardized;

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Obaid Younossi et al., *The Long March: Building an Afghan National Army* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2009), 36.

⁶⁷ Current contributing nations are: Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “NATO OMLT fact sheet,” NATO, www.natootan.org/isaf/topics/factsheets/omlt-factsheet.pdf (accessed 16 November 2009).

⁶⁸ Jan Erik Haug, “The Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team Program as a Model for Assisting the Development of an Effective Afghan National Army” (master’s thesis, Command and General Staff College, 2009), 50.

however, host nations' militaries conduct NATO-recommended training to varying levels of efficacy. Lengths of the home station training are also not standardized. For example, the Norwegian OMLT program includes nine months of training prior to phase two, obviously a much more robust training regimen than offered by the U.S. Army. Phase two training for the battalion-level advisory teams is conducted by NATO at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center at Hohenfels, Germany and includes two weeks of tactically focused training with some interspersed cultural training. For brigade-level and above advisory teams, NATO conducts a staff-centric phase two program at the Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz, Poland. Phase three training for all teams is three days and conducted in Afghanistan by Headquarters, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Afterwards, teams conduct relief-in-place training with the advisory team being replaced in conjunction with the ANA unit.

Under the auspices of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386,⁶⁹ NATO maintains 59 teams spread across all five regions of Afghanistan. Challenges for inculcating advisor tenets among many nations' militaries are numerous, and perhaps the most glaring difficulty is a common operating language. Given the disparate native languages of the various contributing nations, a common language in Afghanistan is an increasingly difficult challenge for the OMLTs and ISAF. Equipped with English language translation manuals for their Afghan counterparts and the need to converse with other NATO counterparts, non-native English speakers from NATO-contributing nations face the unenviable challenge of translating to and from not only English, but Pashtu or Dari, and their native language, as well.⁷⁰

The latitude afforded the contributing nations of NATO in preparing their own OMLTs during phase one underscores the likelihood of disparity in team preparation. NATO gives each nation guidelines for necessary training through the issuance of an OMLT handbook, which includes "ISAF

⁶⁹ United Nations Security Council, "Resolution 1386," United Nations, <http://daccess-ods.un.org/TMP/4694634.07993317.html> (accessed January 21, 2010).

mission familiarization, weapons qualification, first aid, mine awareness, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) hazards and how to counter these threats, rules of engagement, law of war, NBC defense, driver training and handling of enemy personnel and equipment.”⁷¹ These topics largely mirror training currently conducted by the US Army. Though training is dictated, or at least recommended, by NATO, personnel identification and selection is left to the individual nation contributing the OMLT. With only a basic guideline for rank and military specialty, each nation is left to their own devices in manning the OMLTs. This is not unlike a Geographic Combatant Commander asking the U.S. Army or USMC for an Embedded Training Team (ETT) based on rank and specialty; however, given the disparate quality of other nations’ militaries and the restrictions or caveats applied by the host nation’s government on the OMLT’s combat activities, the consequences could be far more ominous.

The disparity in quality and training and language differences again contribute to difficulties in integrating coalition OMLTs, conventional forces, and U.S. advisor teams, creating gaps in which friction and conflict can develop. OMLTs assigned to work within an American BCT’s area of responsibility will first face the difficulty of language and second the real possibility of unintentionally increasing tensions between conventional and Afghan units. Unlike French efforts in Algeria and U.S. efforts in Korea and Vietnam where a common operating language was understood, OMLTs must integrate themselves into a foreign command structure (U.S.-led NATO) while simultaneously advising and influencing another foreign command structure (Afghan National Army).

The efficacy of the OMLT program is germane to how the U.S. Army selects, trains, and deploys advisors because it offers a contemporary and valuable model for ascertaining lessons learned, practices, and procedures. Additionally, OMLTs will undoubtedly serve alongside or in support of U.S. Brigade

⁷⁰ Haug, 65.

⁷¹ Haug, 51.

Combat Teams in Afghanistan, if not elsewhere. Finally, how the U.S. Army conducts training and preparation for deployments is often emulated by other nations, and establishing a viable program to provide effective conventional force advisors to indigenous forces could establish a precedent for other nations to follow.

Recent U.S. Army Training, Policies, and Procedures

The U.S. Army's current training, policies, and procedures are a departure from earlier efforts to identify, select, and train advisors for duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, as explained earlier. The establishment of headquarters, both stateside with the 1st Infantry Division and forward-deployed with the Iraqi Assistance Group in Iraq, as an example, greatly enhanced the Army's ability to standardize training and utilize advisors in theater. The Army initiated training at Fort Riley, Kansas under the auspices of the 1st Infantry Division in 2006 to ensure transition teams received a standardized training package in preparation for deployment. The Army created the 162nd Infantry Brigade at Fort Polk, Louisiana in March 2009 with the task of training advisors for duty in both Afghanistan and Iraq, thus relieving the 1st Infantry Division of the responsibility and linking the advisory training with the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk.⁷² In-theater management of advisors changed as well.

Advisors in Iraq were managed by the Iraqi Assistance Group from 2005 to 2009. The Deputy Commanding General of the 1st Infantry Division commanded the Iraqi Assistance Group in theater, creating an indelible link to both the command and the training at Fort Riley. The Iraqi Assistance Group was dissolved on June 3, 2009, and its duties and responsibilities were absorbed by the Multi-National

⁷² U.S. Department of the Army, "Army Announces Force Structure Actions for Fort Polk, LA," U.S. Army, <http://www.army.mil/-newsreleases/2008/09/25/12704-army-announces-force-structure-actions-for-fort-polk-la/> (accessed November 17, 2009).

Corps-Iraq staff.⁷³ In Afghanistan, advisors are currently subsumed under Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix (CJTF-Phoenix) and the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A).⁷⁴ CJTF-Phoenix, manned primarily by a BCT from the U.S. Army National Guard, has recently transitioned to a two-brigade set populated by both a National Guard BCT and an active duty BCT under the new Advise and Assist Brigade (AAB) construct.

The difficulty of integrating transition teams with conventional forces unfortunately remained. In Iraq, the Iraqi Assistance Group retained administrative control of the transition teams while battle-space owners managed them tactically. The Iraqi Assistance Group and CSTC-A models failed to provide the necessary integration between transition teams and conventional units so vital to congruent operations. As seen in all previous advisor efforts, integration of these two lines of effort must be effected to achieve optimal results. In 2009, the U.S. Army established the Advise and Assist Brigade construct to address these shortcomings.⁷⁵

The establishment of the AAB concept in 2009 applied FM 100-20's SAF concept to a conventional BCT. Given the SFA mission, an AAB would accept attachments of external advisor team members, primarily field grade officers, and other modular units to conduct SFA in Iraq and Afghanistan. Not dissimilar to the SAF construct as outlined in FM 100-20 in 1981, the AAB, instead of the Special Forces Group, provides the framework for establishing an effective SFA force. With the Army's increased emphasis on utilizing the BCT formation to manage complex environments, increasing cultural

⁷³ Multi-National Corps – Iraq press release, June 3, 2009, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2009/06/mil-090603-mnfi01.htm> (accessed November 16, 2009).

⁷⁴ Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan website, <http://www.cstc-a.com/> (accessed November 17, 2009).

⁷⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, "Deploying Brigade to Test Advise and Assist Concept," U.S. Army, <http://www.army.mil/-news/2009/05/01/20528-deploying-brigade-to-test-advise-and-assist-concept/> (accessed November 17, 2009).

understanding in its officers and soldiers, and thoroughly preparing units prior to deployment, it is certainly plausible that a BCT could effectively conduct SFA in any environment if allotted the appropriate time for preparation and training. Employment of the AAB is in its infancy, but the concept should help assuage some of the problems of advisor team integration with U.S. units in theater, as evidenced by all previously outlined efforts.

Manning the advisor teams also changed significantly under the AAB construct. Brigade Combat Teams identified for deployment as an AAB are now augmented with a Stability/Support-Transition Team (S-TT), a complement of field grade officers assigned directly to the AAB as augmentees for the advisory mission. The onus for training the Stability/Support-Transition Teams falls on the AAB itself rather than an external training organization, although newly formed AABs are still relying on a two-week training package from the 162nd Infantry Brigade in addition to their parent brigade's individual and collective training requirements. This is a significant departure from earlier advisor team organizations and is heavily reliant on an external pool of field grade officers in the rank of major and lieutenant colonel. The external contingent of field grade officers can be parsed out based on requirements in the AAB's area of responsibility, and subordinate advisor team members are assigned from within the AAB itself. The AAB design is relatively new and tactics, techniques, and procedures are emerging from the first AABs deployed in 2009. It is too early to determine the efficacy of the AAB construct, though the concept does have precedent in the U.S. Army's FM 100-20 and will undoubtedly improve integration between advisory and conventional efforts. Nevertheless, manning the S-TTs will remain a significant challenge for the Army as the shortage of officers in the rank of major⁷⁶ continues to hamstring efforts to fill requirements across the Army.

⁷⁶ Charles Henning, "Army Officer Shortages: Background and Issues for Congress," (Congressional Research Service: Library of Congress, 2006), 2.

The Army generally approaches filling less-than-desirable mission requirements by offering incentives, as seen earlier in Vietnam. In the past few years, the Army's advisory efforts were incentivized with guaranteed follow-on assignments of choice, the Home-base and Advanced Assignment Program (HAAP),⁷⁷ and fulfillment of key and developmental requirements for promotion of majors to lieutenant colonel in an effort to improve the acceptance of the officer and non-commissioned officer corps. It is difficult to determine whether or not such incentives as family stability and professional reward encourage suitable volunteers for these missions. However, the Army has determined that incentivizing such assignments is necessary to ensure officers are neither prejudiced by assignments to advisory missions nor discouraged from volunteering based on career implications. These important incentive programs may temporarily increase the officer corps' acceptance of the advisory mission as worthy of assignment consideration; unfortunately, such incentives do little to either ensure the volunteer's suitability for advisory duty or prove to the individual officer the Army's commitment to an enduring program. Nevertheless, the Army's advisor program still has challenges as the institutionalization of SFA and requirements of Geographic Combatant Commanders potentially outpace outdated personnel and promotion systems.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates identified an enduring issue for the military as "whether personnel and promotions systems designed to reward the command of American troops will be able to reflect the importance of advising, training, and equipping foreign troops – something still not considered a career-enhancing path for the best and brightest officers."⁷⁸ In contrast to that argument, Army Vice

⁷⁷ Home-base and Advanced Assignment Program is a two-part program outlined in *Army Regulation 614-100, Officer Assignment Policies, Details, and Transfers*. Officers are afforded the opportunity to leave family members at their current "home-base" while the officer deploys on a dependent-restricted 12-month tour overseas. The second option is for the officer to permanently change station, move his family and household goods to the new station, and be guaranteed a move to that station upon completion of the dependent-restricted 12-month tour.

⁷⁸ Robert Gates, "A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age," *Foreign Affairs*, Jan-Feb 2009.

Chief of Staff General Peter Chiarelli stated that “I don’t believe it is in the military’s best interest to establish a permanent ‘Training Corps’ in the conventional military to develop other countries’ indigenous security forces.”⁷⁹ He argued that conventional brigade combat teams are capable of transitioning through full spectrum operations and already possess the inherent flexibility required to train foreign security forces with their existing force structure. Since the Army has resisted efforts to force a structural change in adapting a standing advisory corps, it has instead decided to equip the AAB with the personnel necessary to train foreign security forces. Therefore, the onus is on the AAB commander for establishing effective SFA advisory teams, as appropriate given the conditions in the brigade’s area of responsibility, and providing the necessary logistical and operational support for the teams within the brigade. Advocates of this approach insist an AAB is quite capable of managing full-spectrum operations.⁸⁰ The recent experiences of the U.S. Army in Iraq and Afghanistan underscore the ability of brigade-sized units to transcend through all levels of conflict in their assigned area of operation. By integrating the advisor teams within the brigade, conflict between advisors and conventional units is potentially averted by assimilating efforts under a single command. By establishing unities of effort and purpose, the brigade commander becomes a stakeholder in the progress of foreign security forces being trained, particularly since the advisor teams are comprised exclusively of that brigade’s soldiers. Since the AAB is the way ahead for the Army in the near term, a thorough analysis of the mechanisms for identifying and selecting advisors and the training apparatus is necessary to more effectively generate quality personnel to support the AAB construct.

⁷⁹ Peter Chiarelli and Stephen Smith, “Learning From Our Modern Wars: The Imperatives of Preparing for a Dangerous Future,” *Military Review* (September 2007: 2-15), 8.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Analysis of Selection and Training

Preparation of advisors for duty abroad must be analyzed in order to better recognize the individual traits necessary to perform in complex environments. Adaptable leadership is necessary in such environments, and the Army has conducted much research in this area, particularly in respect to special operations forces. Since the Army's Officer Education System provides the foundation for inculcating newly commissioned lieutenants with Army values, establishing behavioral norms, and preparing officers to deal with complex and, to a lesser extent, ambiguous environments, advisor training must focus more specifically on the more malleable traits of human cognitive ability. Since adaptability and psychological hardiness are necessary in advisory duty, any training program must incorporate the appropriate selection and training apparatuses required to improve these traits.

Human adaptability traits range from stable to malleable and are correspondingly trainable from less to more; thus stable attributes such as cognitive ability, resiliency, and tolerance for ambiguity are least trainable while domain-specific knowledge and varied adaptive experiences are most trainable. The Army's education system provides the structure for establishing and building upon the less trainable attributes, and career progression provides each individual officer with the formative experiences necessary to perform at the tactical level. The more trainable attributes are more critical in complex, perhaps vague situations, such as advisory duty, to improve an officer's capacity for dealing with the inherent ambiguity such positions inevitably entail. Effecting change in such situations requires not only an adaptive personality but a preparatory training experience equal to the task at hand.

The Army's concept of developing adaptable leaders focuses on developing individuals who understand why and when change is necessary based on training, assumptions, and meta-cognition. Research conducted in 2005 by the Army Research Institute studied "adaptability behaviors, characteristics related to adaptability, and effective training interventions to present concrete recommendations for developing adaptable leaders via the three pillars of Army training:

institutional, operational, and self-development.”⁸¹ The study suggested “that training interventions should incorporate as many opportunities as possible for emerging leaders to be exposed to situations requiring adaptability...and an iterative process of practice, feedback, and practice is a necessary part of development.”⁸² Since challenging training models such as the Army’s Special Forces Assessment and Selection course continue to rely on such situational training to teach and assess adaptability, the Army does recognize a direct correlation between adaptability and training. The Army Research Institute contended that training may not necessarily enhance one’s ability to become adaptive; however, it did suggest that certain measurable characteristics may improve adaptive behavior.

One measure of a candidate’s aptitude for training indigenous forces is the Cultural Situations Judgment Test, or Cultural Assimilator, that “presents situations based on critical incidents in another culture and asks the respondent to analyze the situation and identify an appropriate approach.”⁸³ Current training regimens rely heavily on situation training exercises to examine a potential advisor’s situational response in a particularly complex environment. Situational training exercises are valuable in assessing responses from individuals in new and difficult situations, particularly in the context of another culture. The situational training exercise itself becomes a varied adaptive experience and improves malleable, thus trainable, attributes. These types of immersive training experiences are necessary for assessing an individual’s ability to cope in such situations, can serve as measures of predictability and reliability, and

⁸¹ Mueller-Hanson, et al., *Training Adaptable Leaders: Lessons From Research and Practice*, (Arlington, VA: Army Research Institute, 2005), 2.

⁸² *Ibid*, 9.

⁸³ Teresa Russell, et al., “Technical Report – 1033: Development of a Roadmap for Special Forces Selection and Classification,” (Alexandria, VA: U.S. Department of the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 1995), 64.

provide the individual officer with a repertoire of experiences from which he can draw in future situations.

As a target for training, the Army Research Institute identified personal, cognitive, and interpersonal characteristics most likely to contribute to a successful training model's assessment of adaptability in an individual. Researchers identified self-efficacy, resilience, openness, achievement motivation, and other personality variables, notably ambiguity tolerance, as key to demonstrating an ability to adapt to complex environments. Cognitive skills were identified as a general cognitive ability, problem-solving and decision-making skills, and meta-cognition. Interpersonal characteristics were identified as communication skills and awareness of self and others. Many of these characteristics can be taught and assessed and provide a foundation for any adaptability training. Instinctively, an adaptable leader will apply mental models based on previous experiences, training or real-life, in order to better understand the system in which he finds himself, adapt to it, and improve. According to the Army Research Institute's study, malleable attributes on the right of the spectrum (see figure 1) are more trainable and should be the focus of adaptability training programs.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ U.S. Department of the Army Research Institute, *Training Adaptable Leaders: Lessons from Research and Practice* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 8.

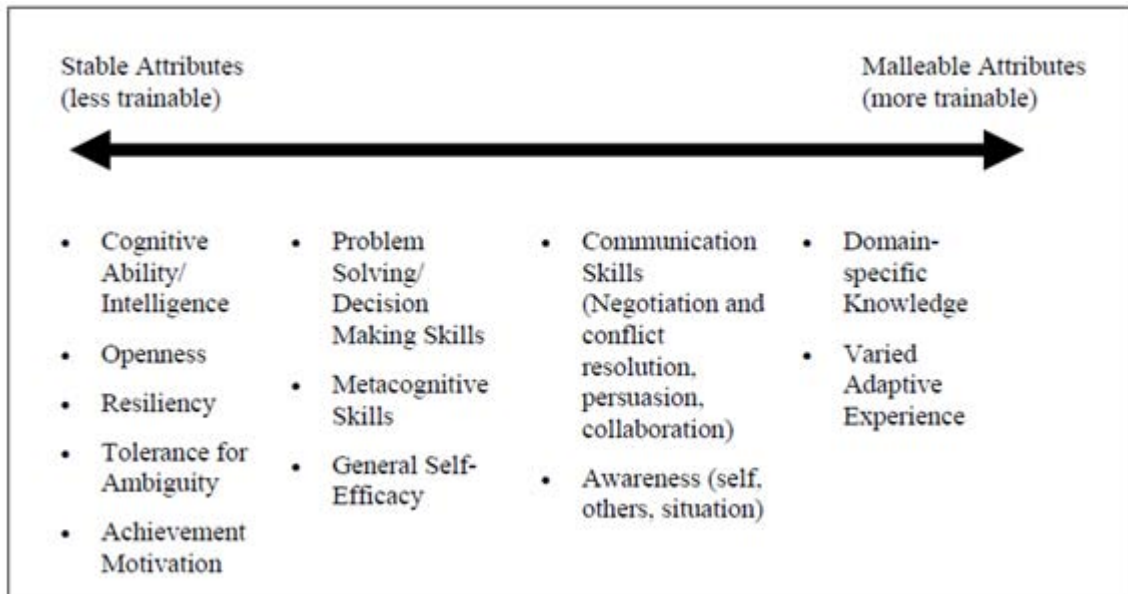


Figure 1: Trainability Continuum for Characteristics Related to Adaptability, Army Research Institute Research Report 1844, *Training Adaptable Leaders: Lessons from Research and Practice*.

The more malleable attribute of domain-specific knowledge should be inherent in any training program for future advisors. Domain specific knowledge is enhanced through participation in graduate education, cultural awareness and immersion training, and regionally specific training conducted prior to deployment. These educational opportunities also provide an awareness of self and others, particularly in relation to the culture in which an advisor might serve. Communication skills, both written and verbal, are improved through the interaction between the student and instructor and the student and peers and serve to increase the advisor's awareness of self and others. This increased self-awareness, particularly in dealing with foreign cultures, improves the ability of the advisor to manage complex situations in potentially ambiguous environments through a deeper understanding of relationship building. As an integral component of domain specific knowledge, language training can also help bridge the communication gap between the advisor and his counterpart. Improving such communication should include a language component relevant to the future assignment as full participation in communication requires common understanding.

Language opportunities abound in the U.S. Army as an increased awareness of its value has influenced the Army to educate its soldiers in foreign cultures through an understanding of native languages. The Defense Language Institute, free access to Rosetta Stone language training software, and local training programs all serve to prepare leaders for complex adaptive environments in foreign countries. In addition to language training, Leonard Wong, in *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom*, identified that immersion in a foreign culture vastly different than the U.S. also serves to improve a leader's adaptability.⁸⁵ An excellent example of this is the Army's FAO program. As part of their three-year certification process and upon attendance at the Defense Language Institute, FAOs are required to serve for one year in a foreign country to immerse themselves in that country's culture and language.⁸⁶ This unique opportunity is unfortunately not required and rarely offered to the remainder of the officer corps,⁸⁷ thus personnel selected for advisory duty generally need at least rudimentary instruction in foreign language and culture.

Other tools for predicting success in a complex environment include the Dispositional Resilience Scale, otherwise known as the Hardiness Scale. Paul T. Bartone, et al. in *Psychological Hardiness Predicts Success in US Army Special Forces Candidates*, concluded that such tools "predict success in high demand assessment and selection programs [and] may also help in the design of training approaches to increase soldier resilience in the face of sustained stressors."⁸⁸ Research conducted on soldiers attending the Army's Special Forces Assessment and Selection showed that psychological hardiness had a

⁸⁵ Leonard Wong, *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2004), 2.

⁸⁶ U.S. Department of the Army *Pamphlet 600-3, Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 258.

⁸⁷ One notable example is the Olmstead Scholar Program which funds graduate education abroad for up to 10 U.S. Army officers annually. www.olmsteadfoundation.org (accessed April 6, 2010).

⁸⁸ Paul Bartone, et al., "Psychological Hardiness Predicts Success in US Army Special Forces Candidates," *International Journal of Selection and Assessment* vol. 16, no. 1, (March 2008): 78.

direct correlation to graduation success rates and could serve as an effective predictor of program success. The study associated hardiness with individual resilience, physical and emotional health, and performance in stressful training situations. Individuals with high hardiness ratings exhibit a commitment to work, are actively engaged in the world around them, believe they can control or influence their situation, and are internally motivated.⁸⁹ High stress environments, such as advising foreign forces with limited resources, require a personal psychological capacity for adapting to such complex situations, as evidenced earlier in the stable traits of the Army Research Institute's study. Using the Dispositional Resilience Scale, identifying soldiers capable of adapting to sustained stressors before selection for an advisory mission could assist in establishing a baseline for instruction and improving success in a challenging training program. Since hardiness and adaptability are inextricably linked, the Army must also understand that future advisors will likely have extensive experience in Iraq and Afghanistan that will affect how training should be conducted.

The experience of the Army's junior leaders in Afghanistan and Iraq will impact any future training necessary for advisors. Leonard Wong asserted that adaptive leaders are being quickly developed by the environment in Iraq.⁹⁰ Company grade officers and other junior leaders are required to quickly transition from combat operations to stability operations and back again. This adaptability in a highly complex environment is an effective training tool that must be harnessed and encouraged in leaders of the future Army. Senior leaders must identify that Iraq and Afghanistan are providing very effective training for our junior leaders, harness that creativity and adaptability, and adjust old training programs to fit the new realities. Assuming that an advisor will already have served as a leader in one of these environments, it will be necessary to understand that those leaders have already experienced a complex, ambiguous environment and the advisor training program must be adjusted to incorporate that reality. However,

⁸⁹ Bartone, 78.

experience in a combat environment should not be considered an effective indicator of future success as an advisor since some combat-experienced personnel would still prove unsuitable for advisor duties.

Given mechanisms for implementing criteria such as hardiness and adaptability as part of a training model, attrition will result, and any selection or training model likely to include attrition must be able to entice a larger pool of applicants than are required for the mission. More simply, more personnel must apply than can be expected to graduate from such a training program. The Army's training and education system has many models that include robust attrition such as Special Forces Assessment and Selection, Ranger School, and even Basic Combat Training. The incentives required to feed an attrition training model are generally based on expected results. For example, the Special Warfare Center offers soldiers who pass the Special Forces Assessment and Selection course the opportunity to attend the Special Forces Qualification Course and serve on an Operational Detachment-Alpha (ODA) upon completion of all training requirements. The Army allows Ranger School graduates to wear the coveted Ranger tab for the remainder of their careers, and in the case of Ranger Regiment soldiers, to continue service in the Regiment. These training programs also benefit from years of experience and excellent reputations within the Army and defense community. Thus, membership in the elite Special Forces or Ranger community is often incentive enough to entice applicants to apply for the arduous and lengthy programs. The Army's advisor training program has no such incentives or reputation, though efforts have been made by the Army recently to improve the rewards of advisory duty.

Recent incentives for volunteer advisors, as stated previously, have included follow-on assignments of choice, the Home-base and Advanced Assignment Program, and fulfillment of key and developmental promotion requirements. Such incentives are quite similar to incentives offered during the Vietnam War. In each case, the incentives were somewhat effective in filling short-term manning

⁹⁰ Wong, 2.

requirements but did little to support the establishment of a viable, long-term program. The incentives provided the necessary forces to meet immediate needs, but the establishment of a corps of advisors never materialized as individual officers returned to their basic branches following advisor tours. These incentive programs may temporarily increase the officer corps' acceptance of the advisory mission as worthy of assignment consideration; unfortunately, such incentives do little to either ensure the volunteer's suitability for advisory duty or confirm the Army's commitment to an enduring program. And it is specifically the Army's senior captains⁹¹ and majors that must be convinced that service as an advisor is not detrimental to career progression.

Majors in the Army today, knowing full well that advisory duty qualifies an officer for promotion to lieutenant colonel, will still opt to complete another key and developmental position in hopes of ensuring promotion, and more importantly competitiveness for battalion command. Conventional wisdom holds that consideration for battalion command, a gateway position for further promotion, is predicated on the types of billets held as a major. Thus, majors serving in an advisory capacity as their key and developmental position would not likely be considered competitive for a tactical battalion command, as their experiences as a major would be outside a battalion construct. Unlike Special Forces Assessment and Selection or Ranger School, the incentive to complete advisory duty is not commensurate with the risk to an officer's career. Until the Army recognizes that the best majors will not volunteer for advisory duty until career implications are resolved, it will continue to struggle to fill these essential positions with capable and suitable officers.

The Army's model for preparing an Advise and Assist Brigade to conduct SFA is provided in FM 3-07.1; unfortunately, the manual falls short in developing the framework for preparing SFA teams to

⁹¹ A senior captain is a captain who has completed basic branch requirements for promotion to major. For example, Infantry branch's requirements for promotion are graduation from the Maneuver Captain Career Course and successful completion of 12 to 24 months of company command.

train indigenous forces. The SFA training model offered in the manual⁹² is limited in scope to pre-deployment preparation and offers useful, yet shallow, guidance on implementing a proper training strategy. Since the propensity of the Army's manning systems is to fully populate a unit identified for deployment as late as 90 days prior to departure, the brigade's SFA training model is, by necessity, limited in scope to tactical training focused on force protection and survivability, shortcomings previously identified in models for Iraq and Afghanistan. By assigning externally-sourced SFA personnel so late in the deployment preparation cycle, training is unfortunately relegated to team-building exercises to marginally improve the SFA teams' tactical capabilities. The result is often on-the-job training in the theater of operations, as seen previously in the Korean War example, limiting the team's ability to affect operations early in the deployment cycle. Only through a more cogent and comprehensive strategy will the Army improve the AAB's ability to effectively conduct SFA.

⁹² U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-07.1 Security Force Assistance* Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 2-5.

Future Model

The 2008 United States National Defense Strategy addresses the need for the Department of Defense to develop the capacity for assisting partner nations with their own internal and external security. The strategy specifically states that “the most important military component of the struggle against violent extremists is not the fighting we do ourselves, but how well we help prepare our partners to defend and govern themselves.”⁹³ The Army must rise to the challenges of the 21st Century by creating the force structure necessary to meet these emerging threats. It can do so by more effectively institutionalizing Security Force Assistance as a key component of its own strategy for managing future requirements and deterring aggression. By building upon the AAB construct and further integrating the advisory effort into its framework, the Army could be better prepared to assist global partners in defending themselves. Since the AAB will be the force of choice in managing conventional SFA missions across the globe, at least within the Army, it must be equipped with the tools necessary to manage such tasks. With an effective program for growing a resident advisor capacity within the AAB, the Army would be better prepared to meet emerging requirements at the brigade level. Therefore, the Army should enhance the institutionalization of SFA by better identifying and selecting advisors using standards outline in FM 3-07.1, correctly incentivizing the advisor program through the creation of a small but elite functional area for advisors, integrating the advisors early in the brigade’s deployment training process, and incorporating a special advisor staff section on each maneuver brigade staff.

Identification and selection of advisors must be predicated on the assumption that the advisory efforts of the Army are not stop-gap measures to meet current needs alone. Developing a long-term strategy, as was attempted by General Westmoreland following Vietnam with the Military Assistance Officer Program, would ensure wider acceptance from the Army’s officer corps, offer legitimacy to the

⁹³ U.S. Department of Defense, *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*,

program, and ensure its long-term viability. Using psychological hardiness testing and information gained by the Army Research Institute on selection criteria and adaptability, the Army should implement an attrition-based training regimen to select the right officers as advisors. Additionally, by relying on the objective screening criteria for assessing advisors outlined in FM 3-07.1, namely ambiguity tolerance, empathy, flexibility, and motivation, the Army should further enhance its accession process with a more comprehensive approach to identification and selection. By institutionalizing SFA as a key component of the Army's full-spectrum doctrine, an attrition-based training model could be established with a properly implemented functional area program⁹⁴ that would minimally impact other manning programs.

Instead of enticing short-term volunteers for the advisor program, the Army should abandon incentives in favor of a viable, enduring, and professionally rewarding career field. To be viable, the Army must effectively communicate that the program is a legitimate field of endeavor that provides capable officers with the requisite personal, cognitive, and inter-personal characteristics to be effective at advising foreign forces. The program must also be enduring, and potential volunteer officers must perceive it as such. It cannot be a successful program if it appears subject to elimination or reduction after current overseas contingency operations have concluded, as was the case with Westmoreland's Military Assistance Officer Program following the Vietnam War. The advisor program must also be professionally rewarding and provide opportunities for command. A program intended to provide a career path for officers from senior captain to colonel would solidify the program's standing in the officer community. Finally, any new program must be effectively implemented within the Advise and Assist

(Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, March 2005), 8.

⁹⁴ According to the Army, a functional area is "a grouping of officers (other than arm, service, or branch) that possesses an interrelated number of tasks or skills which usually require significant education, training, and experience." U.S. Department of the Army, *Pamphlet 600-3: Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009).

Brigade construct to enhance that element's ability to conduct full spectrum operations and improve the selection, training, and utilization mechanisms within individual brigades.

Incentivizing the advisor program must come from new and innovative approaches to implementing incentive strategies. By creating a long-term solution to the SFA mission, the rewards-based incentives that lacked productivity in previous strategies would prove unnecessary as a viable program would be incentive enough to entice the requisite applicant pool. Officers offered the opportunity to excel as advisors, followed by key and developmental positions on a brigade staff would not only improve integration of SFA tasks at the BCT level but improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the advisors themselves. Incentives should include a unique career path for advisors above the rank of captain, a newly-designated functional area in which officers would be offered graduate education, language training at the Defense Language Institute, and multiple opportunities to serve within a BCT (see figure 2). This three phase process would begin with an identification and selection process from the pool of applicants at the Functional Area Designation Board currently conducted in an officer's 8th year of service.

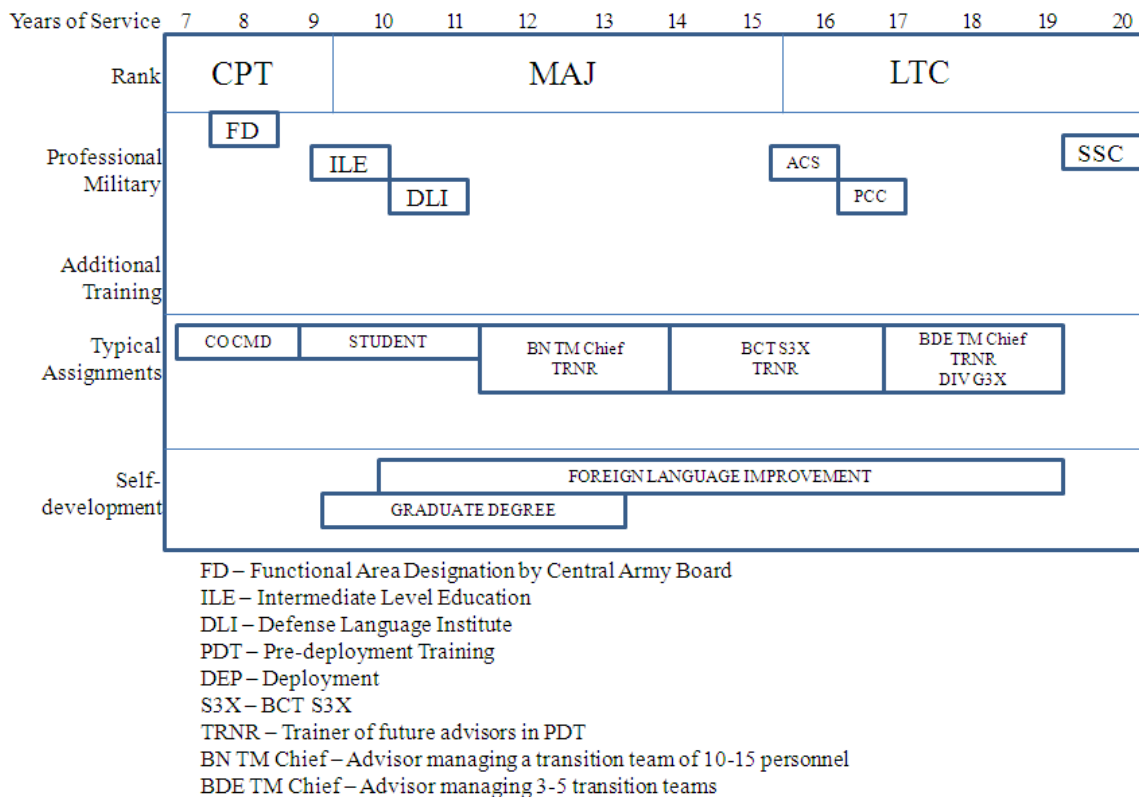


Figure 2 Proposed timeline for Functional Area officers designated as Advisors (figure created by the author using a model from Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3: Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management)

Upon acceptance in the program and designation at the Functional Area Designation Board, senior captains identified for the functional area program would attend a centralized selection training program similar to Special Forces Assessment and Selection. The academically and physically rigorous selection course would identify individuals with the cognitive and physical abilities necessary to serve as advisors. Those officers not selected for further training would be returned to their basic branches and stripped of the functional area designation without prejudice. Officers successfully completing the selection course would transition to phase two, training first at the Command and General Staff College and then at the Defense Language Institute. Upon completion of phase two, majors would be integrated into an AAB early in the deployment preparation cycle to serve as battalion-level advisors, a key and

developmental position and phase three of the certification process. After successful completion of a deployment as a battalion-level advisor, majors would be considered fully qualified as advisors and could then serve on the BCT/AAB staff or be sent to advanced civil schooling in preparation for promotion to lieutenant colonel.

Lieutenant colonels in the advisor program would be competitive for service either as a brigade-level advisor, trainer, or SFA advisor to a U.S. division commander. Since the Army Chief of Staff directed the central selection of transition team chiefs in 2008,⁹⁵ selected lieutenant colonels would be considered peer commanders with battalion commanders in the BCT. Since battalion command is normally two years while transition team command is normally one year, the Army could develop those team chiefs academically in the first year at a civilian graduate school in preparation for service as a brigade-level advisor. A graduate education in foreign policy and affairs, in addition to their solid grounding in the language of the future assignment location could provide the advisory team chief with the academic and language skills necessary to cultivate a productive relationship with both a future counterpart and the BCT commander. The officer's timeline would be minimally impacted given the disparity between the length of battalion command and length of team chief command. Additionally, central selection in addition to service in a BCT as both a major and lieutenant colonel would make the officer competitive for tactical brigade command, and particularly well-suited for command of an AAB due to their advisory experience, thus limiting the restrictions on an advisor's career progression beyond colonel.

Incentivizing the advisory effort with fully-funded graduate level degrees at prestigious universities as a part of the training pipeline could do more to ensure the acceptance of the U.S. Army's officer corps, particularly as part of a program that allowed officers to continue service at the brigade and

⁹⁵Gurney, 17.

division level. The Army has long held to the maxim of educating its officers in both civilian and military institutions. Graduate level degrees are all but required of senior leaders, particularly those serving in command positions at the battalion and brigade level and beyond. Central selection of commanders by the Department of the Army has ensured that education remains a key discriminator in determining selection to those key billets. Of the 370 currently serving active Army general officers, 79 hold Master's degrees from civilian institutions, 103 hold Master's degrees from military institutions, 161 hold Master's degrees from both military and civilian institutions, and 20 hold PhDs or other terminal degrees. Only seven hold a bachelor's degree with no further civilian or military educational degrees.⁹⁶ This underscores the importance the Army has placed on education in career progression with over 98% of general officers holding a graduate level degree. When General David Petraeus was asked in 2006 what experience prepared him most for dealing with the complexities of the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq, he replied “it was civilian graduate school...what we really need to do is get people out of their intellectual comfort zone...in order to find out that the whole world doesn't think the same way we do.”⁹⁷ His comments imply sending selected officers to civilian graduate schools rather than graduate school opportunities offered at the post education center or through the Command and General Staff College where students are normally fellow officers. The opportunity to study and learn among civilians could do much to enhance the breadth of knowledge of advisors and prepare them for service advising both foreign military forces and brigade commanders. The Army has long trained officers at civilian graduate schools, and recent works by Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling highlight the need to better integrate that educational opportunity into the Army's promotion system.

⁹⁶ Sourced from individual general officer resumes at <http://www.gomo.army.mil> (accessed September 16, 2009).

⁹⁷ David Petraeus, “Security Assistance: U.S. and International Historical Perspectives.” (presentation at the Combat Studies Institute 2006 Military Symposium, Fort Leavenworth, KS, August 8, 2006).

Yingling offered recommended selection criteria for admission to the prestigious general officer corps in the U.S. Army. He contended that Congress has the responsibility to “reward intellectual achievement” yet it all too often will “confirm four-star generals who possess neither graduate education in the social sciences or humanities nor the capability to speak a foreign language.”⁹⁸ Though that argument is not necessarily germane to the Army’s SFA mission, it is a fundamental argument about the education of the Army’s officer corps. As the proposed functional area program would integrate both civilian education and foreign language competency, it could partially alleviate the perceived deficiencies in those key capabilities. By aligning selected officers with a functional area for advising, granting them opportunities to study at civilian graduate schools and the Defense Language Institute, and assigning them to positions within the BCT construct, the Army could better capitalize on those educational benefits. And by integrating those educated officers into the BCT staff, the brigade commander would have additional assets to better understand the complex environments in which BCTs must now operate.

James Campbell advocated in a 2007 Strategic Studies Institute monograph for the creation of a section within the BCT staff to assist the commander in developing appropriate “unconventional warfare plans, policies, and doctrine.”⁹⁹ Headed by senior majors or junior lieutenant colonels trained in foreign policy and affairs, the special staff section could enhance the BCT’s ability to transition through full-spectrum operations. Because the BCT “can operate in non-permissive and permissive environments, it can conduct SFA across the spectrum of conflict... [w]hile providing this support to the host nation, the BCT remains capable of conducting full spectrum operations independently.”¹⁰⁰ Integration of an embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) further enhances a BCT’s ability to conduct full

⁹⁸ Paul Yingling, “A Failure of Generalship,” *Armed Forces Journal* (May 2007), 2.

⁹⁹ James Campbell, “Making Riflemen from Mud: Restoring the Army’s Culture of Irregular Warfare,” (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), 21.

¹⁰⁰ U.S. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-07.1 Security Force Assistance* Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 4-1.

spectrum operations. A special staff section for SFA populated with officers trained in foreign policy and affairs could bridge the gap between conventional operations and SFA and provide a permanent liaising component within the BCT staff for integrating PRT and BCT efforts. Establishment of this special staff section would further enhance the BCT's ability to manage full-spectrum tasks in complex environments.

Creation of an advisor functional area program and a special BCT staff section would better integrate the advisor mission within the BCT construct, but advisors from the functional area are not sufficient to fill all of the brigade's advisory team requirements. Since the teams would require additional manpower from within the BCT, the brigade's special staff section could implement an internal selection and training program to cull from within the brigade the most suitable subordinate advisors to fill the teams. Using well-established and documented selection criteria from FM 3-07.1, among other sources, a selection and training program would establish the best possible SFA advisor teams from within the brigade under the leadership of the functional area officers. The author's experience in dealing with internally and externally sourced military transition teams in Iraq underscores the efficacy of internally sourcing such organizations as cohesion and conventional force integration seemed to exceed that found on externally sourced teams.¹⁰¹ However, the integration of the functional area officers must be effected as early as possible in the deployment training cycle to enhance team unity and cohesion and prevent an insider versus outsider dynamic on the teams. Advisors should be assigned to the BCT along with the remainder of the field grade officers populating other key and developmental positions within the BCT.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ The author served on a military transition team in Iraq from February 2006 to February 2007. Externally sourced teams were comprised of individuals from various units while internally sourced teams came from the parent BCT. In the author's opinion, these internally-sourced teams seemed much better integrated with conventional force operations.

¹⁰² Richard Hetherington's thesis on advisor team cohesion provides interesting insight into developing rapport within the team and improving upon existing systems of selection. Richard Hetherington, "Foreign Military Advisor Proficiency: the Need for Screening, Selection, and Qualification," (Master's Thesis, Command and General Staff College, 2009), 1.

This would provide ample opportunity for creating the team cohesion necessary to effectively manage SFA tasks at the BCT level.

Finally, critics of creating an advisor corps would undoubtedly oppose establishing a separate functional area designation for advisors. However, the size and scope of an advisor functional area program would be small in personnel costs but large in terms of BCT capability enhancement. The number of field grade officers, mostly majors and lieutenant colonels, required to serve in such positions in the BCT would limit the impact on the officer corps as the Army is already fielding S-TTs to the BCTs. The bill would come in the form of up-front identification and selection mechanisms and Defense Language Institute training for majors and graduate school education for lieutenant colonels, opportunities offered to numerous field grade officers anyway. Additionally, since advisor functional area officers would be competitive for tactical brigade command at the colonel level, the advisors would be reintegrated into the career pipeline without further impact to the Army or the advisors' careers.

Conclusion

The Army has continuously adapted to ever-changing requirements for advisor support to foreign military forces. From Korea and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army has rapidly stood up advisor elements within its formations to meet the challenges of the operational environment. Unfortunately, it has continuously done so in an ad hoc fashion. The Quadrennial Defense Review for 2010 stipulated that SFA was a key function for the Army in the near term, so it is imperative for the Army's conventional forces to incorporate SFA capabilities into the brigade combat team. Establishing identification and selection, training, and career progression mechanisms to institutionalize advisors in the Army could greatly improve its ability to manage future SFA requirements.

Identification of personnel designated as advisors must use the Army's institutional knowledge of selection criteria and performance indicators as outlined by the Army Research Institute. Selection criteria should be based on more than availability, rather psychological hardiness and adaptability must be measured in applicants to ensure selected officers are prepared for the complex and often ambiguous environment in which advisors find themselves. Effective selection criteria would also serve as a mechanism to predict success in further advisor training, just as Special Forces Assessment and Selection serves as a predictor for potential success in the Special Forces Qualification Course and service in the Special Forces Groups.

The rigorous training regimen should include a robust language component, most appropriately conducted at the Defense Language Institute, advanced civil schooling in foreign affairs and policy, and early integration of the advisor functional area officers in the deployment training cycle. Additional training for selected advisors should be progressive and iterative to ensure officers are professionally prepared for the challenges of advising foreign military counterparts. An academically rigorous training program could also serve to discriminate between qualified and non-qualified applicants.

The attrition-based selection and academically rigorous training programs must be accompanied with an appropriate career path for selected officers to exercise their skills in assignments to brigade combat teams. Assignments to brigade combat teams are critical for advisors to remain relevant when advising foreign armies as experiences gained in the BCT, such as company command, battalion and brigade-level staff positions, and brigade command, are easily translatable to foreign forces and provide the advisor with both the requisite experience and legitimacy when advising foreign commanders. The incentives to serve in the program must be sufficient to outweigh the perceived risks to the individual advisor's career; therefore, a unique career path must be established for select advisors to progress from company command to centrally-selected Brigade Team Chief commands. This challenging and highly selective functional area must incorporate the opportunities required to make it competitive with other branches for promotion, selection for advanced civil schooling, and potential for brigade command. The Army's Advise and Assist Brigade is the conventional SFA force of the future; however, the Army can improve the AAB by institutionalizing SFA capability through a dedicated advisor functional area for field grade officers.

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