

DOCTRINE

general military review

2009
17

THE COMMITMENT OF FRENCH LAND FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

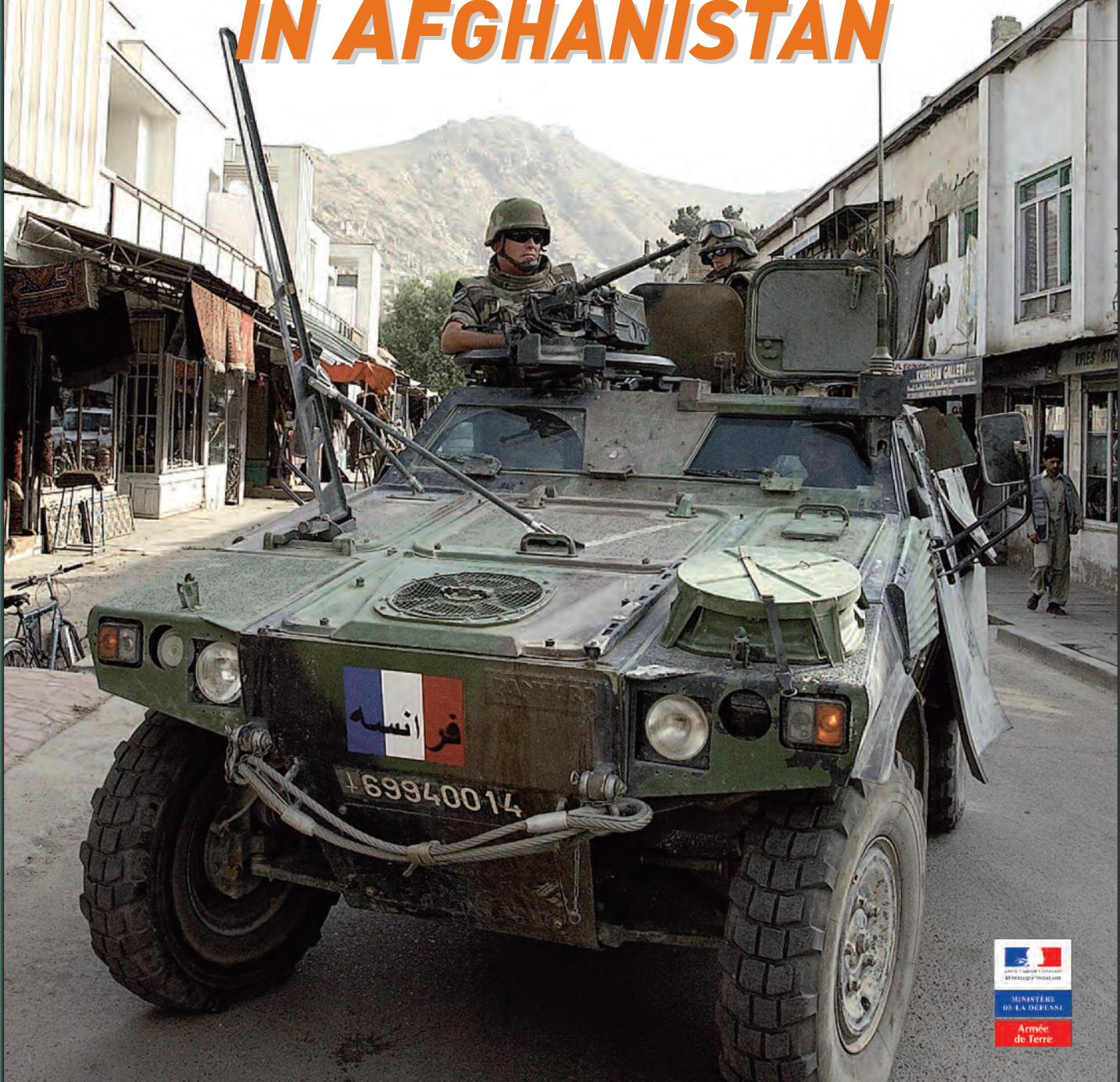




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Crédits photos : 1^{ère} & 4^{ème} de couverture : LCL Pascal Philippeau DREX/CDEF - **S**chémas : Nanci Fauquet ☎ : 01 44 42 81 74

Diffusion : établissement de diffusion, d'impression et d'archives du commissariat de l'armée de terre de Saint-Etienne

Impression : Imprimerie BIALEC - 95 boulevard d'Australie - BP 10423 - 54001 Nancy cedex

Tirage : 2 500 exemplaires - **D**épôt légal : à parution ISSN : 1959-6359 - Tous droits de reproduction réservés.

Revue trimestrielle : Conformément à la loi «informatique et libertés» n° 78-17 du 6 janvier 1978, le fichier des abonnés à DOCTRINE a fait l'objet d'une déclaration auprès de la CNIL, enregistrée sous le n° 732939. Le droit d'accès et de rectification s'effectue auprès du CDEF. Centre de Doctrine d'Emploi des Forces - 21, place Joffre - 75700 PARIS SP 07

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Editorial

C.D.E.F



At six thousand kilometers from our borders, more than three thousand French soldiers are fighting on the front line. They intervene on the Afghan government's request, and under a UN mandate (extended in March 2008). Amidst the populace, embedded in a 60,000 strong international force, they operate shoulder to shoulder with the Afghan National Army. They do it on a daily basis, boosted by danger or stressed by the combat environment. They proceed by fire and sword but also through an approach which courageously open the hopes of populations. These just wish to live safely as soon as possible, longing for a society made peaceful through sound and efficient development patterns. French units are suffering ordeals but they also achieve tactical successes; they try step by step to gain the trust and improve the living conditions of Afghans they are in contact with, in valleys, on the roads and in the villages.

Regarding our distant commitments, the military community sometimes considers that patience in collective ordeals is not the main feature of our public opinion. It is considered here and there sometimes emotion-led and over-reactive and sometimes indifferent then versatile. Of course, we do not intend to challenge that in this publication dealing with the tactical employment of our forces. At least, we will here observe that France displays some political/military coherence:

- integration with allied forces from the beginning of operations at the end of 2001,
- regularly French General Officers taking over operational responsibilities within ISAF (including ISAF Command in 2004/2005),

- Parliament's vote on September 22, 2008, approving the continuation of our forces commitment,

- Parliament's mission in fall of the same year, coming back with a hopeful report,

- Appointment of an official French Representative for Afghanistan in spring 2009.

The current issue of Doctrine attempts to present a French brief – as of summer 2009 – related to the evolution of the Afghan conflict, on the geographical, tactical, joint and allied organization of the deployed assets. Through direct accounts, you will find in the following pages descriptions or impressions on the nature of commitments as well as conditions of employment of units in their tactical missions. The time is not really to the final statement but more to a cautious observation, in a transition phase where the big American Ally revises its commitment objectives and methods. Meanwhile (as we are just about to print this paper), France herself seems to be re-organizing her resources in a rationale of optimized national coherence on the ground.

Major General Thierry OLLIVIER
Commander
Forces Employment Doctrine Center



Afghanistan, Presentation

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL PASCAL PHILIPPEAU/DREX/CDEF (FORCES EMPLOYMENT DOCTRINE CENTER)

Afghanistan, Key facts and figures

Surface area: 652,090 sq km

Average elevation: 1800 m

Population: approx. 25 million

Literacy rate: men / 43% - women / 22%

Languages: Dari / 55% - Pashtu / 40% - Uzbek and Turkmen / 4% - Others 1%

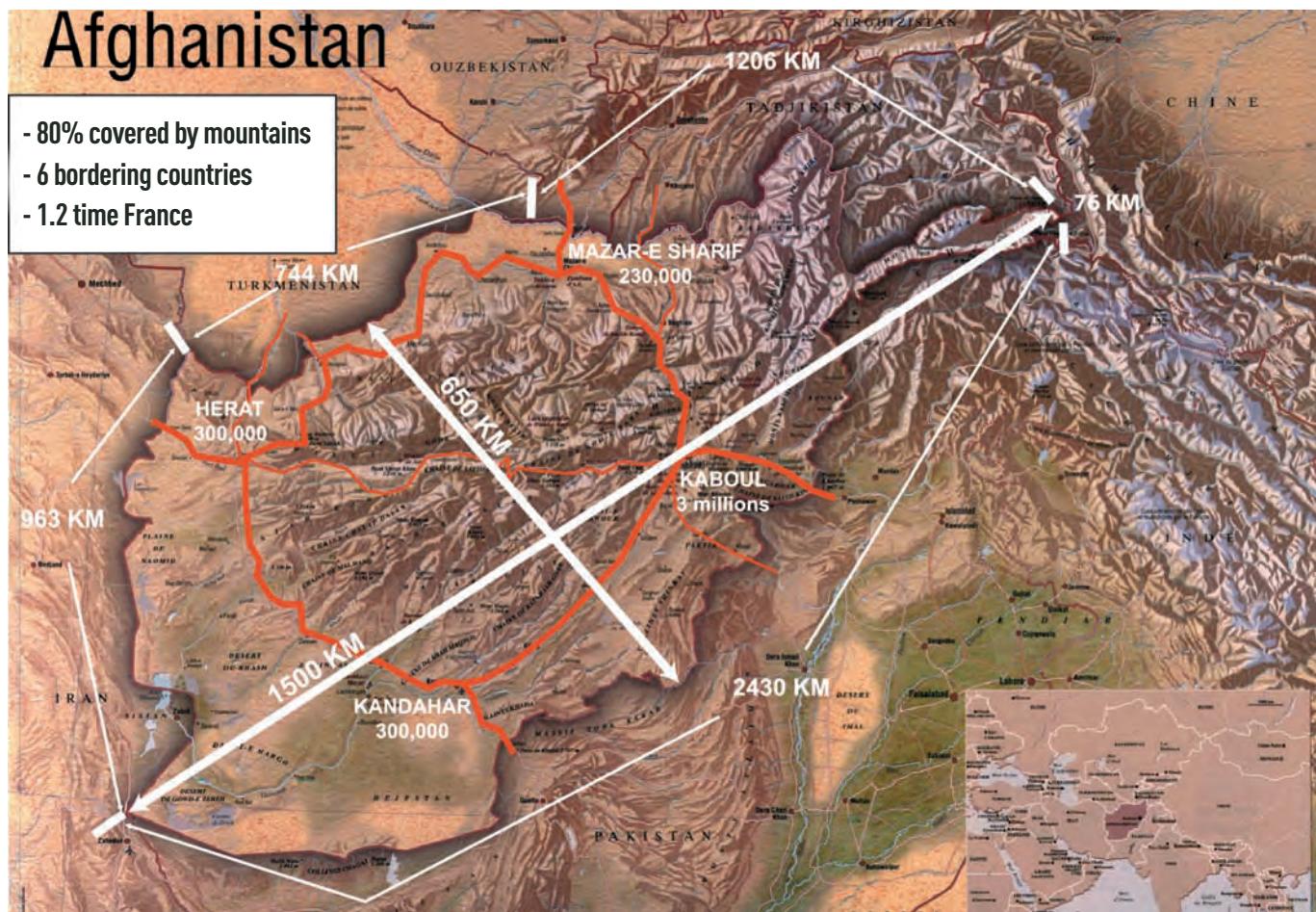
Life expectancy: 44 years

Capital: Kabul

Major cities: Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif

Labor force: 17 million people (services 30%, industry, 21%, agriculture 49%)

Natural resources: natural gas, coal, copper, precious and semi-precious stones



An old Geopolitical Reality:

After thirty uninterrupted years of war, Afghanistan still remains in crisis. Due to its specific physical geography, this landlocked country has no access to any seas. Export of natural resources and integration into the world economy are then difficult.

On the fringes of several empires and civilizations, the cultures of India, Iran, Central Asia and China melted in the past. Then, the collapse of the Soviet empire, the Taliban government and thirty years of war left deep scars on this country. Divided by warlords' regional interests and committed to a difficult reconstruction process, Afghanistan remains a sensitive area at the heart of Central Asia's stakes.



A Human Mosaic:

As in every multi-ethnic country, the issue of the relative importance of communities is hotly debated. Ethnicity definitely remains an important sign of social identification.

The main ethnic group, the **Pashtuns**, represents 40 percent of the population and is essentially located in the South and in the East. The **Tajiks**, 25 percent, are in the North-East, the Hazaras, less than 20 percent, in the Center, and the **Uzbeks**, almost 10 percent, in the North of the country. Afghan history is punctuated with ethnic rivalries and vengeance, its major feature being rivalry between Pashtuns and Tajiks.

Thus Afghanistan appears as a mosaic of communities of unequal importance inside which solidarities are strong. Today, more than nationalism which is real but confused with ethnic differentiations, Islam represents a major identification factor of the Afghan population.

Kabul, the capital, gathering about 3 million inhabitants, is a representative melting pot of this human mosaic all over the country. Should any renewed tension arise in the capital, this diversity could be either a great asset or a source of problems.

A Society to be Rebuilt and an Economy to be Boosted:

For a long time, Afghanistan has been characterized by the unchanging organization of its society.

The social model is based on several structures:

- a mainly rural structure, since the country is organized around the agricultural factor,
- a patriarchal structure, since the apparent demographic imbalance is important, considering the male omnipresence within the social landscape,
- a religious structure, since religion is the unique referent within the social organization,
- a military structure, since the divided organization into diverse, sometimes opposing ethnic groups, is conditioned by the need to defend oneself.

Moreover, thirty years of conflict have disorganized the economy of the country. As soon as the Taliban came to power, the country was placed under four embargoes (military, air, political, and financial) whose objective was to isolate this regime from the international community.

Afghanistan represents one of the poorest countries in the world and many areas of the Afghan economy are still to be rebuilt. Economic boost clashes with many structural handicaps, such as the small amount of resources that benefit the Afghan State (The State is in direct control of only 23 percent of the international aid), the shortfall in communication systems and networks, the energy deficit, the lack of a skilled labor force, corruption, poor development of financial and banking systems and inadequacy of the business legal framework.

A War on the Afghan-Pakistani Border:

Closely connected to the Afghan conflict, the increasing instability of the Pakistani tribal areas makes the situation harder to control. Since September 11th terrorist attacks and the launching of Operation Enduring Freedom, Pakistani leaders were forced to reconsider their regional strategic alliances. A new front has opened up on the other side of the Afghan border, to the east, in this semi-separate region

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known as "tribal areas". Indeed, since their defeat in Kabul, the Taliban and their ally al-Qaeda have annexed those areas inhabited by the Pashtuns. All along the 1,360 km of borders, also known as the "zero line" by the Western soldiers, about forty extremist movements share the border area. More than 150 training camps would have been identified. These centers supply

troops that both feed insurgency against western forces in Afghanistan and against the armed forces in Islamabad, Pakistan. More than 50,000 partisans and TTP (Tehrik-e-taliban Pakistan) and TNSM (Tehrik Nifaz Shariat-e-Mohammadi) members would probably have settled in the whole Pakistani northwest province, up to the northern edge of the tribal zones, in the Swat valley. New President Zardari conducts an increasingly determined policy towards radical Islamists in this area in particular with the operations launched in the Swat valley by the regular Pakistani armed forces in Spring 2009. Due to the mountainous nature of the country, access to many areas is almost impossible with a motor vehicle. Therefore the Afghans walk, ride animals or make use of horse-drawn carts to move around. This safe haven, this "mountainous chaos" harbors a "rebel and independent" population which accepts fundamentalist groups. These groups enjoy complete impunity, while moving in these mountainous bordering masses that are inaccessible to the Westerners.

Pakistani security forces are often a target for Islamic extremists' attacks which are hostile to the participation of Islamabad in "*the War on Terror*" led by the United States.

This border conflict contributes to Afghanistan and Pakistan coming together. In January 2009 in Kabul, the visit of the Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari indicates the "beginning of a new relationship" between the two neighbors that are committed in the fight against terrorism. For Hamid Karzai and the Pakistani President, this border zone represents one of the key points of the "War on Terror".

Main Events from 2001 to 2008:

Year 2001

- **September 9:** Commander Massud is killed in a suicide attack.
- **September 11:** Terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in the United States.
- **September 12:** UN Security Council condemns the September 11th terrorist attacks and recognizes the right to self-defense to the United States (Resolution 1368).
- **October 7:** U.S. and British forces launch a series of massive strikes against the strategic facilities of the Taliban Islamic regime.
- **November 27:** In Bonn, start of UN conference for the setting up of a transition government in Afghanistan.
- **December 5:** In Bonn, Afghan factions conclude an agreement on a temporary government composed of 29 members, run by the Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai who will rule Afghanistan for six months as of December 22. This agreement also provides for the deployment of an "International Security Force" in Kabul and its surroundings.
- **December 20:** UN Security Council Resolution 1386 authorizes the establishment for 6 months of an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to assist the Afghan Interim Authority with keeping security in Kabul and its surroundings.

Year 2002

- **June 13:** Hamid Karzai is elected (85%) President of the Republic for eighteen months by Delegates of the Loya Jirga (Grand Council).
- **December 22:** Afghanistan and its neighbors signed the "Kabul Declaration" related to security in Central Asia. Ratified on December 24, UN Security Council Resolution 1453 constitutes a commitment to maintain constructive bilateral relationships and to fight terrorism.



Combatants/Insurgents

Year 2003

- **April 21:** Signing of an agreement between the Transit Islamic Authority (TIA) and warlords for the setting up of national armed forces.
- **July:** Launched in April by Kabul and the UN, beginning of implementation of the DDR program (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration).
- **August 11:** NATO takes over leadership of ISAF.
- **October 13:** Resolution 1510 which extends ISAF mandate until December 20, 2004 and allows ISAF presence outside KABUL.

Year 2004

- **July 24:** KMNB¹ is placed under the command of the French-German Brigade (FGB) – Brigadier General Spindler (Germany).
- **August 9:** Transfer of authority between ISAF V and ISAF VI. ISAF is attached to EUROCORPS Command [(Lieutenant General Py), FRA].
- **October 9:** Presidential elections.

- **December 7:** Hamid Karzaï is inaugurated as President of Afghanistan.

Year 2005

- **October 2-5:** Hamid Karzaï, Afghan President's official visit to France.

Year 2006

- **January 31 – February 1:** International conference on Afghanistan in London. Adoption of the “Afghanistan Compact” setting up objectives, principles, and modes of commitment of the international community on Afghanistan’s side. The international community (represented by more than 60 countries) agrees on a new aid of 10.5 billion dollars for the next five years.
- **March 1:** Visit of President George W Bush to Kabul. The previous visit of a US President went back to 1959.
- **March 23:** Adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1662 extending ISAF mandate for a year.
- **July 31:** NATO takes over from ISAF in the South of the country. Endorsed by the NATO Council, this transfer of command represents a new extension of the ISAF mission.

- **October:** ISAF assumes command of the Regional Command (RC) East and NATO takes responsibility for the whole Afghan territory (NATO Summit in PORTOROZ, Slovenia in September 2006).

- **November:** NATO Summit in RIGA, Latvia. This summit is dedicated to violence in Afghanistan. France, Italy and Germany accept to lift restrictions on the deployment of their troops on the Afghan theater. Participants support the French proposal to create a contact group on Afghanistan to help the reconstruction of the country.

Year 2007

- **January 30-31:** International conference on Afghanistan reconstruction monitoring.
- **March 23:** Adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1746 extending the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA/MANUA) up to March 23, 2008.
- **September 19:** Adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1776, extending the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF) and the reinforcement of UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA/MANUA), for twelve months up to October 13, 2007.

Year 2008

- **March 20:** Adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1806 extending the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA/MANUA) until March 23, 2009.
- **June 12:** Paris International conference on support to Afghanistan.
- **August 5:** (FR) Brigadier General Stollsteiner taking over command of the Regional Capital Command (RCC) in Kabul.
- **August 18:** Uzbin valley ambush against French/Afghan troops, 10 French soldiers killed and strong media impact.
- **August 18:** France implements the first stage of transfer of security responsibility to the Afghans in the Kabul area.
- **September 22:** France's Parliament votes and approves the continuation of the French commitment in Afghanistan. Announcement of reinforcements with helicopters, drones and mortars.
- **November:** Fielding of the first French drones on the Afghan theater.

¹ Kabul Multi National Brigade

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Year 2009

- **April 3-4:** NATO Summit in Strasbourg-Kehl, France. ISAF strength is about 60,000 military personnel from 42 countries.
- **August 20:** Presidential and legislative elections in Afghanistan.

A Synergy of Civilian and Military Actions

Thus, the boost to the Afghan economy remains eminently reliant on two key factors which do not come within strictly economic measures:

- Achieving security of the whole country.
- Fighting corruption.

As far back as 2001, the objective seemed to be achievable with all the players who defeated the Taliban movement. Setting up NATO Forces (ISAF operation – International Security Assistance Force) in addition to deployed US Forces (OEF – *Operation Enduring Freedom*) and instructions to be implemented according to the Bonn agreement, led to predict a favorable outcome in the rebuilding of the country with a State and democratically elected institutions.

France, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, intervenes in Afghanistan, alongside 40 nations, at the request of the Afghan government and under a UN

mandate, to combat terrorism and to contribute to reconstruction and development. The international community is committed to support the Afghan recovery in order that this country regains its position in its regional and international environment. The French commitment is significant. About 3,000 military personnel currently operate in Afghanistan, within the framework of operations against terrorism and NATO International Security Assistance Force.

International and French Military Presence in Afghanistan

The Afghan National Army (ANA):

Alongside the main ally of the coalition, France supports the building-up of ANA forces, as far as training and operational assistance to units are concerned. Eventually, Afghan Security Forces will have to take over from the foreign forces – that are stationed in Afghanistan – under UN mandate. Eventually, the strength of the Afghan National Army (ANA) should reach about 130,000 by 2012. 60,000 Afghan soldiers are currently on active duty and participate in operations all over the territory. For some units, “mentored” by the OMLT (*Operational Mentoring Liaison Team*) and ETT (*Embedded Training Team*), self-sufficiency is already achieved.

Two Chains of Command:

| | OEF | ISAF |
|-------------------|---|---|
| STATUS | | Security Council Mandate (UN) |
| | US-led coalition | Resolutions : 1386 (2001); 1510 (2003); 1563 (2004); 1623 (2005); 1707 (2006) |
| COMMAND | US | NATO |
| STRENGTH | 10,000 troops | 60,000 troops / 40 countries |
| NAMES | EPIDOTE Heracles Operational Instruction Detachment | PAMIR |
| OBJECTIVES | Counter-terrorism and ANA training | Stabilization by support to legitimate authorities |

1/ OEF:

As of 2001, the international community maintains a military presence in Afghanistan through operation "*Enduring Freedom*" (OEF). **The main objectives of the US-led coalition are counter-terrorism and Afghan Army training.** Its current strength is about **10,000 troops**, 17 coalition contributing countries.

2/ ISAF:

In 2003, the Alliance completes the OEF action. The “*International Security Assistance Force*” (ISAF) currently consists of 60,000 military personnel, from 40 countries. It represents the most important NATO operation outside Europe since the creation of the Alliance.

The country is divided into **5 regional commands (RC)**:

- Regional command North – Lead nation Germany – HQ Mazar-e-Shari,
- Regional command West – Lead nation Italy – HQ Herat,
- Regional command South – Lead nation UK – HQ Kandahar,
- Regional command East – Lead nation US – HQ Bagram,
- Regional command Center – Lead nation France – HQ Kabul.

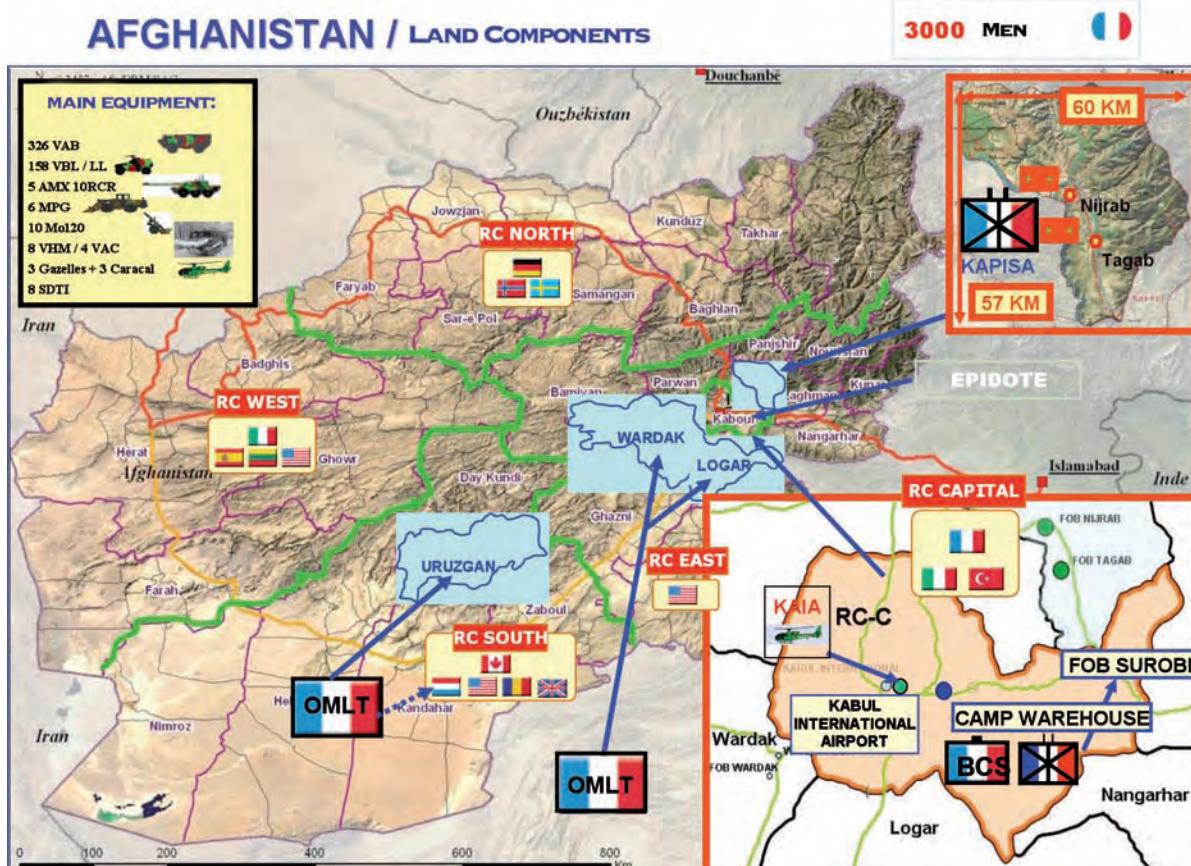
ISAF mission is the “**stabilization by support to legitimate Afghan authorities**”. The success of this major NATO operation is at **stake for the future of the Alliance** and **challenges unity between allies** which is regularly tested. ISAF area of responsibility, initially limited to the Kabul area and the North of the country has been extended to one hundred percent of the territory in October 2006. The **United States is the major ISAF contributing country, France is the 4th.**

French Deployment in Afghanistan:

Regional Command Capital (RC.C/ISAF)

- As of August 5, 2008, Regional Command Capital in Kabul is assumed by France, for twelve months, the new Commander being BG STOLLSTEINER (Theater REP France). This command shifts between France, Italy and Turkey. French Staff is **80** strong.
- This change of command gives France responsibility for an extra zone, located at the East of Kabul and which includes the Surobi District, also known as the *Combined Joint Operational Area*.

The Various Components on the Ground



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Land Components under ISAF Command

- **Rep – France HQ:** stationed in Kabul. Strength about 120 troops;
- **BATFRA PAMIR:** stationed in Kabul with about 770 soldiers, it is in charge of securing Kabul and its vicinity. It is also responsible for the Surobi district, with an infantry company, its CS and CSS elements in FOB TORA;



- **HQ and logistics Battalion:** stationed in Kabul, with around 530 troops, responsible for combat service support of all French Forces in the territory.
- **KAPISSA Battalion TF (RC East) since July 2008:** stationed in Tagab Valley with about 630 troops, under US command;

“Operational Mentoring Liaison Teams” (OMLTs): approximately 300 strong, assigned to the Afghan National Army’s 201st Corps in the vicinity of Kabul and 205th Corps to the southwest of Kabul. Created in 2005, OMLTs are tutor teams, the mission of which is to oversee training of ANA units. France mans OMLTs at the Corps level (201st Army Corps), at the Brigade level (1st Brigade



of 201st Corps) and at the 4-battalion level (*kandaks*) of the 1st Brigade. French OMLTs are deployed in the provinces of Logar and Wardak. In summer 2008, new OMLTs were deployed in Uruzgan (RC-South), replacing the Dutch OMLTs within the 205th Corps.

- **“Embedded teams”** (Multi-national HQs): with a strength of around 35 instructors;
- **Miscellaneous:** about 200 soldiers, detached to specialized organizations or assigned temporary tasks with the forces.



Land Components under OEF Command

- **EPIDOTE:** stationed in Kabul with **45** troops, tasked with education and training of Afghan National Army, and especially officers (platoon leaders and company commanders);
- **Afghan Commando School:** stationed in Kabul, **25** strong and responsible for the commando training for ANA and Afghan police forces.



Air Components /ISAF/OEF

- In **Kabul**, a “Helicopter” detachment: with a strength of about **80** troops, stationed at KAÏA AIRPORT with 3 CARACAL and 3 GAZELLE helicopters.

Counterinsurgency and the Stabilization Phase

BY COLONEL PHILIPPE COSTE/DDo/CDEF (FORCES EMPLOYMENT DOCTRINE CENTER)

This year CDEF issued a counterinsurgency at the tactical level doctrine to fill the lack of relevant tactical processes between conventional coercive COAs (Courses Of Action) and control in securing areas. It also aims to end the mixing-up among the various terms¹ used to describe this COA in military literature, sometimes with irrelevant definitions.

Counterinsurgency at the tactical level is a COA that consists in countering an asymmetrical threat, which indifferently carries out guerilla or terrorist operations during a stabilization phase. It operates with processes that used to be quite widespread but were discarded after the Algerian war. If they have become quite relevant again during current conflicts, is it also true for Afghanistan?

This A tactical answer...

First of all, this COA is different from coercive ones as warfare is being carried out against an irregular adversary within the population, which is at stake. Counterinsurgency takes place within an **comprehensive maneuver** that combines the various securing COAs with non-military operations.

...during Stabilization Stages...

Counterinsurgency operations should result into **political**-oriented effects: securing the theater only enables to complete the stabilization stage. It means increasing security by controlling the environment; these are the required conditions to dismantle an armed organization.

The aim is to deprive adversary forces of any argument by enabling

the country to run normally again. It relies on a direct action towards the environment in order to **isolate** and **to disorganize** the insurgency, while **protecting** the population in areas that support it or that are vital from an

economic or political point of view. However, these kinds of operations have numerous consequences that have to be anticipated and assessed in order to be controlled. Therefore, we have to support them for them to



understand this requirement but also to fight against the propaganda calling to armed insurgency. This is the purpose of INFO OPS (Information Operations) that aim to **influence perceptions** to support the action of land forces. They are supplemented by social operations to provide populations with the material and moral assistance that they need to resume a normal life.

...that gets through Operations Against Armed Gangs...

The supplementary effect to be achieved is to neutralize rebels by fighting against armed gangs. This fight is part of the comprehensive maneuver by adopting the **«oil spot»** principle. It is about gaining influence on the environment by setting up a **covering operation** in the areas being secured, then by carrying out a **deterrant pressure** on their boundaries to achieve destruction or conquest effects.

This principle is summed up in the following formula: **only controlling areas that are critical and conducting main effort only after having seized them**. Thus, it relies on **three stages**:

➲ The first stage consists in being able to set main effort areas by considering **three areas**:

- An area where rebuilding operations are mainly carried out (**stabilized areas**).
- An area that has to be occupied to carry out the mission. Its importance is evaluated from the type of environment, of the communications network, and of the possible adversary refuges.

This area is to be covered to protect and check populations while enabling to carry out offensive operations at any time.

- Eventually, an area whose occupation is not profitable owing to disproportionate required assets, has no interest, or is not possible.

➲ The following stage consists in securing covered areas and in carrying out a deterrent pressure along their boundaries. It consists in adding assets to the covering operation enabling to destroy rebel forces in their own area. But, **without any intelligence, it cannot be carried out efficiently. Intelligence enables to orientate action towards critical targets**. Any imprecision or mistake would result into poor achievements or even failures, regarding operations.

Then, a deterrent pressure aims to create insecurity on the very rebel terrain to compel them to move, and therefore deny them any freedom of action, a vital feature for guerilla warfare.

➲ Then, we take advantage of the achievements in this last stage. Securing and normalizing controlled areas enables to release operational assets that will be useful to reorganize areas in order to enlarge the **«oil spot»**.

...According to Specific Missions.

Common missions linked to area control are not enough; among others, missions more specific to counter-insurgency are missions required to carry out deterrent pressure – **sweeping through, harassing, and intercepting** – and which most often depend on **cordoning off**.

Within a commitment framework characterized by the importance of the environment and the fleeting nature of the adversary, their efficiency will be kept only on the condition that the **following principles** are complied with when setting up the units committed in counterinsurgency operations.

- A battalion task-force with four sub-units is the best compromise, on the condition that unicity of command and an important dismounted capability are preserved.
- It could include additional units of any kind (Military Working Dog Teams (MWDTs) or environment units, specialized intelligence, fire support, logistics, Electronic

Warfare (EW), etc...); their kinds and sizes could vary down to the lowest echelons.

- It cooperates with local units that provide it with environment awareness and legitimacy. These advantages play a vital part in making information more accurate, in complying with cultural constraints, and in optimizing action within populations.
- Eventually, the battalion task-force commander sets up a commitment capability (reserve assets or warning assets in time), and he can permanently rely on support assets coming from neighboring areas or from higher echelons (fire support, intelligence, airmobility, etc...).

Besides, a prerequisite to any operation consists in having reliable **intelligence**, and carrying out any operation should keep **surprise** but also population's neutrality. Then, **influence** operations - fitted to the situation - could complement the effects of a mission. Thus, carrying-out procedures could go along with:

- Being strictly inconspicuous while getting ready and setting up;
- Rapidly carrying out the mission and closely **coordinating** including with local forces.

As it is generally difficult to remain inconspicuous, this attitude is generally complemented with **deception**³ and counter-intelligence operations. While carrying out operations, procedures should also enable to deceive the adversary or the population.

Indeed, surprise during counter-insurgency operations is a **key factor for success**. Within the framework of a fight among populations, their support to rebels is crippling. When selecting COAs (courses of action), we should favor night, terrain, and unfavorable conditions; we should also take the current civilian activity into

account and hide external clues (logistics, local support...).

Eventually, by taking advantage of local weakening in the material and military capabilities of the adversary, any operation should be exploited to rally population and to establish rebuilding.

1 In particular, confusion is kept alive with a literal translation of the «counterinsurgency» term, which corresponds more to the French concept of stabilization phase.

2 This principle, coming from former pacification operations, is perfectly fitted to counter-rebellion, as it enables to control terrain, when considering the very limited strength of current armed forces.

3 For example, they consist in providing wrong clues by deceiving about planning and setting-up [reconnaissance, requirements for guides, and open setting-up in other areas].

In conclusion, when dealing with counterinsurgency, we describe an optimal warfare carried out against rebel groups at tactical level, leaving aside conventional contingencies linked to political, multinational, or any other constraints. It is a «tool-box» aiming to meet the various operational needs of tactical units within a specific framework, for which the Afghan theater is a good example.



SIRPA TERRE/7° BCA

The Role of Simulation

When Preparing Task-Forces before Deployments

By LIEUTENANT COLONEL PASCAL FLORIN

DSRO (SIMULATION AND OPERATIONAL RESEARCH DIVISION) / CDEF (FORCES EMPLOYMENT DOCTRINE CENTER)

From now on, simulation tools cannot be avoided when planning commitments for units and CPs. They provide them with an overall realistic working environment, within an often constrained context, which sometimes could exclude resorting to other processes. They are not a stopgap but an invaluable tool; consciously and reasonably choosing it, is complementary to what already exists in the absolute.

If simulation usually provides us with significant advantages for current planning, we have to wonder whether it provides us with such an advantage for MCP (operational preparation before deployment). Reservations still limit its use for MCPs. However, they should die out rapidly and we could expect important advantages, which – in the future – will take part in increasing the operational readiness of land forces. This prospect includes the whole spectrum of operational readiness procedures, and they include VAPs (Validations before deployment) when MCPs are nearly completed.

Current Reservations to Simulation use for MCPs

The reasons why training centers currently cannot use the simulation tools that are available to them are mainly technical reasons.

We often lack intelligence pertaining to the areas where our forces are being committed or are likely to be committed, in particular intelligence about terrain features. Indeed, for simulation to be realistic and reproduce relevant geography, a picture should be displayed on a screen (for example a digitized base map or an aerial photograph) –which has no specific meaning for a

computer – but planimetry and leveling should especially be displayed in a way understandable by the computer (often manually enriched vector data). Some of these items are not yet available; therefore, simulation tools cannot be used within MCP framework temporarily even if the digitalization of the main AOs (Areas of Operation) in which our forces are being committed is going well.

Other well known data (friendly locations, adversary locations, map nicknames, various plans drafted in the theater, etc) are to be used cautiously owing to their sensitive character. Therefore, to use these data, it is necessary to make sure that

they can be processed without any compromise – in particular if they are classified – in systems encompassing simulation assets and SIOCs (OISs - Operational Information Systems) linked to them. There again, studies mainly pertaining to the security of information systems are in progress. Eventually, current simulation releases do not sufficiently display stabilization operations as their design initially relied on prospects linked to force coercion. The stabilization version of SCIPIO and the replacement of SYSIMEV by OPOSIA should remedy it by 2011.

Thus, these technical reservations are not insuperable. At last, their coming and expected phasing-out should

make the use of simulation assets easier to prepare for task-forces before they are being deployed.

Expected Advantages Thanks to Simulation

The efficiency of this part of operational planning – which will probably be carried out slightly differently – could be increased to a large extent thanks to advantages provided by the immersive character of simulations and to the possibility of economically repeating tactical operations within a realistic framework without any risk.

Indeed, current and developing assets will enable us to operate in a future AOR without any threat from the enemy, with maps properly displaying terrain features, possible 3D displays (for example for fire control and tank-driving simulators), terrain nickname in accordance with the theater one, coherent adversary COAs, and also with pieces of equipment corresponding to those in the theater - that the task-force will not necessarily have in France. In that case, it is about capabilities that can only be provided by simulation, and about which it is difficult to assess the operational contribution differently. The immersive aspect of simulation could appear to be superficial; however, numerous studies have shown that it largely enables to assimilate knowledge. Besides, constructive and virtual simulations will enable us to

repeatedly watch operations to study passed or planned missions, by changing our own COAs, and the adversary's ones; it would also enable to have an external umpire with double-action exercises, while remaining within a context close to the terrain, with data all the more updated as it will be possible to have secured links with the various theaters through a bandwidth that would be enough to repatriate them rapidly.

Eventually, training can be carried out efficiently as early as today, thanks to simulation implemented within a realistic context, and thanks to flexibility and safety enabled by it. It has already been used (combat fire simulator unit), and it could be enriched to correspond to all operational aspects (interactive intelligence, foreign culture awareness, specific action to limit collateral damage, etc...).

Therefore, potential benefits linked to simulation are important, and directly linked to SIOC aspects. They are not only financial benefits, but synergies between SIOC and simulation tools could actually result into capabilities that we do not find elsewhere.

VAPs carried out in constrained time and in a centralized way by a CEPC (battle command training center) to the benefit of level-2 to level-4 headquarters, could improve realism through simulation. Currently – and despite above-mentioned difficulties – necessary training prior to simulation use would potentially make VAP planning and running heavier. Now, were the same tools used in garrison beforehand for decentralized planning, even usually for operational planning, training would become useless and the increase in efficiency due to simulation would appear more clearly.

Indeed, CPs that would come after VAPs would also take advantage of simulation, because of all the advantages usually provided by it, in particular realism, and the capability to simulate assets that cannot be easily used in France. Now, it is obvious that the more they will be set in conditions similar to theater ones, the more validation will gain in importance and influence.

Therefore, VAPS could be enriched thanks to simulation assets if they are already used in garrisons for all other MCPs, and even usually.

A Specific Situation for VAPs

The MCP last phase - and a very specific one for level-2 (*Translator's note*: division – NATO type) to level-4 (*Translator's note*: battalion) CPs: VAPs could take advantage of simulation.

Conclusion

If MCP simulation for task-forces preparing for their deployment is currently marginal in training centers – with the exception of implemented simulation – it is not new, and it has already been tested, for example in JANUS centers. This attitude should become more common in the future, taking the evolution of simulation assets into account; these assets can already be of great help and they will become even more helpful in the near future. Maneuvering with a new armored vehicle in the field, corresponding to its first operational implementation, even before being off to distant parts could be highly informative.

IED Warfare Doctrine: an Ever Evolving Doctrine

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL GIRAUT/JDC (JOINT DOCTRINE CENTER)

The CICDE (JDC: Joint Doctrine Center) started to work on IED warfare/counterwarfare as early as it was set up in 2005. All the works that have resulted into the issue of a doctrine enabled experts in this field to side up with one another and to set up a common network. Afterwards, they identified the capabilities implemented by the Allies and enabling to increase this warfare efficiency. Reshuffling doctrine pertaining to MUNEX (IDD – Improvised Device Defeat) takes place within this dynamics, as well as the setting-up of a military search capability, hence a WIT (Weapon Intelligence Team) capability. Four years later, the already issued documents are being implemented within units in the field. Lessons learned should enable us to amend them in the future.

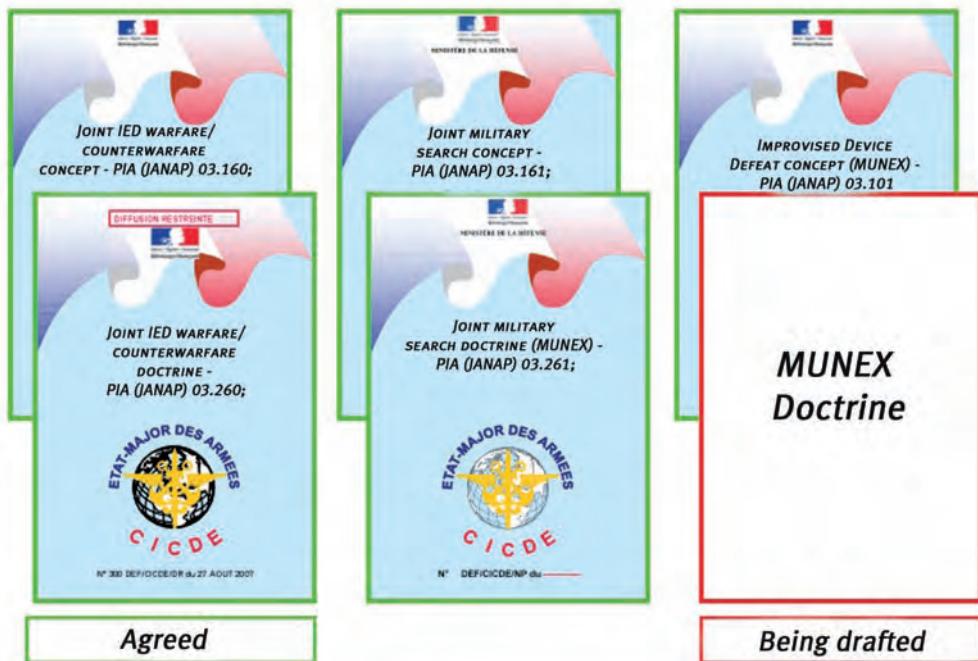
Within the French forces, IED warfare is organized according to some doctrine¹ handbooks, coherent with the Allied doctrine:

- Joint IED warfare/counterwarfare concept
 - PIA (JANAP) 03.160;
- Joint IED warfare/counterwarfare doctrine
 - PIA (JANAP) 03.260;
- Joint military search concept - PIA (JANAP) 03.161;
- Joint military search doctrine – PIA (JANAP) 03.261;
- Improvised Device Defeat concept (MUNEX) - PIA (JANAP) 03.101;
- Improvised Device Defeat doctrine (MUNEX), in progress.

Besides, the counter-irregular-adversary operations concept² also

takes part in IED warfare/counterwarfare, by describing the system that developed this threat qualitatively, quantitatively, and geographically.

DOCTRINE HANDBOOKS



The Origins Of The Doctrine Corpus

This doctrine corpus started to be drafted from summer 2005 onwards. Indeed, the IED threat started to be more and more worrying in Iraq – then in Afghanistan - at that time. The increase in incidents in the Middle East theaters and the dissemination of this threat – because of the porosity principle among theaters – included on the homeland territory, compelled France to set up an IED warfare/counterwarfare capability.

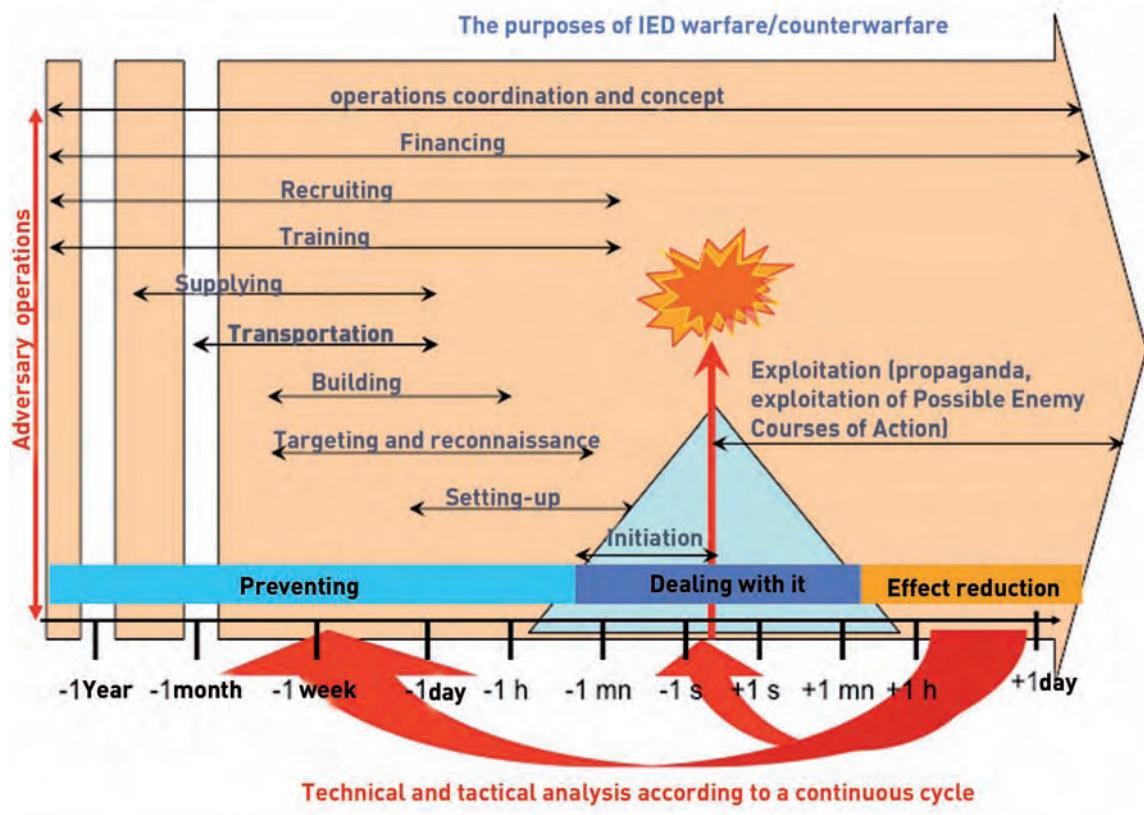
However, IEDs – the main weapon for «innovative insurgents» – are a threat that is not new in itself (Indochina, Algeria, Lebanon, and Drakkar). Thus, we can wonder why it was taken into account so late at doctrine level. Indeed, the reason why this IED warfare/counterwarfare only became a concept very recently comes from the fact

that it is, from now on, the major casualty factor for Western forces; therefore, it has a new political and strategic importance.

Thus, this doctrinal approach justified an experts' mobilization in this field and it went with all researches, studies, tests and trials carried out to counter this threat (intelligence, equipment, training, etc...). Besides, this capability has kept improving since it was set up owing to extreme changes in the threat, and also thanks to links between French and Allied service people in the field.

Ied Warfare/Counterwarfare

This concept is a 10-page document, issued in May 2006; it describes the IED threat, the purposes for IED counterwarfare, and all the ruling principles. In particular, purposes consist in preventing this threat, dealing with it (detection, countermeasures implementation, and intervention), then lowering (decreasing) its effects. They are explained in the following diagram, in which adversary's COAs are also displayed:



After having answered the «what and for what» questions in the concept, the working group answered the «why» questions in Doctrine, issued in August 2007. Within 70 pages, this document includes the measures and organization to be taken that should enable to meet this threat. In particular, IED warfare/counterwarfare is described as follows:

«As an integral part of a force, and more specifically aiming to enable the freedom of movement and the freedom of maneuver, IED warfare/counterwarfare includes all

the offensive and defensive actions carried out by the forces aiming to prevent this threat, to deal with it and to reduce its effects».

On the other hand, we have to mention that doctrine does not include the setting-up of standing structures as in the USA and in the UK. There is only a Working Group (GT EEI = IED WG), supervised by the Joint Staff that coordinates and regroups all actions carried out in this field. This work is difficult owing to the large number of participants and their diversity. Current

thoughts aim to reorganize this IED warfare/counterwarfare and to transform it into a «protection-against-threats-and-hazards-implementing-explosives» function. Today, it seems that the creation of a standing structure cannot be avoided to boost this capability.

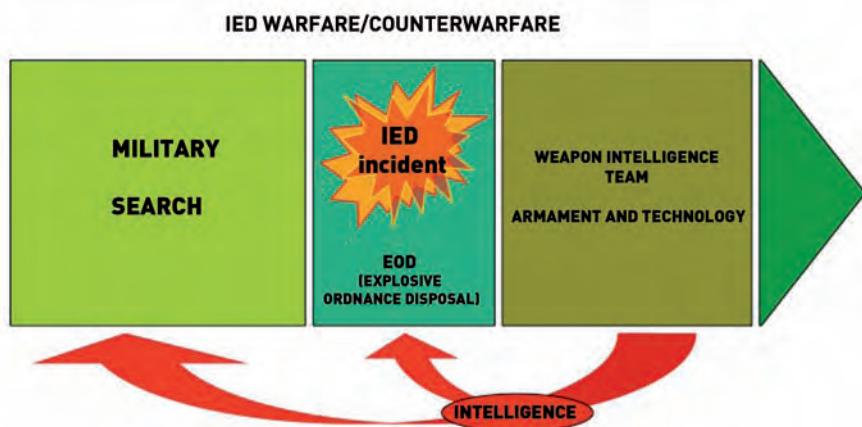
Eventually, because of some incidents that could result into a combination of IED and RBC (Radiological, Biological and Chemical) threats, a second part pertaining to RBC IDs³ was drafted and it complements doctrine.

Doctrine Sets

The working groups that drafted this IED warfare/counterwarfare doctrine and concept discovered rather rapidly that the only offensive capability to be opposed to IEDs seemed to be *military search*, developed by the British, then by NATO. Contacts in the United Kingdom enabled to confirm that this approach was relevant. *Military search* – translated in French by «*la fouille opérationnelle*» – was developed during the conflict in Northern Ireland. Then, it was about depriving terrorists of their resources, information, weapons and equipment by combining optimal information processing, accurate targeting and systematical search procedures. Besides, French servicepeople had the opportunity

to see such units, among others, looking for war criminals in Kosovo and in Bosnia. Therefore, the CICDE was naturally tasked to draft a joint military search doctrine and concept. Thus, it

takes place before any IED incident, as displayed in the following diagram that reviews the capabilities directly committed into this fight and shows the synergy among them:



Within the same dynamics, it happened to be necessary to settle the conceptual bases for MUNEX (IDD: Improvised Device Defeat). Therefore, the MUNEX⁴ concept was drafted very rapidly and the MUNEX doctrine is in progress. Indeed, we commit this capability – and specifically its «cutting edge», NEDEX⁵ (EOD: Explosive Ordnance Disposal) – right when an IED incident occurs or just after it.

After an IED incident, there is another capability, the *WIT* - i.e. *Weapon Intelligence Team* – capability, in addition to ARTEC⁶ teams; its mission will consist in gathering all the clues that can be exploited on the scene of an IED incident, in the intelligence, tactics,

IDD and forensic police fields. This *WIT* capability that only requires a limited number of people will not be the purpose for a concept and a doctrine, but for a mandate. Thus, the hastily built doctrine structure – owing to requirements for protecting committed troops – is made of bricks that are being used or taken over by servicepeople committed in the field.

Therefore, we see that the doctrine structure organizing IED warfare/counterwarfare is not fixed and it integrates new capabilities increasing its efficiency, by combining a required stand-back towards doctrine and the required ability to react to protect servicepeople committed in theaters.

Eventually, even if reading these documents and knowing them could a priori seem off-putting, they are however basic to understand the principles and the conditions for this IED warfare/counterwarfare. A typical French shortcoming consists in preferring having a feeling – so-called «resourcefulness» – even improvisation to the detriment of force protection.

¹ These JANAPs (Joint Army-Navy-Air Force Publications) can be downloaded on the CICDE intradef network site: <http://www.cicde.defense.gouv.fr/>

² PIA (JANAP) 00-180.

³ RBC (Radiological, Bacteriological, and Chemical improvised devices).

⁴ PIA (JANAP) 03 – 101.

⁵ EOD: Explosive Ordnance Disposal.

⁶ Armament and technologies.

GLOSSARY

| | |
|---------------|---|
| ADIR | Irregular adversary |
| ARTEC | Armament and technologies |
| JDC | Joint Doctrine Center |
| IED | Improvised Explosive Device |
| RBC ID | Radiological, Biological, and Chemical Improvised Device |
| IDD | Improvised Device Defeat |
| EOD | Explosive Ordnance Disposal |
| JANAP | Joint Army-Navy-Air Force Publication |
| WIT | Weapon Intelligence Team |

The Legal Bases for the Commitment in Afghanistan

By Lieutenant Colonel Jérôme CARIO Head of the Research Cell, DREX/CDEF Legal Advisor

In the aftermath of the 09/11 attacks, the whole world wanted such events not to happen again. On September 12, the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) adopted Resolution 1368¹ that condemned the attacks which had taken place the day before, and it reaffirmed the individual and collective self-defense right for member countries. The UN called on the international community to eradicate terrorism and to hold accountable those who aided or supported the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of terrorist acts.

I. A Commitment Based On Just Defense

- Operation «Enduring Freedom»

The United-States issued the Taliban government – which accommodates its main leaders in Afghanistan - with an ultimatum. The refusal of the Taliban led the United-States to launch military *Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)*, together with Great-Britain, on October 7, 2001 that aimed to drive the Taliban out of power and capture the perpetrators of terrorist acts.

Supported by the forces of the Northern alliance that were already fighting the Taliban, the armed forces entered Kabul on November 13, 2001, and the Taliban evacuated Kandahar, their initial stronghold in the south of the country on December 7, 2001.

This military campaign, launched by relying on article 51 of the United Nations², was considered by the Americans as «a collective self-defense act». The UN, with Resolution 1378 dated November 14, 2001, fully committed itself in Afghanistan and enabled other Governments (Germany,

France, Canada, Australia...) to take part in this commitment. First, the international organization coordinated international aid and then it supported the setting-up of a «legitimate» Afghan Administration and its support.

II. Supporting the Afghan Authority under un Mandate

2.1 The BONN³ agreements

From November 27, 2001 to December 5, 2001, Afghan officials met in Bonn, in Germany, to determine the post-Taliban era course. This conference enabled to work out an actual «road map» pertaining to peace-building and to post-conflict rebuilding, mainly focused on the organization of presidential and parliamentary elections, scheduled on June 11, 2004. Presidential elections were postponed to October 9, 2004, and parliamentary elections to September 18, 2005.

Through these Bonn agreements, the Afghan authorities were in power again with the purpose of gathering a constituent assembly in order to prepare for a new constitution.

Thus, Afghanistan committed itself on two major issues:

- *«end the tragic conflict in Afghanistan and promote national reconciliation, lasting peace, stability and respect for human rights in the country»;*
- *«reaffirming the independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan, acknowledging the right of the people of Afghanistan to freely determine their own political future in accordance with the principles of Islam, democracy, pluralism and social justice».*

2.2 The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)

Though the Taliban had been rapidly driven out of power, they had not been prevented from being a nuisance. Therefore, the UN Security Council adopted Resolutions 1386⁴ on December 20, 2001, which enabled the creation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Thus, ISAF⁵ had started an ad hoc mission for six months, led by Great-Britain. It operated alongside the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), a

political mission including civilians, once it had been created on March 28, 2002 by Resolution 1401.

On August 11, 2003, NATO commanded and controlled, and planned ISAF. On October 13, 2003, the UN Security Council – in full agreement with NATO – adopted Resolution 1510⁶ that made this change official. In accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter this resolution extended ISAF action to the whole of the country. In 2005, NATO also adopted a military plan amended in order to take into account the commitment of the mission that had started in early 2004. And the mandate for the mission was then extended⁷. Then, the IFAS regionalization process included Afghanistan's Northern and Western areas. The extension towards South and East was completed in October 2006.

On September 12, 2006, the Security Council extended ISAF mandate by one year from October 13, 2006, through Resolution 1707. Noticing the requirement for reinforcing the mission, **the Security Council also encouraged ISAF participating countries to provide it with more manpower and assets⁸**. On September 22, 2007 again, the Security Council extended IFAS mandate by one year through Resolution 1776, though it deplored **«the increase in violence and terrorists actions by the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and illegal armed movements and drug-trafficking»** in the country.

In fall 2007, the mission forces started to hand over the control of some strategic bases to the Afghan security forces. These operations took place within the first part of the withdrawal process pertaining to foreign forces in Afghanistan. As regards the very ISAF, several participating countries, such as the United-States, Canada, France, and Great-Britain also required some changes to be brought in the military and humanitarian strategies, in the increase of POLADs (Political Advisors), in the appointment of a «super-emissary» tasked to coordinate international aid, and in increasing strength. An increasing rift also tended to appear among the participating nations, regarding limitations imposed by the various nations on their forces in the field, either about their mandate or their AA (Area of Action) (*national caveats*).

In Resolution 1806 dated March 20, 2008, the Security Council decided to extend the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) mandate in Afghanistan, while highlighting the requirement for strengthening cooperation with ISAF as regarded civilian-military coordination, the exchange of information, and action coherence in order to keep enforcing the Pact for Afghanistan. By the way, the Security Council recognized – in this resolution – ISAF tremendous efforts to abide by the international humanitarian law

by doing whatever was possible to protect Afghan civilians and lower civilian casualties during operations.

During the Bucharest NATO summit (April 2nd – 4th, 2008), ISAF contributing countries adopted a renewed strategy, based on the French proposals:

- protracted commitment;
- security issues gradually taken over by the Afghans (*Afghanisation*);
- Commitment of Pakistan while looking for a solution.

In this perspective, France decided to strengthen its military structure on the theater.

CONCLUSION

Thus, French forces were committed within the OEF framework to train the Afghan Army but especially within the ISAF framework with, on the one hand security missions in Kabul and on the other hand combat missions in Kapissa, and Surobi in compliance with OPLAN 10 302. If all limitations had been removed, some limitations pertaining to force operating environment were however settled:

- Distinguishing between OEF and ISAF missions. Merging both missions could have ISAF future;**

- Support of the Afghan police⁹ could only be carried out within the framework of units with military expertise;

- Support of the Afghan Administration regarding drug-trafficking warfare was limited to intelligence, awareness actions and logistics support. No direct action could have been carried out against dealers or to suppress drug growing fields.



LCL PHILIPPEAU/CDEF

1 Resolution 1368 (2001)

Adopted by the Security Council during its 4370th meeting, on 12 September 2001

The Security Council,

Reaffirming the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, Determined to combat by all means threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts,

Recognizing the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense in accordance with the Charter,

1. Unequivocally condemns in the strongest terms the horrifying terrorist attacks which took place on 11 September 2001 in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania and regards such acts, like any act of international terrorism, as a threat to international peace and security;
2. Expresses its deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims and their families and to the people and Government of the United States of America;
3. Calls on all States to work together urgently to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these terrorist attacks and stresses that those responsible for aiding, supporting or harboring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these acts will be held accountable;
4. Calls also on the international community to redouble their efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts including by increased cooperation and full implementation of the relevant international anti-terrorist conventions and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1269 (1999) of 19 October 1999;
5. Expresses its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations;
6. Decides to remain seized of the matter.

2 Article 51: «Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.

3 The Bonn agreements or *Agreement on provisional arrangements in Afghanistan pending the reestablishment of permanent government institutions.*

4 In resolution 1386, it was specified that IFAS mandate consisted in *assisting the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, so that the Afghan Interim Authority as well as the personnel of the United Nations can operate in a secure environment*.

5 «*It is vital to clearly make a difference between both operations carried out in Afghanistan: an operation only carried out by the United States dubbed «Enduring Freedom», Operations Enduring Freedom (OEF), and the operation carried out by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Regarding the first one, the purpose of OEF is counter-terrorist warfare. It started in October 2001. Unlike ISAF, whose mandate is limited to Afghan territory only, OEF is to operate on a regional basis. It is monitored by the United States without including US servicepeople only. OEF is being committed on the basis of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which includes a self-defense right, and on the basis of Resolutions 1368 (including «the right inherent in individual or collective self-defense according to the Charter), and 1373 of the Security Council (that decides on sanctions against terrorist organizations, and requires everyone's cooperation against these movements»). Information mission on the situation in Afghanistan: Interim report by MM. LAMY and LELLOUCHE. French National Assembly. October 2008.*

6 Resolution 1510 (2003) Extended IFAS mandate «*to allow it, as resources permit, to support the Afghan Transitional Authority and its successors in the maintenance of security in areas of Afghanistan outside of Kabul and its environs, so that the Afghan Authorities as well as the personnel of the United Nations and other international civilian personnel engaged, in particular, in reconstruction and humanitarian efforts, can operate in a secure environment, and to provide security assistance for the performance of other tasks in support of the Bonn Agreement*

7 Following the ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO headquarters on December 8, 2005, member countries updated IFAS mandate:

«We are committed to the continuing success of the UN-mandated, NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in all its aspects and have today agreed to move NATO's support for peace and security in Afghanistan to a new level. We have endorsed the operational plan that allows for the continued expansion of ISAF. Provincial Reconstruction Teams are at the leading edge of NATO's effort, supported by military forces capable of addressing security threats where ISAF operates, and reinforced by flexible, robust reserve forces, whenever the situation on the ground so requires. Pursuant to its operations plan, ISAF will:

- *Assist the Afghan Government in extending its authority;*
- *Conduct stability and security operations in its area of responsibility, in coordination with Afghan national security forces;*
- *Mentor and support the Afghan National Army to increase their capability and reach;*
- *Support Afghan Government programmes to disarm illegally armed groups;*
- *Operate and maintain security for Kabul International Airport;*
- *Assist the Afghan National Police with niche training and in their interaction with the Afghan National Army;*
- *Advise and support the Afghan Government on border security strategy;*
- *Support Afghan Government counter-narcotics efforts; and*
- *Assist with other key elements of security sector reform, in close cooperation with G-8 lead nations.*

8 Late in 2008, ISAF strength amounted to 48,400 troops from 39 countries. The largest contingent was from the US (18,200 servicepeople). The French contingent amounted to about 3,050 people, taking part in the Pamir disposition (2,350 personnel), in Operational Mentoring Liaison Teams (OMLT) 2 (300 personnel), and in air operations (500 personnel).

OEF strength was smaller (13,700 personnel), and mainly American (12,000 servicepeople); France's contribution was smaller, mainly focused on counter-terrorist warfare at sea (Hercules sea) including 300 personnel, and on the EPIDOTE structure to train the Afghan Army, 39 servicepeople to train officers. This meant that France was the fourth OEF contributor. In all, the French participation amounted to about 3,900 personnel. As early as summer 2009, 150 gendarmes were to be added to the French forces to train the Afghan police.

9 In OPLAN 10 302, Afghan police support and counter-drug warfare are the purpose of «Key Supporting Tasks».



Afghanistan

From a Geopolitical and Historical Perspective (Late 19th Century-Early 20th Century)

«A Goat Among a Couple of Lions: Afghanistan, the Theater of a «Great Game» (Early 19th Century– 1919)»

«*There is not a single stone that has not been tainted with blood* »

Lieutenant General George Molesworth¹

BY GUILLAUME LASCONJARIAS, TEACHER-RESEARCHER/CDEF/DREX/RESEARCH CELL

In the light of late events, we are tempted to call on history to explain the difficulties that the coalition is experiencing in Afghanistan. According to an old oral tradition, about which some recent stories are a sometimes complacent relay, Afghanistan would only be this «Kingdom of Insolence»* that nobody could own or control throughout the centuries. Thus, we are reminded of ephemeral conquerors that passed through the country, from Alexander the Great to the Soviets, through the bloody British defeats in the 19th century.

A Crossroads and a Conquest Land

Afghanistan has always been a crossroads between East and West. The Macedonian phalanxes might have passed through the Khyber Pass to reach the Indus River as the Greeks were already aware of this strategic crossroads. From the 4th century BC until the 7th century, invasions occurred one after the other, and the Indians, Sassanid Persians, Huns, and then the Arabs in turn occupied this region, one invader expelling a previous one. In 651, Caliph Omar seized Herat and established Islam that progressively became the prevailing



Shah Durrani,
father of modern Afghanistan

religion. In the 13th century, steppe conquerors led by Genghis Khan settled the Mongol domination that has lasted for nearly two centuries until the Tamerlane period. This last one seized Northern Afghanistan late in the 14th century and founded the Mongol dynasty, whose capital was Kabul (1504).

If the great empires fought over the Afghan territory, they actually controlled useful areas only, the *Hokoumat* (government land). The mountainous belt around Kabul was left in the hands of Pashtu tribes. This area was soon dubbed *Yaghestan* (the kingdom of rebellion or arrogance)². It was difficult to settle in; the armed forces that moved into this area were likely to get ambushed and to suffer deadly raids from the «Afghan bandits»³. Authorities settled in major towns, in Kandahar, Herat, or Kabul were less trying to subjugate tribes than succeed in having these tribes neutralizing each other. Thus, some local chiefs were paid to secure roads, and others were paid to fight other rebel tribes. Peace periods were

precarious and riots unceasing; the Persian and Mogul empires were struggling to stabilize the region. The critical split occurred in the 18th century, when Afghan tribal chiefs took advantage of the decline of neighboring major Muslim powers. In 1747, Ahmad Shah Durrani was elected king by the Loya Jirga, and he started a conquest policy; Eastern Iran, Baluchistan, Kashmir, and Punjab got under the control of the Afghans. But this empire had no features of a modern state; from 1772 onwards, his son Timur had to face more and more violent protests against the central power – these events showed rivalries among Pashtu tribes⁴.

The Empires era and the «Great Game»



*Scenes of the first anglo-afghan war
(www.british-battles.net)*

In the 19th century, the central position of Afghanistan aroused keen interest from the European powers that Great-Britain and Russia were. The first Western temptations dated back to 1807-1809, when British envoys attempted to convince the Afghan emperors to support them in their fight against the Russians, allied at that time to Napoleon. It went on during the 1830s with what was dubbed the «Great Game» by Kipling – following Lord Curzon – i.e. a set of agreements and treaties agreed on by the Western powers to extend their influence within an area including Persia, the Transcaspian region, Turkestan, and Afghanistan⁵.

At the court of Dost-Mohammad, the Afghan sovereign, English and Russian envoys negotiated to draw this country into their sphere of influence; the king temporized, hedging between the proposals and threats from both sides. The British policy endeavored to push forward the English-Indian dominions (*«Forward policy»*) to set up in opposition

to a Russian empire that aimed to have an outlet to warm seas. In 1837, an English officer took part in the defense of Herat against Persian and Russian attacks. This will to protect India against any threat from the north led the British to start the first conquest of Afghanistan in 1838.

With this first Anglo-Afghan war (1838-1842) the English tried to control the Afghan foreign policy by putting back a formerly deposed king on the throne. It ended with a military disaster during winter 1841-1842, when the British force was cut to pieces while withdrawing through the narrow passes that led to Peshawar, after the Kabul uprising. Out of the 16,000 servicemen and civilians from the British colony, some of them were taken prisoners, and only one witness, Surgeon William Brydon⁶ managed to tell about this tragic episode. London had to resolve to deal with king Dost-Mohammed, to whom important grants were given to keep a buffer state between Central Asia and India.

A second conflict broke out in 1878, with the same roots; again, the weakness of the Afghan central power, linked to Russian appetites, stirred up the English: they invaded the country in November 1878, and they compelled the Afghan emir to sign the treaty of Gandamak on May 26, 1879. The British supported local warlords and they were handed over the control of the Khyber Pass, as well as a right of access to the country's foreign policy.

A Goat Between two Lions?

Once again, a popular riot was brewing against the emirs supported by the British power. The Russians took advantage of it by delivering weapons to Abd-or-Rahman that advocated Jihad and the recapture of Afghanistan. This combatant managed to unite the main Afghan tribes by carrying out a perfect double-dealing; on the one hand, he asserted himself against the representatives from Western powers – including against his former Russian protectors –



An Afghan tribal council, in about 1880 (copyright)

Experiences and Feedback



British fortifications in the vicinity of Kabul, in about 1840 (copyright)

and on the other hand he secretly negotiated the departure of English troops while providing them with diplomatic compensations. By the way, the best solution for the British was to have these diplomatic exchanges after the serious setback suffered in Maiwand on July 27, 1880, and the Kandahar siege⁷.

In the following years, Abd-or-Rahman waged war against dissidents and he subdued them, manipulating tribal vendettas, hatred between Sunnis and Shiites⁸. Simultaneously, he provided Afghanistan with modern state-controlled structures, endeavoring to centralize the country, to break local independence impulses, to modernize the society. For this purpose, he took advantage of three assets: as a tribe chief, he kept traditions; with funds granted by the English, he could buy loyalties; as an irreproachable Muslim, he islamized Nuristan. Besides, he took advantage of Russian difficulties in subduing Caucasus, which led to the 1907 Russian-British agreement that compelled Westerners to comply with the territorial integrity of Afghanistan.

The last stage occurred after the First World War. In 1919, the «Iron Emir's» grandson took advantage of the Bolshevik revolution and of the difficulties the British had in India to fully declare independence. The third Anglo-Afghan war only lasted for a few months (April-July) and it ended with the Rawalpindi Treaty (August 8, 1919), in which the British relinquished control of the Afghan foreign policy⁹.

Within a couple of centuries, Afghanistan had become an independent State, without betraying its own particularisms – in particular tribal ones – by taking advantage of strained relations among its powerful neighbors – the Russians in the North, and the English in the South. Afghanistan was born out of a diplomatic game - and it was just a pawn in this game – and it stressed its will to live according to its

own rules and customs, by denying foreigners the right to interfere in its political life.

Moreover, the «Iron emir» left his successors two rules, whose relevance has been unfailing: being convinced that the highest security for Afghanistan lies in its mountains, and in its people – naturally warlike-born – and in a shared religion – Islam. Indeed, in 1901, he concluded as follows: «they do love freedom, independence, emancipation; they hardly tolerate to submit to a prince of their own faith, and they will never accept the domination of anyone¹⁰».

¹ Lieutenant-General George Molesworth, *Afghanistan 1919, Asia Publishing House, 1962*. The memoirs of this officer mainly deal with the 3rd Anglo-Afghan war in the years 1919-1920; he took part in this war as an Adjutant in the 2nd Somerset Rifles.

² *Ibid.*, page 99.

³ In fact, the image of the Afghan bandit emerged in the 19th century in the aftermath of British defeat, under the pen of Rudyard Kipling.

⁴ It was about the Ghilzai and Durrani tribes. This confrontation was permanent in the history of Afghanistan, as talibans were monitored by the Ghilzai, Mullah Omar tribe, whereas the current President, Hamid Karzai, is from the Durrani tribe.

⁵ At that time, Russia seized Georgia and Bakou.

⁶ *Lady Sale, A Journal of the Disasters in Afghanistan, 1841-1842, London, 1843*.

⁷ As regards the Battle of Maiwand, we can read Bryan Perrett, *Against all Odds*, Sterling Ltd, 1998. Attacked by 25,000 Afghans, the 3,000 Indian and British soldiers led by Brigadier General Burrows fled. The 66th Regiment was totally destroyed during the battle.

⁸ Michael Barry, *The Kingdom of Insolence*, above-mentioned book, page 176.

⁹ Besides, August 8, became National Holiday.

¹⁰ Michael Barry, *The Kingdom of Insolence*, above-mentioned book, page 190.

^{*} According to the title of the book by Michael Barry, *The Kingdom of Insolence. Afghanistan, 1504-2001*, Paris, Flammarion, 2002.

The Soviet Intervention (1978-1984)

BY CAPTAIN ® MÉRIADEC RAFFRAY, RESEARCH DEPARTMENT/DREX /CDEF

AUTHOR OF THE SOVIETS IN AFGHANISTAN 1979-1989 AN UPSET RED ARMY

Christmas 1979. The Kremlin launched the main stage of Operation «Prague». On December 25, the 40th Red Army – 5 divisions – rushed at Afghanistan. At the head of it, General Borissov, the man who commanded and controlled the air bridge to Ethiopia in November 1977. Planning started one year before through air reconnaissance. In summer, the Soviet DoD (Department Of Defense) sent General Pavlovski - its second-ranked general – to Kabul for reconnaissance purposes. He commanded and controlled the takeover of Prague by force in 1968. There, 1,500 Soviet «advisors» controlled the main bases. On December 7 and 8, an airborne assault brigade seized the major Bagram AB (Air Base), north of Kabul. In the December 20 night, this unit seized the Salang tunnel. On Christmas Eve, two other brigades reinforced this bridgehead.

On December 27, 10,000 paratroopers put Kabul streets under tight surveillance. At 2045, the *spetsnaz* attacked the Presidential Palace in which Hafizullah Amin, the Head of State, had locked himself under the protection of his bodyguards. Within a few hours, the deal was clinched. On January 1, 55,000 Soviet soldiers camped in Afghanistan. Four years later, the highest figure was reached: 118,000 servicepeople.

Moscow had considered this commitment in March 1979, but had given up not to jeopardize the Détente Policy between East and West. Since the coup fomented by the Afghan communist party in Kabul in April 1978 the interior situation of this USSR satellite had kept deteriorating. By attacking the traditional structures of the society, the Marxist government had caused the country to revolt. Repression made the situation worse. Weakened by successive purges and mass desertions, the Afghan Army failed to restore order. Its strength amounted to half of its theoretical level set at 90,000 servicepeople. Kabul – which only controlled the major axes in the country - required help from Moscow.

But the evolution of the international context led Moscow to intervene. On January 16, 1979, in Tehran, the Shiite Mullahs expelled the Shah. The Americans packed up and went, leaving the field open for the USSR to become a major regional power and to come closer to warm seas. On December 4, the US embassy's personnel were taken hostage in Tehran, which rushed things. Anticipating the return of the Americans, Moscow intended to beat them by a nose.

For lack of facing them, the headquarters of the 40th Soviet Army had to make up for the inability of the Afghan Army to circumvent the rebellion. On paper, the strength ratio provided it with overwhelming superiority. However, shock with reality was painful.

After having linked up in the south, the heavy armored columns marked with the red star left the major axes. They immediately showed their inability. The craggy geography of the country paralyzed them. As a reaction against it, they concentrated along communication axes, in cities and in the vital economic areas: useful Afghanistan – 20 % of the territory. Units bunkerized in camps in the vicinity of cities. They moved out of them only to carry out large-scale operations (up to 15,000 men), aiming to keep the rebellion at a distance from urbanized terrain where the «Sovietization» process towards the population started. As early as March 1980, fighting increased. The Soviets used their whole firepower to break rebels' morale. In vain. Mujahidins evaded. During the day, Soviets laid down the law; during the night, the adversary laid down his own one. As early as the end of the year, strategists became hopeless regarding a rapid victory. Between 500,000 and one million manpower was required to close off the border with Pakistan and crush rebellion, they said in Moscow. Their reasoning: in Vietnam, the Americans had committed three times more troops to control a twice smaller territory.

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For lack of augmentation forces, the headquarters endeavored to avoid stagnation. Its commanders carried out a true internal revolution in strict secrecy. From advice granted by Vietnamese generals - anti-colonial war veterans – the headquarters cut up the country in seven areas. At the head of each of them, they appointed a Soviet general alongside an Afghan general or a battle-seasoned civilian official. Each area was granted with a SF (Special Forces) and helicopter augmentation to hunt down the enemy in his rear. The bulk of the force was broken down into two parts: 40 % of the strength was «sacrificed» to control strategic areas. The rest of it started to attack. And it innovated. The headquarters better targeted operations and the Afghan Army were included in them. They rediscovered the virtues of raids, ambushes, as well as cordon and search.

Conventional units took up SF COAs (Courses of Action). Commanders encouraged the setting-up of *ad hoc* battalion task-forces around charismatic leaders.

In reluctant valleys, considered as not being strategic, the headquarters reacted very aggressively. They chased population out of them by carrying out a burned land policy. Massive air bombing, destruction of fields under cultivation and villages, poisoning of sources of drinking water... On the one hand, all means were implemented to cut

support to the rebels. On the other hand, in all the areas where it seemed possible, the generals organized the rallying of tribes and villages, and supported the return of Government officials to the country. In some valleys, *spetsnaz* even bought harvests in advance. This strategy paid off during the years 1984-1985. Split in rival clans, a plaything for foreign political parties, confined to mountains and poorly supplied, the resistance – between 60,000 and 150,000 people, according to the various sources – dragged its feet.

Then a huge increase in US aid occurred. The CIA delivered one thousand *Stingers* to «the «freedom fighters» between 1986 and 1987. If used properly, these ground-to-air missiles with an optical sight and infrared homing guidance scored a bull's-eye up to 5,000 meters. Frightening Soviet pilots, these weapons had a part in lowering the pressure exerted on resistance logistics caravans by the helicopter-SF pair. *Stingers* compelled the Soviets to amend the commitment doctrine for their air force, but they responded very quickly.

For logistics, they made do with land convoys. At all levels, they increased technology. At that time, the first satellite images appeared, and ground forces were provided with NVGs (Night Vision Goggles).

However, this new deal accelerated the strategic change in progress. Mikhail Gorbachev understood the full extent of the Soviet Union's gradual decay, and he observed the inability of the Red Army to gain a decisive victory against the rebellion. Whereas he negotiated a halt to Mujahidin support with the Americans against a definitive withdrawal from the country, the 40th Army withdrew to its vital zone. An international agreement was signed in April 1988. It was possible to start withdrawing. It was completed in order on February 15, 1989. The results of this 9-year-and-2-month war were heavy.



It marked the end of Soviet expansion in the world, and it hastened the collapse of the Soviet regime. Through rotations, 620,000 young people, mainly conscripts were committed in this theater. 26,000 were killed and 53,754 were wounded. However – as highlighted by its successful withdrawal – the Red Army kept the score. It avoided stagnation, supported the power in Kabul at arm's length, and supported the return of the Government in the country. Through a combination of violent methods and contingency complicity, the Soviets enforced a semblance of order in this country – a keystone for the Asian continent – intrinsically reluctant to any laws but age-old tribal ones and Islamic customs. Truly, the Afghans paid a high price for the «pax sovietica»: one million dead, 700,000 handicapped and disabled people, 1.5 million DPs (Displaced Persons), 5 million refugees in Pakistan and in Iran. Without mentioning tremendous material damages. The Afghan regime stood up to resistance battering for another three years, which went to show that the Red Army strategy was efficient.

"POLADs"

(Political Advisors): Expertise and Confidence

Thinking over the role and the function of a POLAD, or «*Political Advisor*», deserves to be done as this function is important in operations today.

By COLONEL ® C. BRUMTER/CRR-FR (FRENCH RAPID REACTION CORPS)

POLADs: a Function that is not «Fully» Defined Yet

There is no choice but to accept that the phrase in the English language is always used in staff organization charts and that the title of «political advisor (*translator's note*: in French)» is only rarely used. Though the *LEGAD (legal advisor)* exists under his title of “conseiller juridique” in French and the *PIO (Public Information Officer)* is named «information and press officer» («officier de presse et d'information» in French), a *POLAD* is not that lucky. Should he have this title, we would wonder whether «political advisor» is a fair reflection of his action and responsibilities. Indeed, both these terms put together may lead to misunderstandings: indeed «advisor» is not so far from «commissioner», who is sent by another Department or another authority.

Then, there is the word «political», about which we do not exactly know what it means in a military operation. What do the respective political and military areas include? Are these areas exclusive of each other, or which way do they intermingle? What is political in military action? What is the dialectics between the military and politicians? Which way does their subordination or their complementarity evolve? At least, let us admit that a *POLAD* is neither a «politician in uniform» nor a «soldier doing politics». It is an obvious truth: it supports thinking but it does not exhaust it.

Formerly, there were «diplomatic» advisors; which way did he become «political»?

Part of the answer is to be found in the new forms of war, in the very nature of modern crisis management. Therefore, a *POLAD* could be called «civil affairs advisor». But this title would exclude him from military affairs and it would artificially discriminate between the military and civilian fields, which is unthinkable in today's crises.

POLADs: Their Strategic Field

Obviously, the strategic level is a *POLAD's* favorite level. He must be familiar with issues dealt with at the strategic - political (STRAT-POL) level; indeed, they are reflected at the strategic – military (STRAT-MIL) level, which obviously comes at operational level.

This approach is not always easy as orders given to a commander result from long debates and from a generally diplomatic debate, which is less and less national and more and more sophisticated. Indeed, there are numerous stages in crisis management and they generally hang together very accurately^①. Hence, the requirement for commanders and *POLADs* to refer to them as early as they are uncertain about a specific objective nature, about links with local authorities, about time spans with a view to relieve or about the priorities to be granted to missions...

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Thus, to work properly, a **POLAD** should be aware of the challenges and the debates that have animated political or diplomatic authorities beforehand. But, to work perfectly, a **POLAD** should be able to grasp the whole spectrum of operational actions.

POLADs: their Operational Scope

If generally the structure of headquarters is relatively similar from one theater to another one, the way they are run may however be different. Indeed, the interaction of its own components may change along with the main or secondary mission(s), or according to their more or less important military overtones.

Within such an environment, the role of commander's advisors is essential. Now, they are numerous and their role keeps changing.

- First, the **PIO** or *Press and Information Officer*. Beyond his role towards information agencies, his action obviously consists in letting know, in «informing» about the «know-how» of the Force, and of course, of his commander.
- Then, **LEGADs** as a Force always operates within a legal framework, or more exactly within the framework of laws: national law and international law, humanitarian law, etc...
- Then, the *«Provost Marshal»*, who is not only a provost as his mandate extends to a police and security role carried out by police forces often reporting – temporarily – to the force Commander.
- Eventually, a **POLAD**, whose role description is often blurred: is he more particularly tasked to pay attention to political contacts or should he also conduct political analyses? Should his task be limited to decipher the political

consequences of actions or does he take part in imagining them? If he wants to support a commander - and he should do so – not only to complete the mission successfully but also to successfully achieve the after-mission part – indeed, some missions could sometimes go on in courts or on the benches of boards of inquiry – a **POLAD** should have an overall view of the situation, summarize all the pieces of information while making sure that communication has an appropriate aspect.

This is the framework of any **POLAD's** action. What about his activity?

Of course, a **POLAD's** task consists in paying attention to political issues in the field. Now, what seems easy in theory is often more difficult at operational level. As political issues are not – in principle - dealt with at this level. Then, his only «military» action could be limited to check the drafting of the paragraph pertaining to the overall situation in the *ASSESSREP (Commanders Assessment Report)*, to complete a *FRAGO (Fragmentary Order)* or to brief on the overall situation during *«shift briefs⁴»*. This is the reason why a **POLAD** should be permanently linked to the headquarters and take part in its works. This link is all the more important as most decisions have a political overtone that has to be considered carefully.

If everyone's skills and responsibilities are complied with, everything is easy: to serve well, a **POLAD** must understand the action of the headquarters and take part in it. His contribution may prove to be crucial, as much for the *Command Group* as at the level of the headquarters cells and branches.

At the level of the *Command Group*, he is permanently interacting with the **LEGAD** as law and politics are always closely linked to each other. Of course, he closely follows the action carried out by the *Provost Marshall*, in particular

to make sure that the use of force by police forces is commensurate and appropriate.

Eventually, the **POLAD – PIO** pair is even more vital: both of them deal with regional, national, and international public opinion.

At Division level, **POLADs** and **CIMIC** personnel (*Civil-Military Cooperation*) are close to each other and they complement each other naturally. There is a similar close link with G2s, which is as important; beyond all summaries achieved by intelligence experts, **POLADs** must bring in their knowledge and their own thinking in order to enable Commanders to be best aware of an adversary. This way, briefings about targets to be dealt with or *«targeting»* are among the most important ones because we know that targeting is, by nature, political and the way they are dealt with is as much political, especially during crisis management, in which



LCL Marie-Dominique CHARLIER/CDDEF

political «gesticulation» plays a major role. Meetings pertaining to information operations «INFOOPS» are not less important; they always require a specific care. But above all, *POLADs* may bring in their contribution during «*analysis meetings*» or during «*decision briefs*». His links with operation planners, especially with «G35»², are very close as this element operates within a very similar «time frame», i.e. within 72 hours. All this enables *POLADs* to compare the future maneuver with political changes at other levels. When a negotiation may start, it is not to be desired to make it more difficult with a devastating *deep-op*; conversely, such an operation may help to encourage recalcitrant people to speak to each other. We have to add meetings in divisions, as *POLADs* may be called for specific issues pertaining to *battlespace management*, to Force protection, to EW (Electronic Warfare) – jamming is always a violation of sovereignty - or specific meetings organized on Commander's request on specific issues.

Therefore, *POLADs* need to be trusted by headquarters for successful actions.

The Future of *POLADs*' Role

It is clear that the function of «political» advisor is likely to become more important as it corresponds to an increasingly significant requirement. Thus, the British forces appointed *POLADs* at battalion level in Iraq.

We are also sure that this function will develop towards a more comprehensive approach. During crises, *POLADs* must support Commanders to deal with the after-crisis period. Formerly, once a mission was completed, once action was achieved, commanders could «turn over». Currently, it is

much more difficult; they have to report to politicians, at national level, and often at international level. In some respects, for any commander, the after-war period may be more trying than the very war period.

Eventually, there is the issue pertaining to *POLAD's* status: military or civilian? These thoughts undoubtedly lead to speak in favor of an integration of military, civilian or diplomatic skills and cultures. Obviously, a double experience is desirable. No source should be excluded to find such applicants, especially within the military world. It has been possible to find legal advisors in the heart of it; *PIOs* were created, and military assistants are everything but ADCs (Aides-De-Camp): could it not also be possible to appoint *POLADs* coming from it – once they have been trained – provided that they have a relevant rank and experience (there are many officers that have worked in connection with departmental staffs or embassies).

The military institution would only take advantage of it: indeed, *POLADs* have to safeguard differentiation, balance – and complementarity – among the various skill fields of politicians, responsible for conducting wars, and military commands, tasked to conduct battles.

There is an actual challenge as far as current crisis management is concerned, and even more regarding post-crisis management.

¹ Shift brief: «briefing during the hand-over/take-over» between an incoming shift and an outgoing shift.

² G 35 (Future Operations Cell): Plan cell in headquarters.

III) Crisis management: the various stages

- *Identifying a crisis*,
- «*Fact finding mission*» or *collecting data about the crisis*;
- *Decision(s) of principle by Authorities to commit themselves, generally on the basis of a UN Security Council Resolution*;
- *Adoption of a crisis management concept, which is a basis to decide to operate in cooperation (Joint action) (for example: border restoration, stopping ethnic cleansing) in order to reach an end-state*;
- *Launching a force generation conference*;
- *Defining and choosing military and civilian options before starting planning*;
- *Adoption of early civilian and military directives*;
- *Adoption of an operational concept (kind, size, attitude)*;
- *Adoption of an OPLAN (Operation Plan)*;
- *Drafting statuses applying to military and civilian forces (status of forces or mission agreement - SOFA and SOMA)*.

The Political-Military Context, the Management of French Nationals and Cooperation Operations in Afghanistan

BY COLONEL PIERRE DUCROS, MILITARY ADVISOR TO THE FRENCH EMBASSY IN KABUL

Military Advisor's Operational Environment

The military advisor to the French embassy in Afghanistan is tasked to monitor the French defense diplomacy in Afghanistan. He reports to the French ambassador in Afghanistan, without any direct hierarchical link with the PAMIR French Representative.

Owing to the specific security situation in the country and the nature of the commitment for the French forces in the country, the KABUL MA (Military Advisor) makes operational and military operations - conducted by the PAMIR French Representative within a multilateral framework - consistent with defense cooperation - carried out within a bilateral framework with the Afghan military authorities - towards the Ambassador.

Mission

- To broaden and monitor military relations with an old partner, whose defense structures are being rebuilt (cross visits by authorities, targeted exchanges);
- To set up a regular political-military dialogue with the Afghan defense officials in support of diplomatic action - which is the responsibility of the Ambassador - and of military operations - which are the responsibility of the French Representative;
- To bring out advice actions within the framework of the French defense organization;
- To follow up the organization and the actions carried out by the networks of foreign military missions (Defense Attachés in Kabul) in order to reorientate some operations or to share them among the members;
- To carry out targeted operations economically, likely to bring out the French presence in Afghanistan;

- To look for a better regional insertion for operations carried out by the Kabul station by developing a broader synergy (information exchange) with the French military missions in Central Asia, India, and Pakistan;
- To check that the NEO (Non combatant Evacuation Operation) plan is completed and up-to-date at the level of the embassy. More than 300 French nationals live in Afghanistan.

Defense and Military Cooperation

- In compliance with the directives of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces¹ and of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs², the defense and military cooperation policy is drafted in cooperation by the EMA (Joint Staff) and the DCMD (Directorate of Defense Military Cooperation). The Kabul CONSMIL (Military Advisor) has a critical role in their definition and implementation. Indeed, when meeting with Afghan authorities, the Kabul

CONSMIL may be brought to submit new orientations to the Joint Staff and the DCMD likely to be given cooperation actions.

- The training component is a favorite dimension of the bilateral link with Afghanistan. Within the «training» framework, he becomes an advisor to the Afghan Defense Vice-Secretary responsible for personnel and the supervisor for the initiative «training of the Afghan military elite». This initiative meets a requirement from the Afghan authorities; its political visibility requires a close coordination among the various actors in the bilateral cooperation and the Kabul CONSMIL devotes himself to optimize it.
- Regular meetings are organized by the Kabul CONSMIL to inform the Ambassador and French authorities; they enable to take stock of the situation as regards the action carried out by the various actors in the training field (Head of the Epidote team, teachers responsible for the French language...).

The CONSMIL is the Head of the Defense and Military Cooperation

He must keep and perpetuate the French influence in the area, among others by:

- Enhancing the value of education in the French language within the Afghan community. Indeed, teachers teach French to the benefit of Afghan officers in the French cultural center, in the military Academy, in the military hospital and in the staff school;
- Sending the Afghan elite to France for education purposes;

- Training officers from the ANA (Afghan National Army) (Operation EPIDOTE);

- The 2008 budget allocated to cooperation (DCMD) amounted to 455,000 €, out of which 300,000 € were devoted to support Operation EPIDOTE. Results on December 31, 2008 were the following:

- After having trained three full infantry battalions in 2002, the French were tasked to train ANA officers - from 2003 onwards. 5,500 Afghan officers have been trained by French DIOs (military training teams) within the framework of Operation EPIDOTE.
- Moreover, Afghan anesthetist nurses and doctors have also been trained in the French Camp Warehouse GMC/ISAF (ISAF Medical/Surgical Team) since 2007.
- Eventually, besides training carried out by the EPIDOTE training team, the DCDM enabled to train the following personnel in France:
 - 36 officers within the framework of «customized» intelligence training in Strasbourg (from 2005 until 2008);
 - 5 military doctors, for one-year specialized training in French military hospitals;
 - 19 combat arms officers in our branch schools and specialized schools.

The French CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation) in Afghanistan

The French forces, which have been mainly committed in SHAMALI and in DEH SABZ since 2002, handed over this area in October 2008 and took over the SUROBI and KAPISA areas.



Experiences and Feedback

Three Different Situations:

- **Areas in Northern Kabul (DEH SABS, SHAMALI ...).** They were handed over to the ANA on October 12, 2008; this area seems to be quiet and only some insurgent propaganda activity has been reported in the border zone between DEHSANZ and the KUH E SAFI. However, we should notice that local authorities (sub-governor, maleks) said they have no contact with the ANA – in particular since the area was handed over – and nobody takes their requirements into account any longer. For your information, the French forces have been in this area since 2002, and they achieved nearly 200 infrastructure initiatives, to which numerous humanitarian supplies and medical or veterinary support should be added.

- **The SUROBI** area that has been under French responsibility since August 2008. This district had taken advantage of an important CIMIC aid from the Italians and previously from the Turks (infrastructures, humanitarian supplies). Unfortunately, this support has not gone along with an increase in security, as the August 18 ambush showed. The insurgents have managed to set up in some neighboring areas and indirectly to take advantage of ISAF-provided support.

- Since August 2008, the policy of the French CIMIC has been completely different. In this district, the number of initiatives has been cut down owing to movement limitations, to available budget, but especially to the Force's will to show inhabitants in this district that support and development can only be provided if it is secure; security is not only the province of NATO forces but also of local security forces and of the population. Any major initiative carried out in SUROBI should not only be linked to a local requirement but also to an improved situation.

This policy seems to be efficient as the population and local authorities realize that they miss something if they support insurgents or at least tolerate them (this appraisal is confirmed by positive reactions in the UZBEEN valley following the neutralization of some insurgent groups). But this policy will require a more important budget, and it is to be desired that the French embassy increases its effort in this district, among others by supporting CIMIC operations financially; as there is no PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team) in RCC contrary to other provinces in Afghanistan.

- **The KAPISA** area was handed over to the French forces in July 2008. As it lies in the RC EAST area, which is under US command, the French GTIA (battalion task-force) is taking advantage of US CIMIC support, and specifically from the **PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team)**. The security situation is tenser but contacts with the population seem to improve. However some

initiatives could be completed in the vicinity of FOBs (Forward Operating Bases) and CIMIC teams have more and more opportunities to move out to take the requirements of the local population into account.

Observation: operations carried out in SUROBI and in KAPISA by the French forces cannot really be efficient without reflating development in these districts.

French CIMIC Budget in 2008

- In the fields of security, training, health and agriculture, there are 62 infrastructure initiatives financed by:
 - ISAF for 90,740 €;
 - two French companies for 6,000 €;
 - the French DoD (Department of Defense) for 240,000 €;
 - The EU (European Union) for 400,000 €;
 - the French embassy for 100,000 €;
 - The city of CASTRES for 7,300 €.

Total amount: 844,040 €

- 35 humanitarian actions to the benefit of the populations (education, sports, fuel, and clothing).

Total amount: 30,000 €

- Daily veterinary and medical aid for about 600,000 €.

That is to say, a grand total of 1,474,040 €.

Observation: the Force provides an efficient and standing medical support to the benefit of the Afghan population by complementing local organizations and not by replacing them. This support (600,000 €) is currently provided from assets set up for the force; it could be and it should be financed by the AFD (French Development Agency), which has planned a budget amounting to 24,000,000 € for the medical chapter in Afghanistan for 2009-2010.

Links between the French CIMIC and IOs/NGOs (International Organizations/Non-Governmental Organizations):

A major partner: Afrane Développement

For several months, French CIMIC teams have had favored links with the French NGO Afrane Développement, whose top executive in Afghanistan is Mr. Yves Faivre. Cooperation between French CIMIC teams and Afrane Développement

enabled to achieve many infrastructure initiatives (gardens for children, schools, building of a police precinct in progress...), and agricultural initiatives (pilot initiatives for the laying out of *karez* and terrace exits, dissemination of agricultural kits...).

A steady support to humanitarian actions in the Kabul area

Moreover, the French CIMIC supports or has supported a large number of other French or foreign NGOs, located in Kabul or in the French AOO (Area Of Operation), among which: Le Pélican (equipment gift, airlift), Aschiana (equipment gift), SWB (Sports Without Borders) (equipment transportation)...

Sustained contacts with all the humanitarian and international actors

CIMIC teams have sustained contacts with a large number of NGOs and IOs through their LOs (Liaison Officers). Among these partners, there are numerous Afghan NGOs operating in the French AOO (IHSAN, WHDO, AADO, Sozo, ACBAR, GHRSO...), French NGOs (Madera, Acted...) or international ones (Action Aid...).

IOs, and in particular the various UN agencies (UNAMA, ONUDC, UNHCR, WFP...) are standing partners in terms of information exchange and civil-military coordination. These contacts add to those carried out with the various Afghan authorities at various levels (local, district, provincial, national).

Some IOs are also financial partners: such is the case for IOM, operating as the EU representative within the framework of its *PRT* financing program; the French CIMIC works with them within the framework of a couple of infrastructure initiatives.

Observation: if the French CIMIC has regular contacts with NGOs/IOs, it operates with a small number of them. The sought-after purpose is to hand over the programs taken in charge by the force to them.

Monitoring French nationals in Afghanistan

Generally, French nationals travelling to Afghanistan are required to call at the consulate to report that they are in the country. Indeed, without it, it will be very difficult to help our nationals.

French people staying in Afghanistan are broken down into four main categories (French servicepeople are not included in them):

- People working directly or indirectly for the French embassy;

- Humanitarian aid workers (NGOs);
- People working for private companies.
- In this difficult country, there is still a fifth category of French people: tourists. Despite advice provided by the French State Department on its Web site «Advice to travelers», some fellow citizens go touring in Afghanistan. These people are totally reckless. Latest events have shown that hostage seizing is occurring more and more often.

The total number of French people is considered to amount to about 300 for the whole country. In Kabul, the number of French people is assessed to amount to 250.

It is impossible to give the accurate figure regarding our fellow citizens. Some of them leave the country without reporting to the consulate. Some others stay in the country just for a short time. It is very difficult to have an updated list; a name cannot be taken away from the list by the consulate, if the person concerned does not report.

Should it be necessary – and in order to plan the evacuation of nationals – a NEO (Non combatant Evacuation Operation) plan was set up in cooperation with the Commander of the French forces in Afghanistan. His plan keeps being updated by the Defense Attaché in the Embassy. It relies on a so-called contingency list, updated by the Consul when French fellow citizens – that are in the country for a short time – report their arrival in Afghanistan or their departure from the country. This list includes French nationals registered on the territory. Five safe havens have been set up; a safe haven is a regrouping point for French nationals before they are evacuated by the French forces, which have a radio communication system, permanently linked to the Embassy. Every week, tests are being conducted with wardens in order to check that the communications system is working. A report is forwarded to the Consul.

¹ The closest US equivalent would be the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
² French equivalent of the State Department

The Multinational Mission for the Kabul Command and the New Challenge in Surobi

BY BRIGADIER GENERAL STOLLSTEINER, COMMANDING THE REGIONAL COMMAND CAPITAL

Having Commanded the RCC for 8 months

I have been in the Afghan theater since August 5, commanding the *Regional Command Capital (RC-C)*; this testimony about my command within ISAF will focus on the major features, underlining the multinational aspect. The Surobi district was a trouble spot – and considered as such – and monitoring this district was part of the *RC-C* mission.

There was a gap between *RC-C* IV and its predecessors. The *RC-C* was set up in August 2006, to supersede the *KMNB (Kabul Multi National Brigade)*. On the basis of a tripartite agreement, and through a rotation of command and staff assignments, France, followed by Turkey, and Italy, successively commanded it. After the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, France – on NATO request – accepted to take over the *RC-C* command for one more yearxs, without any identified successor. To keep the multinational feature, mainly with the Turks and the Italians, bilateral agreements enabled to share the various important jobs within the headquarters.

A Multinational Structure

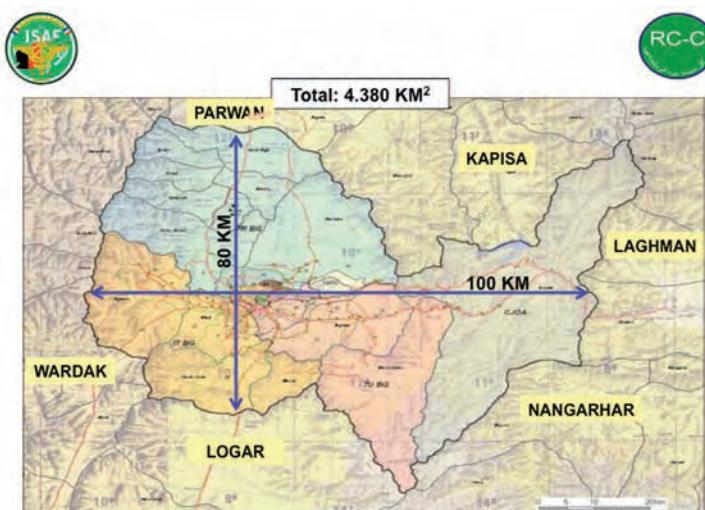
Within NATO, *RC-C* was one of the 5 *ISAF* major commands set up in Afghanistan under the command of US General David McKiernan. 12 countries were included in this headquarters, as well as the French, Italian, and Turkish battalions, and a Croatian MP (Military Police) company. The Command Group was composed of a Turkish Deputy, a French CoS (Chief of Staff), supported by an Italian J3 and a Turkish J4.

RC-C's strength amounted to 3,400 personnel, including about 1,000 personnel for support of all contributing countries.

All three battalions represented an 8-company maneuver capability, to which CS (Combat Support) and CSS (Combat Service Support) were to be added. In particular, France provided an airmobile component and drones. 120-mm and 81-mm mortars were an appropriate fire support despite range limitations.

Surrounded by the *Regional Command East (RCE)*, the boundaries of the *RC-C*'s area of action corresponded to the administrative boundaries of the Kabul province. From East to West, its dimensions were 100 kms and 80 kms from North to South; however, owing to road conditions, it was better to refer to the time span required to drive.

The headquarters was set up in Camp Warehouse on the Eastern outskirts of Kabul, along the road to Jalalabad. Each battalion was tasked to monitor some districts. The French Battalion had the responsibility of the Surobi district, devoted to the nation responsible for the *RC-C*. The Muhasi district, in the Italian area, and the Surobi district were the two trouble spots identified in the area. If the *RC-C* was the smallest of the 5 «*Regional Commands*», regarding its size, it had a specific importance owing to the fact that it was the capital of the country, and it gathered 1/5 of the population (4 to 5 million people).



Mission

RC-C's mission was defined in *ISAF* TOLO OPO (Operation Order), in force since November 1, and it was stated in NUUR OPO. The 3 operation features were: Security, Governance, Reconstruction and Development; the aim was to secure the environment for the population and to support Afghan security forces (*Afghan National Security Forces = ANSF*).

To carry out the mission, all processes relied on the *SCHB* (*Shape – Clear – Hold – Build*) concept.

My mandate was marked by the *TLSR* (*Transfer of Lead Security Responsibility*) to *ANSF*, a specific *RC-C* mission, and which was not a concealed Phase 4 (stabilization) of NATO plan. Nevertheless, this particularly demanding mission fitted perfectly with *ISAF* mission spirit in Afghanistan. It was carried out in three stages:

- On August 28, 2008, downtown and urban districts were handed over, with the exception of the KAIA airport *Ground Defense Area (GDA)*;
- On October 31, 2008, Kabul Northern area;
- On December 31, 2008, Kabul Western and Southern areas.

As for the Surobi district, it was about to be included into the *RC-E* later on, and the *RC-C* was still responsible for security.

This hand-over did not mean that the 3 battalions no longer had to carry out security missions in these areas. Tasks were just systematically joint tasks with *ANSF*, both for planning and C2 (Command and Control); support provided by *RC-C* units was about to evolve up to full autonomy for *ANSF*. It was already the case downtown where the *RC-C* got committed *«in extremis support»* only.

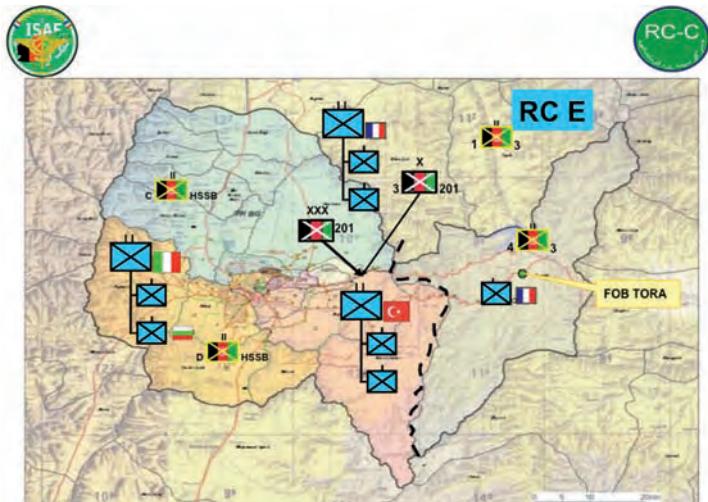
Between November 5, 2008, and December 5, 2008, support to census operations in the province was a successful major operation, carried out according to the following principle: police forces inside a first circle, ANA units inside a second circle, and *RC-C* forces inside a third circle. The security plan for this operation had been developed by the *RC-C* headquarters and the Kabul *OCCR* (*Operational Coordination Centre Regional*).

The operating method with the *ANSF* relied on partnership at all levels, from company to company, from battalion to battalion or Police District and the *RC-C* headquarters with the *OCCR*.

Multinationality inside the *RCC*

Multinationality was carried out on a daily basis, both for the headquarters and for units.

Regarding the headquarters, it consisted of standing contacts with the *ISAF* headquarters upwards, and with the battalions downwards, alongside with numerous *«Backbriefs»* of OPORDs, *«Fragos»* drafting, and numerous



reports, among which systematic lessons learned about carried-out operations. But it also consisted of very long planning work for level 2 (*translator's note*: NATO type divisions) operations; it included meetings with the *RC-E* headquarters, with Afghan partners from the *HSSB* (*Headquarters Security and Support Brigade*), the 201st Corps and the *Kabul City Police (KCP)* or the *National Directorate of Security (NDS)*.

As far as units were concerned, it dealt with operations in which both and even the three battalions took part, as it happened during operations «*Da Vinci*» in the Musahi district last December. But it also dealt with downtown security operations in which units participated; it required assets from all battalions EOD commitments, MP (Military Police) patrols, JTAC (Joint Terminal Attack Controller) commitment.

Eventually, regarding the COMRCC (RC-C Commander), it was about meetings:

- *«commander's update»* daily meeting with the headquarters;
- weekly meetings with a videoconference with the COMISAF (*ISAF* Commander), his staff and the other regional commands, or meetings with battalion commanders and the command team;
- Bimonthly with an *ISAF* command workshop every two months.

Apart from this, it was relatively easy to get into contact with the COMISAF and the major commanders from the *ISAF* headquarters on short notice, which was favored by co-location.

Weaknesses and Strong Points

If we limit the review to tactical level:

1. Multinationality drawbacks within the *RC-C* were mainly: national use limitations, which were more or less detrimental depending on the operational situation; a sometimes differing appraisal of the way to conduct the mission, a lower response from the headquarters, in comparison with a national framework, and a CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation) tool, with a varying level of financial commitment, under national responsibility.

Experiences and Feedback

2. Nevertheless, some definite advantages resulted from: sharing some available capabilities (airmobility, support, intelligence...) - including out of the **RC-C**; the probable availability of a larger structure regarding information gathering and intelligence dissemination; using one C2 language; and especially using tactical and technical procedures that were known and acknowledged by everyone.

Conclusion

Therefore, this job was fascinating, and as usual, it required mastering the art of command fit for the situation. Among the numerous lessons learned from this 8-month experience, I would like to highlight three of them. To successfully fulfill a mission, it was necessary to have:

- **Forbearance**, to create an **RC-C** spirit and thus, gather energies towards a common goal;
- **Pragmatism**, to take the best of what each nation could do;
- **Tenacity**, to find a relevant solution to each issue.

The new Surobi challenge

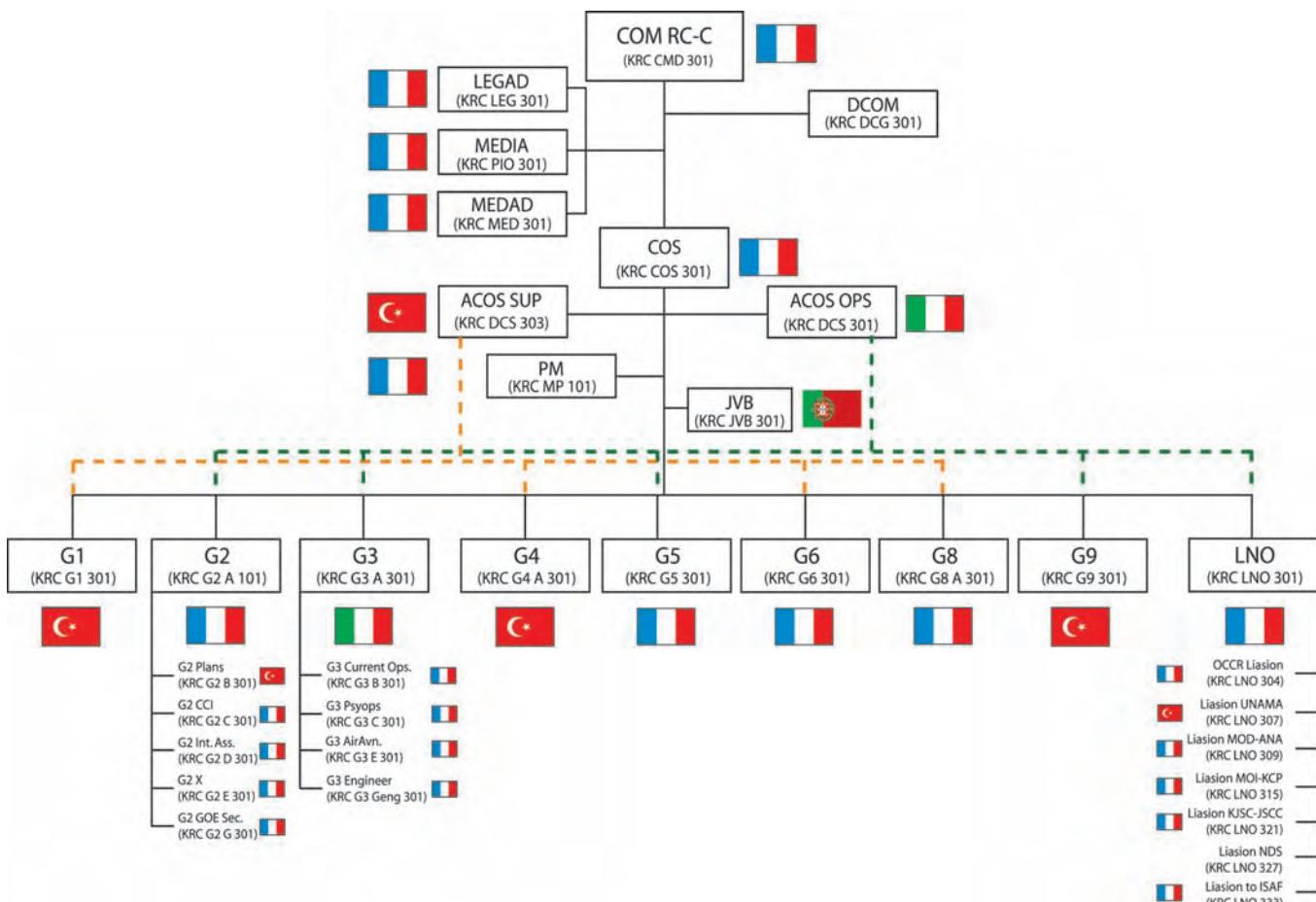
Operation Framework

Regional Command Capital (RC-C) units operated in the center of the Surobi district on the Tora **FOB (Forward Operating Base)**, 20 minute flight from Kabul, and 1 hour 30 by road (**Highway 7**) without any traffic jam.

Today, 300 French soldiers and an ANA platoon from a kandak (battalion), 3rd brigade, 201st Corps were committed in this area (**FOB**).

This district, which was an administrative part of Kabul, was particularly important for four reasons, as:

- historically, it has always been the access to Kabul from the East when coming from Jalalabad and from Peshawar; and therefore, it was a combat and resistance area with a naturally warlike population;
- today, it is a TML (Terminal) to Pakistan, and **Highway 7** is one of the umbilical cords that enables Kabul – and also **ISAF** – to be supplied from Pakistan;
- in the upper part of the Uzbin valley, it accommodated a permanent structure of stealthy insurgents, assessed to amount to 100/150 people (an insurgent was an armed



peasant); in the Southern parts of the Jagdalek and Tizin valleys, that were transit areas from East to West for insurgents between the Pakistani tribal areas and the province and the town of Kabul; - eventually, insurgents in Uzbin were part of a continuous structure of opponents that communicated among them between the Tagab and Mehtar Lam districts; this structure freed itself from the limitation made on the one hand by the administrative Afghan provinces (Kapisa, Kabul, and Lagham) and on the other hand by the *ISAF* boundaries (*RC-C* and *RC-E*).

So, the recognition of the Afghan Administration Authority (*GiRoA*) was essential to deny any infiltration towards the capital by checking the Eastern accesses to Kabul; therefore, it would have become possible to have peace and stability again in this area apart from any influence from opponents.

Which Challenge?

- Restoring and keeping the freedom of movement for security forces – either *ISAF* or Afghan forces – in the whole district.
- Restoring a standing *ANSF* presence in the whole area to avoid the population from being intimidated by opponents.
- Enabling economic activity to start again (mainly agriculture) by repairing what was destroyed and by enabling development organizations to operate in secure conditions.

Recent History

The TORA *FOB* was a strongpoint for the *RC-C* units that had been operating in this area since 2002. The Germans, then the French, the Turks, and the Italians successively operated in this area; but their respective strength never reached the current one. Methods in this area had changed, according to the goals that each nation endeavored to reach and to devoted assets.

During summer 2008, a kind of *status quo* prevailed in the valley; it was not an armed peace, but it looked like a kind of «each at home» situation as the Uzbin valley was a kind of sanctuary for the insurgents who carried out trafficking without being disturbed.

On August 18, and 19, the Sper Kundai ambush broke this status quo, which implied resuming operations within the framework of the mission tasked by *ISAF* to the *RC-C*, according to the *SHAPE* (terrain organization) *CLEAR* (suppressing), *HOLD* (holding) and *BUILD* (building) processes. From late September 2008 until late March 2009, 14 operations - at the very least - were carried out in this district – at company, battalion, and *RC-C* levels; among them, 7 were

carried out in the Uzbin valley. These operations were added to reconnaissance missions, with a more limited scope, carried out daily from TORA *FOB* by a detachment that controlled it permanently, supported by fires and intelligence.

The BATFRA (French Battalion) core was made of the 3rd RPIMa (translator's note: Airborne Infantry Battalion), then of the 1st RI (Infantry Battalion). Due to a mild winter, this battalion did not decrease the tempo of operations; its action - completed by SF (Special Forces) operations – enabled to suppress some chiefs and especially to disrupt networks, which made any coherent operation for the opponents even more difficult. On the other hand, the population – wary of this situation – became more and more prone to come closer to the Afghan Administration and all the more as operations were carried out with an ever increasing commitment from the ANSF (Army, police, security services), both within a security framework, and within the framework of population support, for it to regain confidence. As an example, 2 operations were carried out in Sper Kundai. Regarding «Longbow» on October 18, and 19, 650 French servicepeople and 80 ANA servicemen were committed into this area. During «Three valleys», on March 8, and 9, 250 ANA soldiers, 100 *KCP* (*Kabul City Police*) policemen, and 10 *NDS* (*National Directorate for Security*) personnel carried out search and possible arrests and were supported by 400 French servicepeople.

The Way ahead

Thus, the situation had changed in the Surobi district since summer 2008. In compliance with *ISAF* order, methods also had to adapt. Besides the fact that the - already mentioned - prevailing role of Afghan security forces regarding Security, Governance and Reconstruction & Development aspects were the basis of *RC-C* action, specifically in this district. As far as Governance was concerned, the *KLEs* (*Key Leaders Engagement*) were then increased with many actors (UNAMA, province and district governors, elected representatives, maleks, provincial assembly representatives, and religious authorities) taking part in it. As regards Reconstruction & Development (R&D), there were even higher ambitions. Following CIMIC initiatives exclusively in support of the force – and which was about to last long, ever important rebuilding operations, and programs enabling to create activity were necessary. To do so, a structure of the *PRT* (*Province Reconstruction Team*) type was fundamental to raise funds and to spend them properly. Indeed, the programs required much money and they had to be carried out with the involvement of the very Afghans; to start with, by selecting the kind of program and its location, as no one was better aware of these requirements as the Afghans.

Without any assessment made about the way this situation will evolve in the coming months – in particular regarding security – a process is in progress from now on; it enables to say that the challenge in Surobi was about to be taken up.

Controlling the Environment

to Overwhelm the Enemy

By LIEUTENANT COLONEL PIERRE-JOSEPH GIVRE, S3, 27TH BIM (MOUNTAIN INFANTRY BRIGADE)

The 27th BIM has been tasked to deploy a GTIA (Battalion Task-Force) to Afghanistan every winter. The MCP¹ for GTIA 27 – TF *Tiger*, operating in Kapisa from November 2008 to June 2009, is a benchmarking for GTIA 13 that will be committed after it late this year.

The key idea for MCP is very simple: *train as you fight* and more specifically, *train as you fight in Kapisa*.

Indeed, if the overall conditions for war are unchanging, local conditions are always specific, in particular in a country such as Afghanistan; commitment methods and conditions are very different from one area to another, and they are added to a patchwork of peoples and natural areas.

Counter-insurgency warfare is not conventional warfare. Action efficiency for friendly forces that take advantage of technological superiority and fires depends on their capability to discriminate an enemy that behaves «as a clam», within populations and in the field. In order to

resume control and win, a prerequisite consists in having collective and individual capabilities that will enable to challenge him and then to overwhelm him on his «ground».

Consequently, one of the first training goals will consist in controlling the environment, in particular in winter.





The Kapisa Insurgent: a Guerilla from the Mountains

Kapisa is a mountainous country that looks like Southern Alps and whose population is strongly influenced by geography. This province, the smallest one in Afghanistan, is structured by a main valley directed North-South and about fifty kilometers long. It includes four secondary valleys directed West-East, and about twenty to thirty kilometers long. The average altitude of these valleys is about 1,400 meters, and they are surrounded by summits that are between 2,500 meters and 4,200 meters high in the East. In winter, snow takes to the very valleys even if this year – a particularly mild one – the limits for permanent snow cover roughly moved to 1,800 meters. Valleys are generally tilled, scattered with patches of land surrounded by dry-stone walls, and traditional hard-earth houses are concentrated around villages. Surrounding mountains are characterized by ruiniform features and large alluvial cones composed of unstable schistose rocks. Population in the Hindu Kush foothills and its combatants are mountain people. Therefore, Kapisa insurgents are combatants who know how to take advantage of all the tactical characteristics of their native mountains. They cannot think up combat operations without using high grounds and the upper parts of slopes; and, before getting committed, they always check whether aircraft are flying in the vicinity and if high grounds are controlled. They have built the defense of one of their main haven areas around a sophisticated system of BPs (Battle Positions) scattered in the middle and upper parts of mountain slopes from where they control a whole bottom of a valley.

Thinking about Operations as a Mountain Soldier

When facing this mountain enemy in an AA (Area of Action) such as Kapisa, and wherever the terrain compartment is - where tactical action takes place - it is required to think as a mountain soldier; otherwise we are likely to lose initiative when closing with the enemy. Operating in the mountains requires having commanders able to plan a 3-D maneuver in this very specific terrain, according to the basic principles of mountain warfare; it also requires having soldiers able to comply with them. To defeat insurgents, we have to be able to move, station, and shoot with all the weapons of a platoon from crests and high grounds; these three capabilities are a basis for such a maneuver.

In such a context, where the specific aspects of the environment are a key asset for the enemy, and a challenge for the allied forces, the 27th BIM can rely on favorable local conditions to carry out its training - in the heart of the Alps - and on a technical and tactical knowledge applied to mountain operations.

Therefore, the specific MCP part for the GTIAs, 27th BIM, is broken down into three major components: physical, moral and technical individual preparation, as well as TNF (Trainfire) and tactical training.

An Intensive Physical, Moral, and Technical Training

First of all, soldiers have to carry heavy loads for protracted periods, and they must be good mountain infantry soldiers. In such a broken and intersected country, most operations are carried out on foot, all the more as the availability of helicopters is uncertain, including within the US chain of command. Soldiers should be able to infiltrate on foot, by night, with differences in height regularly amounting to nearly 1,000 meters, with equipment whose total weight blithely amounts to 40 kilograms: 25-kg body armor, all kinds of ammo, communication, day and night observation devices. We can only spare weight on food, and sometimes on some warm clothing.

If there is no major technical difficulty with the encountered terrain, it requires, however, to be surefooted and to have a sense of balance. Thus, we have to be able to move with heavy loads, most often in darkness, by meandering among boulders or above them. Nothing is difficult from the moment when we are aware of the unbiased hazards linked to this kind of terrain, which is often more dangerous than expected at first sight.

The moral dimension of the specific aspect of mountains does make sense here. Being able to monitor both stress within a naturally hostile environment and the fear of death or of becoming SWIA (Seriously Wounded In Action) requires an important training before being deployed, toughening bodies, hearts and minds. In mountains as in combat, being defeated results into having failed while carrying out one's mission and by its most painful consequences: the death or the wounds of one's comrades in arms or of one's rope climbing team's companions.



Experiences and Feedback

Therefore, soldiers' self-containment – whatever their branches – results from permanent training, with two outcomes within a year: being awarded the mountain-climbing diploma, and the military skier diploma. Officers and NCOs have their tactical and technical training in the EMHM², enabling them to securely command and control committed detachments. The use of VHMs³ and «blade» VACs⁴ in the theater to clear snow-covered routes requires qualifying about twenty drivers each year. Training is comprised of two 15-day training periods; the first one is about training on non-snow-covered tracks, and the other one on snow-covered tracks. The snow-clearance military specialty is the province of engineers from the 2nd REG (Foreign Legion Engineer Battalion), and it requires several years of practice. Eventually, AMX 10RC crews from the 4th Chasseurs (*translator's note*: Light Tank Battalion) train themselves regularly to drive on mountain tracks.



Combined-Arms Shooting in Altitude and in Snow

Combined-arms training for combat shooting/firing in mountains is the second component for this specific training. The meteorological-nivological, altitude, terrain features, and aerologic conditions strongly influence shooting/firing factors and they justify preparatory training and regular practice. To this end, each unit from the 27th BIM takes advantage of expedient firing ranges in civilian terrain, enabled in winter. Besides, the brigade organizes a combined-arms and joint live-firing maneuver at GTIA level in the GCTAs⁵ - at an altitude ranging from 1,800 meters to 2,500 meters - every year. It simultaneously enables to monitor artillery and mortar fires from the 93th RAM (*translator's note*: Mountain artillery battalion), helicopter- and aircraft support, infantry shootings and light tank fires; all this faithfully reproduces combat conditions for SGTIAs (*translator's note*: CTFs - Company Task Forces) and GTIAs in Kapisa.

«Chamois» and «Jalalabad»: GTIA Mountain Training

Eventually, two major meetings sanction tactical training at GTIA level in mountains: EEB⁶ and VAP⁷. The «Chamois» brigade training area is stage 1 for the GTIA's MCP1 for likely-committed GTIAs; it generally takes place in November or December of the previous (Y-1) year. Validation before deployment, better known under the «Jalalabad» nickname, takes place towards the end of the training period, in September, two months before leaving. Both these exercises take place in the Alpine arc, in high-mountain free terrain – at an altitude ranging from 1,000 meters to 3,000 meters – the first one in winter conditions, and the other one in fall. They are designed and controlled bearing in mind that they «stick» - as best as possible - to the actual features of the Afghan theater. Regarding VAP, the Briançonnais area is favored because of its mountain ranges looking very much like Kapisa ones. In concrete terms, realism is achieved through a ten-consecutive-day/night exercise, adapting Afghan toponymy to the French ground, using NATO procedures in the English language, and bathing into an insurgent and «friendly» environment of the Kapisa type. Moreover, the GTIA that trains under the command of TF 27, takes advantage of numerous combined-arms and joint assets, in particular air force ones. These exercises more specifically enable us to use the tactical principles for counter-insurgency mountain warfare; first of all there is the essential capability consisting in using higher and lower terrain areas in a complementary manner.

Thus, the winter MCP structure for GTIAs, 27th BIM, is a variant fitted to the generic process for FT's (Land Force) «war training»; the first lessons learned from GTIA 27 confirm the rightfulness of trends that were early selected. However, as war is not an exact science and the enemy has already shown his response capability, keeping initiative will depend on our capability to regularly review our training concepts.

¹ Pre-deployment training and preparation

² Alpine military school

³ High mobility vehicle

⁴ SUSV = Small Unit Support Vehicle

⁵ Major firing range in the French Alps

⁶ Brigade-sized combined-arms training

⁷ Validation before deployment

«Not a Single Step Without Support...»

By COLONEL JEAN-PIERRE PERRIN, COMMANDING OFFICER 3RD RPIMA, COMMANDER KABUL BATFRA FROM OCTOBER 2008 TO MARCH 2009

From 17 September 2008 to 7 February 2009, the French Battalion PAMIR XX was mainly manned by units from the 11th Airborne Brigade.

In a context marked by the 18 August ambush, the aim was to take again the lead quickly and for a long time. The operations carried out by the FRENCHBAT were characterized by the multiplication and the diversification of the support assets to the benefit of the Bn TF, which were directly in the battalion commander's hands. They have highlighted the importance of the planning process in their preparation and particularly the essential implementation of the basic knowledge in their execution.

General Framework of the Action

The French Battalion (FRENCHBAT) PAMIR XX, 830 strong, is the biggest unit of the French disposition in Afghanistan. It is deployed on 2 bases: Camp WAREHOUSE in KABUL and the *FOB* TORA in SUROBI. (cf. organization)

Its mission is to carry out security and stability operations to create the conditions enabling rebuilding and development actions. Its operational area is particularly wide and with some contrast.

North of Kabul, the Deh Sabz and Shamali plains are the area of interest, transferred to the ANA on the last 12 October in the framework of the *TLSR* (*Transfer of Lead Security Responsibility*). In the East the Mai Par, Uzbeen, Jeg Dalay and Tizin valleys are the area of responsibility.

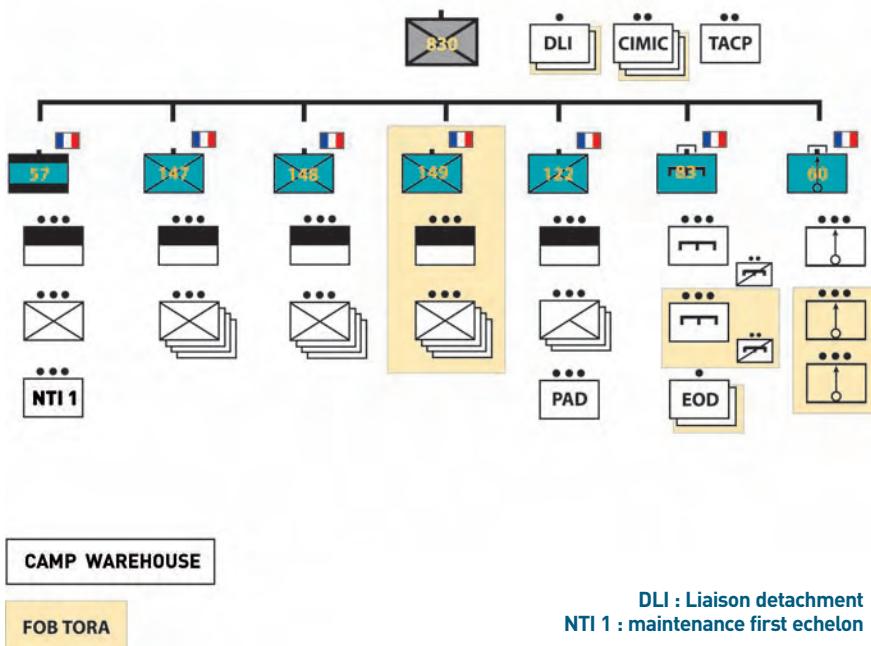
The FRENCHBAT is continuously in relation with the *ANSF* (*Afghan National Security Forces*) as it takes part in its training. The FRENCHBAT combines presence and support to the population as well as war operations against the insurgents.

The population is undoubtedly the center of gravity of the insurgents and to some extent also the government's one. All our

operations have aimed at winning it over to governmental forces or at least to deter it to support insurgents. In fact, the main operations at battalion level in area classified as hostile might be depicted as follows:

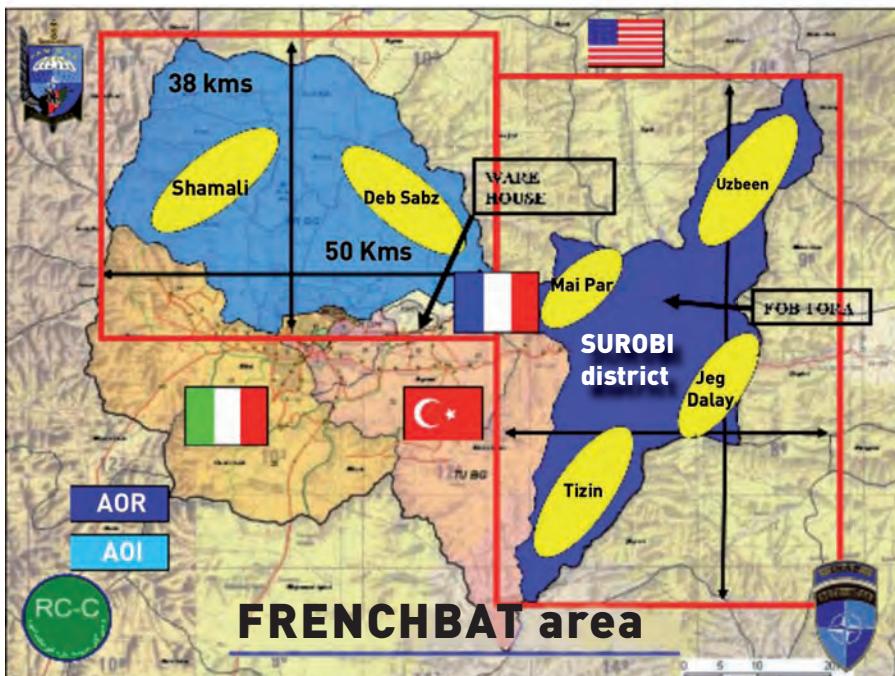
- Preparation;
- Infiltration;
- Securing a wider perimeter;
- Support of the objective seizure by the ANA;

ORGANIZATION BATFRA



Experiences and Feedback

FRENCHBAT action area



- Support in searching houses by the *NDS (National Directorate for Security)*, or the *ANP (Afghan National Police)*;
- Convening of a SHURA;¹
- Sensitizing the local chiefs;²
- Human aid delivery and CIMIC assessment;
- Withdrawal.

The most important operations have involved more than 1,000 soldiers on the ground including 250 Afghan. Some considerations and lessons learned might be shared.

Lessons Learned

⇒ The importance of planning

- ✓ The FRENCHBAT does not possess all means but is not alone. As such, to get necessary means from the coalition (Air support or close support helicopters, US or FR utility helicopters, UAVs, ...) it must enroll to a planning process to «rank among» in a way.
- ✓ It is not enough to anticipate, it is also necessary to be able to defend one's project and to convince the decision-makers (*RC-E deputy commander and ISAFCOM DCOS OPS*) during the *backbriefs* done. The subject and the way to deliver them are therefore important.

⇒ Back to the basics

- ✓ Relying on intelligence and a precise risk assessment, the leader's job is to foresee the worst scenario so as to avoid this case or to be in a position to immediately take back the initiative.
- ✓ The fight against compromising is a permanent effort, a major challenge as soon as you duplicate players, (FRENCHBAT, ANA, ANP, *NDS*, *RC-C* and *RC-E HQs*, US and

FR *OMLT*, ...). To inform only those who have a need to know, not more and no sooner than necessary at each level, switch off internet network, collect cell phones of civilian employees, forbid mobiles on the ground are so many basic skills.

- ✓ Any movement, be it usual, must be considered as an operation and therefore subjected to a FRAGO.
- ✓ Trainings to procedures; *rehearsals* on sand table preferably, are much needed for all players.
- ✓ Who holds the high ground holds the low points...: the pressing necessity to hold the heights highlights the needs for utility helicopters (UH). The capability to

land a company in a single wave is only possible with US assets.

- ✓ Not a single step without support
 - The first indirect fires must be delivered within 10 minutes. This requirement has led to transform the 6-mortar platoon of the authorized table of organization and equipment (DUO) of the heavy mortars detachment (DML) into 3 separate 2-mortar firing platoons.
 - The first reinforcements must intervene within 20 minutes to take the initiative again.
- Infantry platoons are systematically reinforced with an engineer squad. The engineer squad leader and the infantry platoon leader must learn how to work together.
- ✓ Not a single step without combat service support
 - The combat trains have worked a lot.
 - We do not fix under fire but we extract; to have been obliged to do it with a multi-purpose engineer tractor (MPG) (still at the combat train level since) the FRENCHBAT has regretted the lack of a forward recovery vehicle able to tow a VAB.
- ✓ The enforcement of war principles as well as the implementation of our basic skills in operations enable to impose our will to the enemy. The need to open fire however is not systematic if the forces ratio and the maneuver do not offer any possibility for the enemy and deter the insurgents.

- ⇒ New support assets for the benefit of the Bn TF that we must learn to use:
 - ✓ The new US planes *IED burner* enable to trigger some IEDs before the passage of vehicles.

- ✓ Detached electronic warfare assets are forward deployed. They provide an immediate contact intelligence which facilitates the decision making. They also confirm the losses inflicted to the enemy.
- ✓ UAVs:
 - They efficiently take part in controlling the area, enabling limited resources of combat (sub) units.
 - The image feedback at the tactical CP helps the decision making. It is possible with the PREDATOR, it will be possible with the SDTI.
 - The SDTI like the Gazelle VIVIANE is useful for axis reconnaissance and can detect caches or IEDs thanks to thermal devices.
- ✓ The integration at tactical level of support assets which were previously reserved to operational or strategic levels is easy to achieve for anyone who asks for desired effects. A common MCP will make this integration even easier.

⇒ A need for a 3D coordination

- ✓ Having put on the same network the artillery, the **TACP** and the artillery observation elements (EO) and entrust the artillery liaison detachment with the coordination, the FRENCHBAT has succeeded in managing the fact to have simultaneously, being in contact, shells, aircraft, UAVs and flying helicopters.

⇒ The population being at stake

- ✓ The success of an operation in a village relies more on the coherence and the strength of the disposition than individual “aggressive” attitude. To display serenity everyone must be convinced by the efficiency of support and service support.
- ✓ The confidence of the population must be won in support of the governmental forces. They must be associated to the rebuilding actions. A part of the prestige of our CIMIC actions can and must fall upon them.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|------------------|---|
| ANA: | <i>Afghan National Army.</i> |
| ANP: | <i>Afghan National Police.</i> |
| ANSF: | <i>Afghan National Security Forces (ANA+ANP+NDS)</i> |
| BATFRA : | <i>Bataillon français./ FRENCHBAT</i> |
| CIMIC: | <i>Civil Military Cooperation</i> |
| COMISAF : | <i>Commandant de l'ISAF/ ISAF commander</i> |
| DCOS OPS: | <i>Deputy chief of staff for operations.</i> |
| DML : | <i>Détachement de mortiers lourds/ heavy mortars detachment</i> |
| EM : | <i>Etat-major/Headquarters</i> |
| EO : | <i>Elément d'observation d'artillerie/ Artillery observation element</i> |
| FOB: | <i>Forward operational base.</i> |
| FRAGO: | <i>Fragmentary order.</i> |
| HAP : | <i>Hélicoptère d'appui protection/Close support helicopter</i> |
| HM : | <i>Hélicoptère de manœuvre/Utility helicopter</i> |
| ISAF: | <i>International Security Assistance Force.</i> |
| MALEKS: | <i>Kind of mayors or population representatives, elected or nominated according the local law</i> |
| NDS: | <i>National Department for Security.</i> |
| OMLT: | <i>Operational mentoring liaison team.</i> |
| RC-C: | <i>Regional command Capital.</i> |
| RC-E: | <i>Regional command East.</i> |
| RPIMa : | <i>Régiment de Parachutistes d'Infanterie de Marine</i> |
| SHURA: | <i>Traditional assembly of the village gathering the Maleks, the wise men (the white beards) and official dignitaries (former war chiefs,...)</i> |
| TACP: | <i>Tactical air control party</i> |
| TLSR: | <i>Transfer of the Lead of Security Responsibility.</i> |

Conclusion

In addition to the daily reconnaissance missions with the ANSF, the FRENCHBAT PAMIR XX has carried out, over 5 months, 12 major operations in the SUROBI district, out of which 5 in the UZBEEN valley. They enable to severely strike the insurgents³, to reduce their refuge area only to the northern part of the UZBEEN valley and to noticeably limit their influence and freedom of action⁴.

In the more secured areas, it has realized 10 projects in support of the population in the framework of the CIMIC (well, extension of school, delivery of school material, medical aid in the most remote villages, poultry farming and agricultural projects,...). 8 more have been planned.

Finally, to carry out war operations is not easy but the initiative and clear rules of engagement offer a much higher mental quality than the peacekeeping operations. We feel that we never have been better prepared since, for the first time, we have to implement in operations skills for which our units are daily training.

¹ Traditional assembly of the village gathering the Maleks, the white men (the white beards) and officials dignitaries (former war chiefs,...)

² To involve leaders and gain their support, we might usefully rely on the ANA brigades imams. To take into account the religious dimension or show that we respect it by proposing a prayer is always welcomed.

³ The FRENCHBAT operations have directly contributed to defeat around hundred insurgents. Furthermore, 21 ammunition caches, 6 suicide-bomber jackets, 3 IEDs and 7,500 UXOs have been neutralized.

⁴ The situation remains delicate and the durability of the joining of some villages will rely on our capability to provide them with some good reasons to dare to resist to the terror imposed by insurgents. Significant rebuilding actions to their benefit, which are far beyond the only CIMIC capabilities, are entirely indispensable.

The Engagement of a Combined Arms Task Force

The Task Force CHIMERE¹ in Kapisa

A Battalion Task Force, mainly generated around the 8th *Régiment Parachutiste d'Infanterie de Marine*², composed of one staff, one headquarters and logistics company and two company teams as well as dedicated assets from battalion level, was engaged from June 30 till December 20, 2008, in the Kapisa province in Afghanistan. The mission of the force was to relieve a greatly smaller US unit and to take into account the mission of securing several valleys where the presence of insurgents was a recognized fact.

BY COLONEL ARAGONES, COMMANDING OFFICER 8TH RPIMA, COMMANDER FRENCH KAPISA TF 700 UNDER US COMMAND IN RCE FROM JULY TO OCTOBER 2008



Context of Action

This first deployment within the *Regional Command – East*, in an adverse province, with a lot of insurgent activities and in the summer time, was a technical, tactical and human challenge both as for the deployment and the operations.

Committed to the ISAF operation within the Regional Command-East, under the US CJTF 101³ command, the TF KAPISA was deployed by the end of June 2008 on Bagram military base. After a 3-day adjustment to the theater in the framework of the US RSOI⁴, it was deployed effective July 11, step by step, on the two *Forward Operating Bases (FOB)* of Nijrab and Tagab which were 15 km distant from one another.

Responsible of the KAPISA province, which encompasses 7 districts, the TF CHIMERE however focused its action on the 3 districts of NIJRAB, ALASAI and TAGAB due to the fact that the operations areas of the insurgents were located in the Southern-East part of this province.



This mandate was original due to the fact that we simultaneously had to:

- Deploy on two forward bases and settle to endure,
- While showing the flag and beginning to fight in the action area,
- And making effort on a gradual adaptation as well as on the consideration of the geographical and human environment.

Conduct of Operations

The force was engaged in long-lasting high intensity counter-insurgency fights. They require the use of the whole battalion assets as well as those of the RC-E. Actions were carried out in summertime which is the most favorable season for the insurgency using pedestrian isolated supply lines in altitude. Those actions were also carried out in the face of an enemy living in this country and knowing the nooks and crannies of any valley better than anybody. This enemy has, in addition, the possibility to merge into the population it knows very well by burying his weaponry or using very well hidden caches.

Operations were carried out according to two forms which both have advantages: foot patrols quickly provide a precise knowledge about terrain, enemy; they ensure presence through a direct link with population and enable to “feel” the atmosphere. After an operation, they enable to assess a posteriori its efficiency and contribute to intelligence collection. Operations carried out at the level of company team or battalion TF create an unsecure environment for the insurgents who do not know whether they are identified or not. They have to move or at least to communicate. Operations later enable to widen the patrol perimeter and despite they often are not very efficient at the time, they give advantage back to the force.

Lessons Learned

In the framework of such a high risk engagement, a high quality and long (6 months) preparation is instrumental.
It implies that everyone takes part in it and

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that procedures (e.g. air support) as well as equipment employed on the theater might be used: *“train as you fight and fight as you train”*.

The mix of the different force components must be realized as soon as possible and kept all along the mission preparation phase. To be in a good physical condition is also vital to face altitude, the load to be carried and the quick series of missions. A great part of the training therefore must be carried out in the closest fighting conditions: permanently wearing a flak-jacket, as well as basic ammunition, water, optical, electro-optical and signals assets, etc... stowage. All units are concerned, to include those which normally are not so frequently called upon such as aid stations for example, and must absolutely take the same combat units training. Consequently, light and flexible units are the most suited ones.

A US demanding environment as for planning.

The RC-E environment as well as the important but however limited assets (such as close support and utility helicopters, drones, electronic support aircraft, etc) and used in a focused situation by all *Task Forces* have imposed on the *Task Force CHIMERE* staff specific constraints as for operations planning and forced it to create an operation matrix for the whole campaign so as to possess a pre-assignment of assets.

In combat, command and control at all levels remains the backbone. The fighter's value is instrumental only if backed by a leader who masters his role and proves a knowledge of the situation and anticipation capability. In order to achieve that, the fight adaptation phase must not be neglected so as everyone, from the team leader up to the battalion commander, might understand the environment and the enemy.

Not to try to be innovative at all costs, but rather to well implement the basic war principles regarding the unity of command, intelligence, support and service support. To strive to keep the surprise of operations which first and foremost guarantees the security of engaged troops. To conceive simple maneuvers but perfectly assimilated by everyone and carefully rehearsed: a less brilliant but efficient maneuver is better than a badly conceived original idea. From that moment, the preparation of all operation has focused all efforts around three main meetings: briefing about the concept of operations and actions expected from everyone ; meeting called *“back brief”* where the elements commanders brief about their mission, the identified key points and the potential difficulties to be met; lastly the after action review which is the only one which enables to clear away the mist of the war and to understand everyone's role as well as the encountered enemy's action.

Conclusion

Being proud of the job done, the TF CHIMERE has experienced around fifty combat actions labeled as *Troop In Contact (TIC)* involving Air support. Twelve *Improvised Explosive Devices (IED)* were laid down during our more than five- month mission, seven of them were cleared. One was discovered before being laid down. Lastly the BN TF has had fifteen wounded soldiers, four of them were urgently repatriated and three later on.

During its summer mandate, opening an unknown area, an important work of assimilation, cultural integration and data base creation has been done. In the same time, the population which is the main challenge, has been convinced of the legitimacy of our action on its side. Without sticking to our motivations, it perceived that our presence has been before all, devoted to enable it to live as it wanted, being protected from pressures and threats. As a result it has cooperated more and more. The incoming battalion has therefore been able to proceed in the same way. It nearly marks the end of the first year of French presence in Kapisa and depicts very well the continuity of the managed action.

Finally, after more than five months of operations, the units which have composed this first Battalion Task Force might be considered as battle-hardened units. This engagement has provided everyone with a more precise knowledge of his job but this mission has, above all, federated all energies around a common objective and has bound soldiers like no other mission can.



- 1 Upon completion of the theater reconnaissance beginning of June, General Milley, RC-E deputy operations asked the KAPISA Bn TF commander , according to US tradition, to nickname his Task Force for the mandate duration. The name of Task Force CHIMERE has been chosen to pay tribute to the French Indochina paratroopers as well as those of the 8th RPIMa, and therefore it is under this nickname that all French soldiers deployed in KAPISA in the framework of this first mandate are known.
- 2 Airborne Marine Infantry Battalion.
- 3 CJTF 101: Combined Joint Task Force 101 (101st Airborne Division)
- 4 RSOI: compulsory training for all units deployed in RC-E.

The **RC-C₁** French Helicopter Detachment

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL ARNAUD CAZALAA, DAOS S3, COMMANDER KABUL HELICOPTER DETACHMENT

A joint operational unit under the command of the Special Operations Army Aviation Element (DAOS²), the French helicopter detachment of the RC-C is composed of 6 helicopters and 80 people coming from 5 different units belonging to the 3 Services. This article aims at describing its organization, its missions as well as the tactical lessons learned from the operations carried out in its action area.

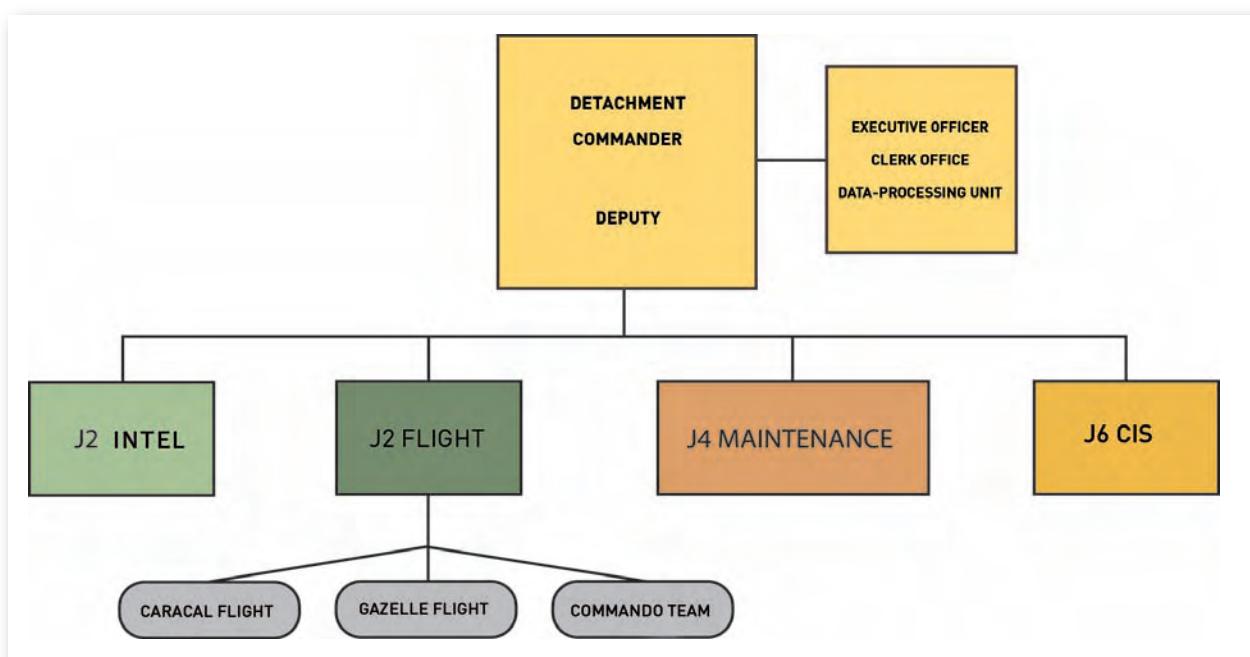
Organization

Initially set up by the Air Force in November 2006, two EC 725 «CARACAL» have equipped the first helicopter detachment deployed in support of operation PAMIR. Based in KAI³, this unit has progressively changed. The Airmobile brigade (BAM) has replaced CARACALS by COUGARs between the end of 2007 and April 2008 ; the return of the Air Force in May 2008 accompanied by a reinforcement of GAZELLE from the 1st RHC as of October 2008, thus giving this detachment its 3-service feature as well as enhanced capabilities. Since January 2009, it is under the command of a DAOS senior officer. It is composed of three CARACALS, two of which are manned by crew belonging to DAOS and the third one by a crew from the EH4 «Pyrénées», as well as three GAZELLES with crew from

the 1st RHC. A team of the Air Force Commando (30 rounds CPA⁵) out the structure with a medical unit, the 1st and 5th RHC and Air Force support personnel.

Under the **RC-C** command for the operations carried out in its **AOR**⁶, the detachment is also tasked by the French higher representative (REPFRANCE), particularly in support of liaisons towards Kapisa or missions in support of **OMLT**. In any case, the mission requests are centralized by the RC-C Aviation G3, which remains the only detachment point of contact as for the **tasking**.

The detachment is standard organized : J2, J3, J5, J4, J6 with three operational cells: a 3-aircraft CARACAL flight, a three-aircraft GAZELLE flight and a commando team. All missions are jointly prepared and carried out through standardized and evolving briefings and methods.



Missions

The missions assigned to the detachment according to the current operation order encompass the whole forces airmobile tactical support and service support skills.

- The medical evacuation (EVASAN⁷) is ensured 7/24 in support of *ISAF RC-C* personnel.
- The tactical transportation enables to connect in a safe and quick way all the French facilities (*FOBS*⁹), for logistic movements.
- The *ISR*¹⁰ encompasses the intelligence collection missions: scouting, reconnaissance, checking of facilities or lines of communication, validation of land routes and landing zones.
- The heli-transport enables to land or extract *ISAF RC-C* forces during operations: FRENCHBAT¹¹, *JTAC*¹²...



- The C2 support: helicopters enable to board a tactical commander able to lead while flying be he *AMC*¹³ or *GMC*¹⁴: the GAZELLE and CARACAL helicopters enable to have thermal imagery and air-to-air, air-to-ground communication means.
- The fire support is only possible with GAZELLE equipped with HOT missiles. This is the weakness of the helicopter detachment, which could be favorably rounded out by a TIGRE helicopter team to grant a better employment consistence (support of committed modules and ground forces).
- A part of the *PR*¹⁵ skills, mainly *IMEX*¹⁶ oriented in support of the forces, with a *CSAR* capability.

In concrete terms, the helicopter detachment offers around 200 flight hours in support of forces.

Tactical lessons learned

The main threat directed against the helicopters is the ground-to-air fires, mainly coming from *SAFs*¹⁷ and from RPG 7, direct or ballistic fires: they number 376 direct attacks against helicopters in 2008 throughout the whole

Afghan theater. We also notice cal 50 heavy machine guns and ground-to-air missiles fires. The latter number only 5 direct attacks (missed) against aircraft in 2008. Taking into account the unsafe and hostile ground, flights are systematically carried out by two aircraft. This configuration enables a better threat observation and above all a pinpoint or pick-up capability in case of failure or crash. The Air Force commando team might be also committed to *IMEX* mission on short notice.

The Air units are organized in mixed or of same type modules according to the effects to be obtained. For any mission involving more than a flight the element leader boards a GAZELLE or a CARACAL to fulfill the *AMC* role.

The operational missions are mainly carried out in support of the FRENCHBAT. Some have already been achieved in support of the *OMLT* and others as autonomous ones (deception operations). The FRENCHBAT uses primarily helicopters for *ISR* in support of its tactical maneuver; GAZELLES are a major asset in this field (scouting), remaining in the Bn TF leader's hands or one of his subordinates (company commander (CDU) or platoon leader (CDS)). Light, stealth and not very noisy, this asset mission is essential to collect information prior to any deployment of ground forces. It couples with the *ISR* means inventory such as the MALE¹⁸ type UAVs (US PREDATOR, French SIDM¹⁹) or SDTI²⁰. The versatility of the GAZELLE, coupled with its ability to provide a sidelong thermal vision taking into account the leveling has turned it into a unique highly appreciated tool.

On the one hand the daylight *ISR* missions call upon the classical skills taught in schools; however the asset remains quite vulnerable and the area is quickly congested. On the other hand, by night, new courses of action have been elaborated to enable the collection of very precise information about areas or axes safely. The employment is therefore highly improved by night. If it does not have dedicated support (US APACHE or KIOWA), the helicopters detachment (DETHELICO) carries out its missions by night, using GAZELLE teams to scout CARACAL insert or extract positions. The capabilities of the VIVIANE system of



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the GAZELLE and the *FLIR*²¹ of the CARACAL are excellent by night and enable to safely deploy troops in hostile area(s) while taking advantage of surprise.

The air-to-ground fire support of the troops or the helicopters detachment during operations is ensured from the US CAS²² or the CCA²³. The difference between the two types of support is simple: «CCA begins where CAS ends²⁴».

As for employment, the fire support provided by the helicopter is much more precise than ammunition delivered by planes. In a country where any civilian loss pushes in the Taliban' arms the rest of the family, this point is particularly important. All pilots from the detachment have therefore been trained to the *CCA* by BAGRAM US pilots, in theory and then in practice. They are subsequently able to request and guide helicopters fires on board of GAZELLE or CARACAL, from where sight is often better. This procedure requires, like joint operations with American assets which are carried out in *RC-C*, a good command of the English language. This point is vital, both to be able to brief as well as to lead in the air or on the ground.

Conclusion

Afghanistan offers the crew the opportunity to develop air-combat in the very meaning of the word. It allows to confirm the basic principles taught in schools while imposing innovation which enables to face the threats: to keep initiative when confronting enemies weaker but opportunist, evolutionary, stealth and smart. The airmobile tactics must therefore evolve to enable the crew to permanently keep initiative and surprise effect, two war principles which gain all their meaning here.

1 *Regional Command-Capital*

2 Détachement ALAT des Opérations Spéciales/ Special Operations Army Aviation Element

3 *Kabul International Airport*

4 Escadron d'Hélicoptères/ Helicopter Squadron (from the Air Force)

5 Commandos Parachutistes de l'Air/ Air Force Commandos

6 *AOR (area of responsibility)*: zone de responsabilité

7 Medical evacuation/ Evacuation sanitaire

8 *International Security and Assistance Force*

9 *Forward Operating Bases*

10 *Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance*

11 French Battalion /Bataillon français

12 *Joint Tactical Air Controller*: guidage des appuis feu CAS (close air support)

13 *Air Mission Commander*: chef de l'opération aéromobile

14 *Ground mission Commander*: chef de l'opération au sol

15 *Personnel Recovery* : personnel recovery, encompasses *SAR (Search and Rescue)*, *CSAR (Combat Search and Rescue)*, *IMEX (Immediate Extraction)* , *CR (Combat Recovery)* for people other than aircrew and *NAR (Non Conventional Assisted Recovery)* hostage rescue operations carried out only by Special Forces

16 *Immediate Extraction*: immediate recovery of crew in case of breakdown or crash

17 *Small Arms Fires*

18 Medium altitude long endurance/Moyenne altitude longue endurance

19 MALE Interim tactical drone system /Système de drone intérimaire MALE

20 SDTI : système de drone tactique intérimaire/ Interim tactical drone system

21 *Forward looking infra red.*

22 *Close Air Support*

23 *Close Combat Attack*: (helicopter fire support)

24 *CCA* starts where *CAS* stops.

The IEDs Evolution in Afghanistan in 2008

BY MAJOR PIERRE TENAILLEAU

In 2008, Afghanistan has experienced more than 4,000 Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) attacks, it means more than the double of 2007. The IEDs employment is not recent but Afghanistan is a country where they are systematically used. Face to this threat, the coalition members are trying to improve the protection of their soldiers and to act against the devices. This human and financial investment is focusing on a technological answer and the deployment of new capabilities. However, despite these efforts, IEDs remain efficient and NATO and ANSF (*Afghan National Security Forces*) losses have never been so high. Indeed, the IEDs are implemented thanks to very simple and tested technological processes which rustic style is just the opposite of the NATO technological answers.

IEDs, Weapons Supporting a Tactics

IEDs attacks implement tested guerilla techniques. Their impact is not limited to the sole physical or psychological effects but also take part in hindering the coalition freedom of movement. In response, nations imagine major technological protection measures. However, looking for a comprehensive answer necessarily comes up against the diversity of systems we can find on this theater.

Indeed, to speak about IEDs compels to make out on the one hand the technology used in the preparation and the trigger action system, and on the other hand the tactics used in their implementation (choice of the tactical and strategic objectives). Thus their use varies according to the target and the desired effect: They can be used either with the aim of harassing, terrorism or ambush support. Above all, they particularly offer the advantage to preserve the insurgents' freedom of action.

The favorable areas of attack are known, the targets, even if it is not too difficult to get close to them, remain easily identifiable. The look for the added value remains a constant, either aiming at tactical objectives by destroying the main threat, the C2 means or limited assets, or aiming at strategic objectives by striking facilities, VIPs or symbolic targets, but the minds as well.

IEDs, Back to Simplicity

The fight against the IEDs is characterized by a short loop reactivity. To defend themselves, troops take advantage from innovations such as jammers, the improvements of armor or the development of new fighting capabilities.



Logar : attack of a French convoy.

These new assets, despite a costly development, are offering, for most of them, only a partial answer to the problem. Moreover, they create important training needs both to learn how they work and to integrate their tactical use. Taking these protections and their limits into account and in the scope of a relationship of the weak to the strong, the insurgents are keeping very simple operating modes without taking part in this technological logic. Despite some complex IEDs have already been used, it seems that home-made systems remain predominant. Thus, in reply to jammers spreading, the insurgent is using again more traditional assets in which mechanics overrides electronics. This trend explains the significant decrease of radio controlled systems and the renewal of pressure or wire systems even if they impose longer laying time. In the same way, facing a longer range and an improved capability of returning fire, he favors either the remote control of the launch unit at several hundred meters from the target or the combination of the several ignition systems. These methods enable to select the target without any collateral damage. In reply to the deployment of *MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected)* – type vehicles such as the BUFFALO, the insurgents have two approaches. The first method requires more complex systems which have shown their efficiency. The explosively formed penetrator/projectiles (*EFP*¹) can currently pierce all armors. However their employment remains limited due to the difficulty to make them and their lack of accuracy. The second one is simpler and consists in increasing the power of the systems. Devices of more than 100kg are standard from now on despite the risks incurred during the laying. The use of duct lanes remains predominant since their size enables the employment of very important loads on the all width of the axis and their number denies any systematic check.

IEDs, the Research for a Strategic Effect

Hard to prevent, the suicide attacks, despite being spectacular, remain however limited and located to some areas or particular targets. This could be explained by the difficulty to enlist “volunteers” and the uncertainty as for the result since the martyr might hesitate or be neutralized before triggering his charge. However they offer a real added value thanks to their lethality and above all their media and psychological power.

The media impact will be looked for, particularly in the RC-C, the real center of gravity of the war in Afghanistan. Any attack is therefore significantly exploited by the media as well as the political community. Its effects go well beyond the Afghan borders.

The psychological impact of a suicide attack is instrumental in maintaining a «traumatic stress» climate which will be at the origin of a challenge between *ISAF* troops and the population.

Relying on this breakdown of the relationship, the insurgent, while targeting his strikes, tries to increase his ascendancy over the Afghan society. Concerned not to alienate a population which conceals and protects him, the insurgent selects his victims by giving greater importance to *ISAF* personnel and other debtors, while limiting the better he can collateral damages. Thus the casualties in the queues at the *ISAF* bases entrances are given more importance than those indiscriminate caused during attacks on patrols. At the same time, any civilian damage done by *ISAF* will be subject to a systematic and important media hype.

The Counter Measure: Training People

Confident with his experience, the insurgent very quickly takes advantage of his successes but above all his failures, which is the feature of small structures. Confronted to the implementation of new counter measures, he adapts himself and strikes at the weakest points. Faced to this responsiveness, the armed forces react too. However changes are slower since any evolution requires to consider at the same time strategy and tactics. Moreover, emergency measures show their limits. Thus the responsive adaptation which reduces the acquisition times for adapted equipment has a cost which might have a significant impact on the defense budget in the long run. In the same manner, the lessons learned loop has still to be improved and find a compromise between the secrecy of the subject and the demand for a quick and fluid communication required for responsiveness.

Despite those technical changes the soldier remains in the heart of the fight against IEDs. *ISAF* assesses that casualties are mainly due to a lack in soldiers' training. Thus NATO requests that everyone has a minimal knowledge to detect IEDs, to restrain effect and to take part in the fight against networks. France begins to size up this challenge and must now maximize the deployment of her new capabilities while improving soldiers' training. The awareness sessions being assessed to be inadequate, training trails have been set up in some units. The integration of the IED threat in the exercise is now systematic, particularly at the Forces Training Center, and during the operational preparation for deployment (MCP). The Land Forces Command carries out studies about the details of implementation to ensure the best training possible at all levels for all services. These measures should come off by 2009.

¹ *EFP: explosively formed penetrator/projectile*

C.IED¹ among the Allies

A Still Confidential Field for Some Countries

BY MAJOR PARNET, 2IC (2ND IN COMMAND), EOD (EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL) HEADQUARTERS

Major PARNET, 2IC, EOD Headquarters, who intends to focus on this issue and fuel thought takes part in the joint *CIED* working group and was assigned to the *CIED* branch of ISAF² Headquarters in Afghanistan in 2007 for about seven months. Today, *CIED* is a matter of discussion within our armed forces, which results into debates, stand-taking, and - to some extent - questioning our operational methods and processes.

There is an issue with which everyone agrees: the requirement to favor a comprehensive approach in front of a widespread use of *IEDs*³ by an irregular adversary.

Regarding this issue, France is in a state of excitement, endeavoring to meet this threat by putting to work the whole of relevant capabilities gathered within a joint working group.

What about our Allies within NATO? What are their approaches? Are skills in this field the same for everyone? What are the stakes for the future?

CIED Actors: a Limited Group of Countries

Within NATO, English-speaking countries are the main *CIED* actors. No doubt, there is an American leadership and a well identified group of member countries.

Heavily committed in the Iraqi and Afghan theaters, the Americans have deeply developed their warfare capabilities for some years. Actually, they are leaders in this field and they rely on *JIEDDO*⁴, a powerful specific organization. Set up in 2006, this organization mainly aims to find solutions by attacking the adversary network,

increasing the freedom of movement for friendly forces, and training any combatant likely to be committed in *IED* context for the best. *JIEDDO* relies on strong links on the US territory and in the various theaters in order to be coherent and to deal with the *IED* issue rapidly – a key efficiency factor. Moreover, this interagency organization, is in a position to use all useful civilian resources enabling to deal with this threat in a transnational manner. As an example, over 400 people work within the *JIEDDO* structure, and its annual budget amounts to about 5 billion US dollars⁵.

Similarly, the so-called *ABCA*⁶ countries have developed specific structures. The Canadians are creating a Counter-*IED* structure: it is a «*CIED task force*» in progress since 2007. In this field, Canada's dynamism is strongly linked to the heavy toll of casualties they suffered in Afghanistan. Australia also did the same by having set up a «*CIED task force*» since 2007. As for the British, they have had an experience for over 30 years, owing to the conflict in Northern Ireland during which they had to face repeated *IED* attacks; therefore, their structure is fit for this kind of threat.

All these countries build a hard core, with a cutting-edge *CIED* skill; they are close to each other through obvious cultural links, and they rapidly chose dedicated *CIED* structures at national level. This remark is illustrated in

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Afghanistan, within the main headquarters that includes a *CIED* element, the *CIED branch*. This *CIED branch* is monitored by the Americans, and strongly supported by the English-speaking countries; thus, there is very little room left for other countries, which are only involved in it marginally.

Other Countries: Building While Operating

Beyond this English-speaking circle, other NATO members have focused on immediate *IED* processing, once committed in a theater of operation.

Numerous countries have responded to counter the *IED* threat; they have focused on force protection by dealing with *IEDs* as a device. Very often, these measures resulted from actions carried out by NATO and the limited English-speaking circle to encourage these countries to go ahead. In the Afghan theater, the *CIED branch* of ISAF headquarters set up a whole set of training sessions to meet the lack of skills from committed countries. This gap had to be filled.

Similarly, NATO has set up an *ad hoc* working group since June 2008; it deals with *CIED* in order to process all the aspects of this issue in a coordinated manner.

Experiencing the first casualties and getting aware of this kind of threat, countries like France, Germany, or even Spain realized this kind of war, in which *IEDs* are massively implemented in the scope of insurrectional warfare. It is not only a matter of protecting oneself, but it becomes a matter of avoiding the use of *IEDs* by an adversary; to this end, it requires to attack the network, to break up the components of the *IED* system (manufacturers, planners, *IED* layers, support...).

Still today, there is a large discrepancy with the English-speaking countries in terms of threat awareness, personnel training, technological development or tactical maneuver. Now, the other countries should be in keeping with this *CIED* warfare; it should not only rely on a defensive approach, but also develop it through an offensive approach including attacks against the *IED* network and a high level of training for their servicepeople in order to be able to take the initiative.



Photo de la «CIED Branch» prise par le service photographique du PC de la FIAS en 2007.

It requires a new approach to military operations, other C2 (Command and Control) structures, and especially a capability to process information in real time. These countries have to build while operating, as the IED threat is now a common factor to be taken into account for any commitment into a theater of operation but also because an irregular adversary could change one day and become a terrorist in our own countries.

Developing Cooperation Within NATO and Among Countries: a Requirement

Owing to the importance of challenges, the capability to work in close cooperation among the Allies will enable to carry out an efficient action; it should develop both at theater level and at NATO's and countries' levels.

More than ever, *CIED* requires sharing information and data to attack the network and take the initiative again; however, this issue is still sensitive for several countries. At theater level, we have to stand at the heart of *CIED* operations to better become aware of the threat and draw all the consequences. It should become possible for non-English-speaking countries to accede to some key J3 and J2 jobs to adjust to this new cultural environment. Of course, it requires a significant contribution from these countries in terms of troops, but also an actual opening will from the English-speaking countries. As a swap of good processes, all of us could take advantage of it, and it could also enable to make the action carried out by the committed force more efficient.

At NATO level, the capability to share information is vital. It does deal with an access to merged pieces of information from various sources to be able to claim carrying out offensive operations. True information-sharing should be embodied through a structure enabling to merge military information based on a data-sharing network. On that account, the whole of countries will be in a position to better play its role in the terrain. Then they can make the decision and win in these new kinds of war. Support of this sharing could become embodied within a CIED-dedicated Center of Excellence, which is currently being created in Spain.

At countries' level, inter-agency work is to be developed. The entanglement of military, security, and legal aspects becomes significant within CIED. Why would we attack networks, if we cannot chase after terrorists out of the theater whereas we have evidence? English-speaking countries already include police forces, and forensic experts in their military operations. The outcome of this cooperation is an overall capability to fight but also to strengthen military operations. Countries are brought to rethink the way they carry out military operations so that they have significant effects in terms of national and international security; and police and judiciary cooperation complete military action. Thus – and contrary to Clausevitz' thought, who considered the use of military force as the continuation of politics through other means – military action would no longer be an ultimate resort but a means to launch other kinds of warfare against an irregular adversary.

Among our Allies, *CIED* is not taken into account on an equal footing today. English-speaking countries are ahead of other countries, possibly because they are strongly involved in high-*IED*-level operations. However, NATO and the whole of concerned countries should endeavor to have a better cooperation in order to better adapt to these new kinds of warfare. This is demanded by the standing and transnational feature of this threat, and the requirement to combine efforts to better fight.

1 *CIED: Countering Improvised Explosive Device*

2 *ISAF: International Security Assistance Force*

3 *IED: Improvised Explosive Device*

4 *JIEDDO: Joint Improvised Explosives Device Defeat Organization*

5 Source: JIEDDO Web site

6 American, British, Canadian, Australian

The Operational Preparation Before Deployment (MCP) /Afghanistan, a Strong Investment for Land Forces

By LIEUTENANT COLONEL (P) HUBERT LEGRAND, LAND FORCES COMMAND/OPERATIONAL PREPARATION BRANCH/G7

One of the major challenges for the units operational preparation before deployment (MCP)/Afghanistan is to ensure their full interoperability both joint and with the allies (NATO and Afghan forces) as well as a high level of counterinsurgency fighting preparation.

The hardening of the theater since 2007 and the use of a combined and multinational fight at an ever lower tactical level have led the Land Forces Command (CFT) to deeply modify the structure of the operational preparation for deployment/Afghanistan.

The result is a totally new process expanding from the strict operational preparation and including lessons learned in a short loop. It does not go without facing a permanent threefold challenge for the Land Forces Command (CFT): units cohesion, training realism and a general balance of the operational preparation.

A Peculiar, Strengthened and Streamlined Structure for Pre-Deployment Preparation

The limits of a decentralized system

The much decentralized structure of the Land Forces MCP until 2008 scheduled a general framework and a 3-phase organization (individual, collective and validation) phased over 4 months. A limited temporary support was provided in particular for documentation in the CFT data electronic system and the set up for some CPs of validation exercises at the CP Battle Command Training Center (CEPC). Besides that, the lead brigades were free for training and later certifying their detachments.

This structure did not provide either a precise vision of the job done or a full efficiency assessment.. Moreover it did not enable a quick adaptation of programs according to lessons learned. Considering the hardening of the Afghan theater and the tensions about the training conditions on the homeland the system has showed its limits.

The OMLT¹ operational preparation for deployment, a basis to be enhanced

During the summer 2007, the *OMLT* preparation was given a specific support/ identification of compulsory courses²; sizeable budgets granted (including ammunition); identification of expertise centers³ responsible for collecting and disseminating lessons learned; writing of a memorandum for the brigades⁴. This structure was taken over and suited for the 8th RPIMA MCP on the account of the SRF and later the Battalion Task Force (Bn TF) KAPISA during the first half-year 2008.

The quality of the preparation of the concerned units has been unanimously recognized despite some weaknesses⁵. However the density of the program as well as the continual moves due to the multiplication of courses throughout France, thus creating important costs overruns and units attrition before deployment, have shown the necessity to streamline the process. At the same time the programs⁶ have been deeply adjusted thanks to hot wash-up carried out during the mandate.

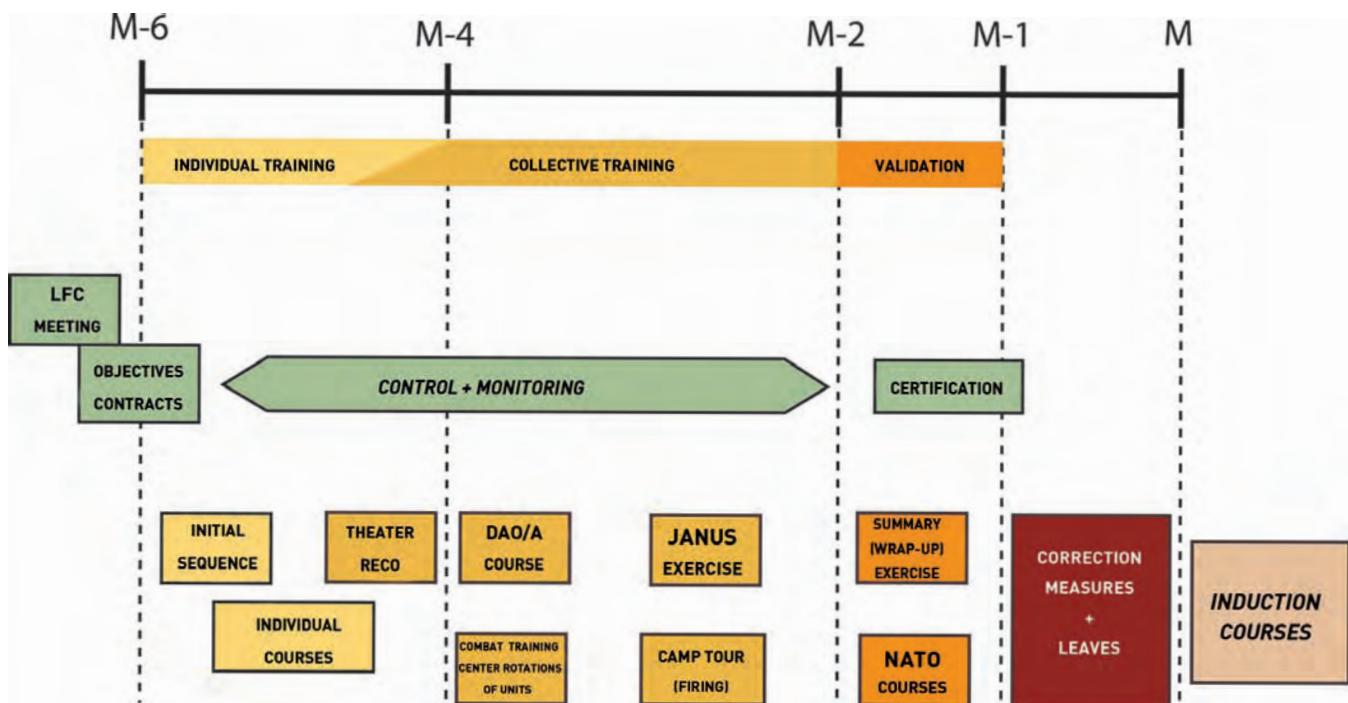
Operational Preparation for Deployment

A new 6-month structure relying on an expertise center

During the second half-year, the Land Forces Command (CFT) has carried out a study to reorganize the MCP Afghanistan relying on this experience and the one of our allies (The lessons learned from the 18 August ambush being exploited without being clearly mentioned). The main

objective was to guarantee the level of the units preparation while ensuring a better sharing of the lessons learned in a short loop. The second objectives were to systematize these MCP for all units, to strengthen programs so as to reach the framework of the Bn TF KAPISA and to rationalize the process to avoid a premature attrition of the units and to facilitate a better general management.

Afghanistan MCP Current Structure



*This pattern approximates the maximal system ; it is suited to the kind of detachment.
For example, the Bn TF goes to CENTAC but does not attend NATO course contrary to OMLT;*

The decisions made were immediately implemented regarding the units currently under preparation: MCP spread over 6 months, planned before and certified one month before the deployment; reserved financial and ammunition resources; priority regarding requests for training camps, centers and training spaces; identification of an individual minimum «vital pack»⁷ designed to save lives without being a burden for deployed units.

The two key points of this structure are the operational support detachment-Afghanistan (DAO/A), attached to the 1st RCA in Canjuers, and the systematic resort to foreign military training unit (DIO) manned by units returning from mission.

The DAO/A is tasked to collect and disseminate lessons learned, to provide mentoring teams, to advise brigades during the MCPs, to manage the operational training detachments. It organizes courses for the benefit of individual soldiers, Bn TF, Kandak OMLTs and units. It has a peculiar training space for this purpose.

The DIO are temporary structures which mission is to share the recent theater experience by taking part in the direct training of the units currently in MCP. Coordinated and controlled by the DAO/A, these DIO are involved all along the MCP, from the beginning till the final wrap-up exercise.

Experiences and Feedback

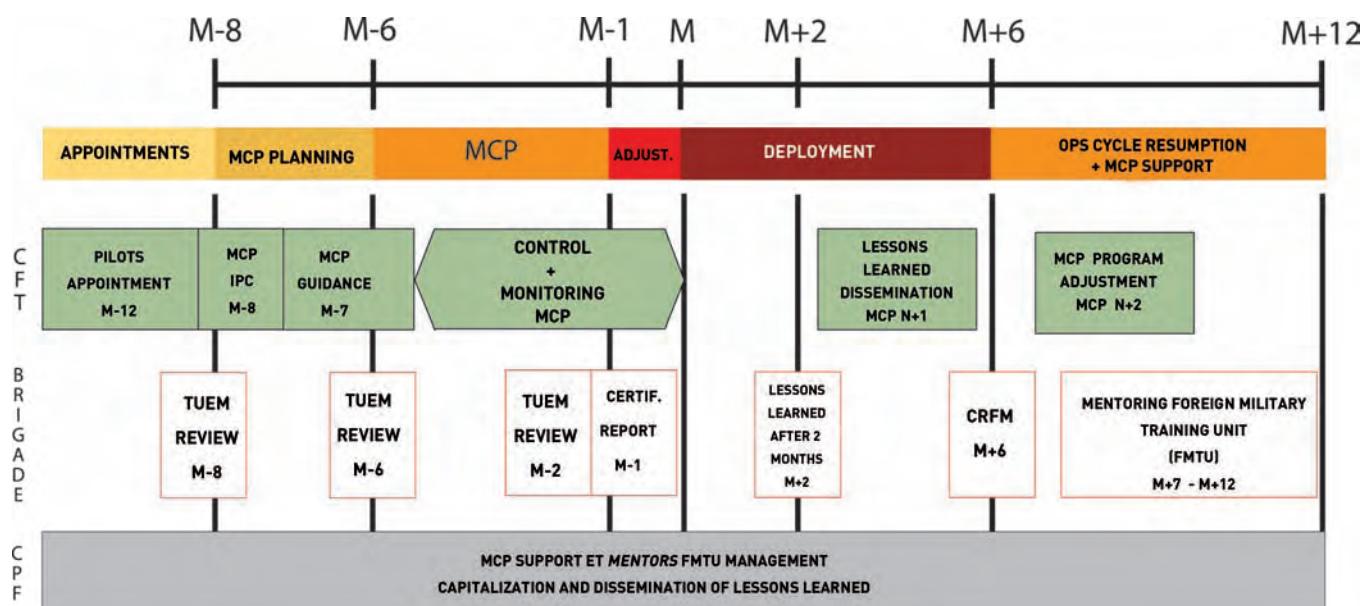
3 Permanent Challenges for the CFT

The cohesion of the detachments

The first challenge is to ensure the cohesion of the deployed detachments and their chains of command. Augmentees and most of the time joint modules external to the brigade modules are particularly concerned. Some key posts require additional individual training and have a role to play in the set up of the CPs⁸. In some cases the basic skills training of these reinforcements will also rely on the lead brigade.

The main difficulty is certainly to anticipate their nomination and then to obtain the provision they are made available to the lead brigade for the main activities of the MCP in order to facilitate their integration and to reinforce their mutual knowledge. To do that a coordination process has been defined with the Air Forces Command (CFA)⁹, to synchronize the handover planning and the MCP activities¹⁰ carried out on both sides. Similar modalities have been defined with the medical support and the specialist support brigades (BAS).

MCP Responsibilities



Appointments anticipation and quick adjustments of programs according to lessons learned are 2 main challenges. Any personnel not assigned 2 months before a deployment might be considered as an individual and attached if need be to a "vital pack" course.

A realistic training

The units and CPs configuration during their training must be as close as possible to the theater reality both as for equipment and procedures.

As for equipment the choice has been made to focus on the DAO/A of Canjuers, by realizing a specific training space for MCP. Composed of armored vehicles but also of an inventory of specific assets for the theater on the account of a responsive adjustment, this space aims at ensuring at least the units training and if possible the training of a reinforced company task force¹¹, according to the nature of the responsive adaptation process.

Moreover some **FOB** and a **C-IED** course are currently under development and joint firing capabilities are developed in Canjuers.

The dissemination of a complete and up-dated operational documentation remains difficult to implement due to direct connection with NATO networks and the rules related to classified information management.

The devoted CPF teams play a key role from the very beginning of the MCP and their involvement in the direct collection of the lessons learned on the theater and its dissemination via a short loop - either as raw material (operational documents) or processed ones (case study, memorandums) is much needed.

Operational Preparation for Deployment

To preserve the general balance of the operational preparation

The differentiated operational preparation concept enables, in some often tense conditions, to allocate to units under MCP/A a total resources priority. The risk would therefore be to unbalance the general operational preparation by not ensuring the minimum training threshold of all armed forces; a war, the one carried out in Afghanistan, would conceal other wars for which we must nevertheless train for.

The CFT therefore looks after this fragile balance in order not to hamper the other units training; this is particularly the case for ammunition, the employment planning of the specialized centers as well as the use of training spaces.

To sum up, the engagements in Afghanistan have a certain «laboratory effect» and the units preparation for this theater means a major investment. A MCP Afghanistan is a major operation, coordinated by the CFT, exceeding the battalion capabilities and the full involvement of the lead brigade, which is totally responsible not only for the nucleus of prepared units but also for the augmentees.

¹ *OMLT: Operational mentoring liaison team*

² Of which the one organized by NATO at Hohenfels, France being the most faithful nation to this course since the beginning.

³ CAA and CNEA

⁴ The first memo dated December 2007 has been replaced in October 2008 by a second version taking into account the experience gained.

⁵ Use of operational English language, training on *IED (Improvised Explosive Devices)* jammers and on PRC 117, air support employment

⁶ JFO and then DLOC concept and Air Force CTA integration at battalion Task Force level; thorough overhaul of the first aid and combat rescue training; battlefield stress management; guidelines on NTIC security and use.

⁷ Individual slots (embedded and augmentees) and short period theater missions.

⁸ Two-sided action: knowledge of combined needs and training of the combined employment (to include capabilities and constraints).

⁹ Air Force Command

¹⁰ For Air support: staff training by the CTA, *TACP-P* training with the theater procedures, practice of air support in collective training (including missions planning, fires coordination, intelligence integration, real guidance).

¹¹ If need be, resorting to substitute means has been looked for to get the fighters used to their ergonomics.

The high training level of these units as well as their broad experience gained on the theater must be beneficial to all land forces. For that, the lessons learned process has undergone a real accelerating pace, with an increased role of the brigade DIO and the CFT centers. In this respect the set up of the DAO/A is a perfect example of responsive adaptation concerning the operational preparation.

LEXICON:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| BAS | Brigades d'appui spécialisé / Specialist combat support brigades |
| CEPC | Centre d'entraînement des postes de commandement / CP Battle Command Training Center |
| CFA | Commandement des forces aériennes / Air Forces Command |
| CFT | Commandement des forces terrestres / Land Forces Command |
| CIMIC | Coopération civilo-militaire / Civilian- Military co-operation |
| CAA | Complexe d'aguerrissement des Alpes / Alps mountain training center |
| CNEA | Commission nationale des évaluations de l'artillerie / National board for FA units evaluation |
| CPF | Centre de préparation des forces / Army Training Center |
| CTA | Contrôleur tactique Air / Tactical Air Controller |
| DAO/A | Détachement d'assistance opérationnelle/Afghanistan / Operational assistance detachment/ Afghanistan |
| DIO | Détachement d'instruction opérationnelle / Foreign Military Unit Training |
| DLOC | Détachement de liaison, d'observation et de coordination / Liaison, observation and coordination detachment |
| FOB | Forward operational base |
| GED | Gestion électronique des données / Electronic data management |
| GTIA | Groupement tactique interarmes / Combined arms Battalion Task Force |
| IED | Improvised explosive device |
| NTIC | Nouvelles technologies d'information et de communication / New Communication and Information technologies |
| OMLT | <i>Operational mentoring and liaison team</i> |
| RETEX | Retour d'expérience / Lessons Learned |
| SGTIA | Sous-groupement tactique interarmes / combined arms company task force |
| SRF | Strategic response force de l'OTAN: NATO Strategic response force |
| TACP | Tactical air control party |

Political Adviser to the Force Commander in Afghanistan:

A Specific Role at Politico-Strategic Level

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MARIE-DOMINIQUE CHARLIER, PROJECT MANAGER WITH CDEF

The evolution of new types of conflicts is in particular characterized by the commitment of military means within the framework of the stabilization and reconstruction¹ phase. This justifies a second reflection about the use of military forces in a context which is more politico-strategic than strictly coercive. In order for this role to be effective, the military commander should, at the earliest opportunity, have a clear view of the objectives aimed at. These are selected by the political authority which had decided to use an armed force.

The commander's concept of operations should indeed be completely in line with the vision of the «desired political end state», both at the conception stage and at each phase of his conduct of operations. In fact the Polad new function naturally appears and cannot be ignored in this type of conflict².

The lessons learned by Lieutenant Colonel Marie-Dominique CHARLIER from her mission in Afghanistan, as Polad to the Force Commander, may be used as an example to illustrate what is expected from this emerging function.

A Strategic Mission

I was deployed in Afghanistan as an individual augmentee within the ISAF operational Staff in Kabul. In this scope I was assigned for six months³ as *Political adviser*⁴ to the Coalition Force Commanding General⁵.

Within a political cell composed of 10 people from six different nationalities⁶, I was clearly tasked to advise the ISAF Force Commander⁷ on the “evolution of political factors which could affect military decisions”. In this role, I led a team of four officers, who were regional advisers, each of them being responsible for a geographical area⁸.

Functionally, the Polad cell was responsible for monitoring the evolution of the political situation both at local, national and international level. This evolution was likely to result in implications for the conduct of the mission. This office had an assessment role. It had then to measure the level of governance, define the ways of improving it, participate in the HQ planning process, while maintaining contact with

the Afghan government and Parliament, as well as with representatives of the national and international communities⁹. In this respect, my mission, based on information data originating from the field, consisted in



Mission CIMIC. Nord de Kaboul

particular in proposing courses of action for governance, assessing governance and grading it¹⁰. Should the need arise, improvements had to be proposed. An essential dimension of relaying French policy influence also characterized this position. It especially required the preparation, for the ISAF Force commander's meetings with French representatives on the ground, politico-military situation reports and wording elements with regards to the French national policy. In addition, a watch on the international situation and a follow-up of the evolution of the relationship of Afghanistan with its main neighbors and partners had to be kept.

A very large freedom of action in the field was granted to the cell staff. This was demonstrated by obtaining a very rare authorization for access to all the political and military structures of the Afghan territory. The organization of Polad's cell was decentralized to a large extent with a double-headed structure, run by two diplomats, one US and one German.

The original features of this structure fell in its operational / strategic level, as well as in its multinational and civil-military composition.

In particular I could measure the influence of political factors on military decisions, especially during a counter-attack which took place in the district of Daman (Province of Kandahar). About a hundred Afghan people were killed or wounded and ISAF was blamed. Opposing forces took advantage of it while trying to undermine the credibility of the Force and to weaken the Government. The latter was forced to react. President Karzaï blamed the Coalition for it, so that he would not lose his own credit. The support of international public opinion also was at stake. This support was all the more essential since some of the contributing nations were initiating an internal debate regarding the extension of the mandate of their forces.

Therefore ISAF had to face a situation that jeopardized the support of the Afghan population and the robustness of its links with the Government, as well as the support of international authorities and contributing nations.

Then a tactical directive was issued by the ISAF Force Commander, as a reminder that the achievement of tactical goals was not justifiable after a strategic failure.

The use of weapons, especially air-to-ground support, was therefore restricted and governed by much more drastic rules. Added to which, the multinational aspect of commitments requires the commander to be aware of the different *national caveats* and to understand the different doctrines of the Coalition Forces, since each contributing country has its own approach. Units which at first sight appear similar in nature or name can act and use their resources in different ways.

They may also be subject to standards of acceptability (for example, as far as risks and losses are concerned), which greatly vary from one country or one culture to

another. In Afghanistan, the 39 nations making up ISAF may use very different rules of engagement. Once again, knowledge of these factors comes under the "intellectual weaponry" that is essential to the Polad.

As such, the Polad would have achieved its mission if he (she) acts in such a way that the Commander integrates the constraints compelled by the desired final political situation in all his decisions.

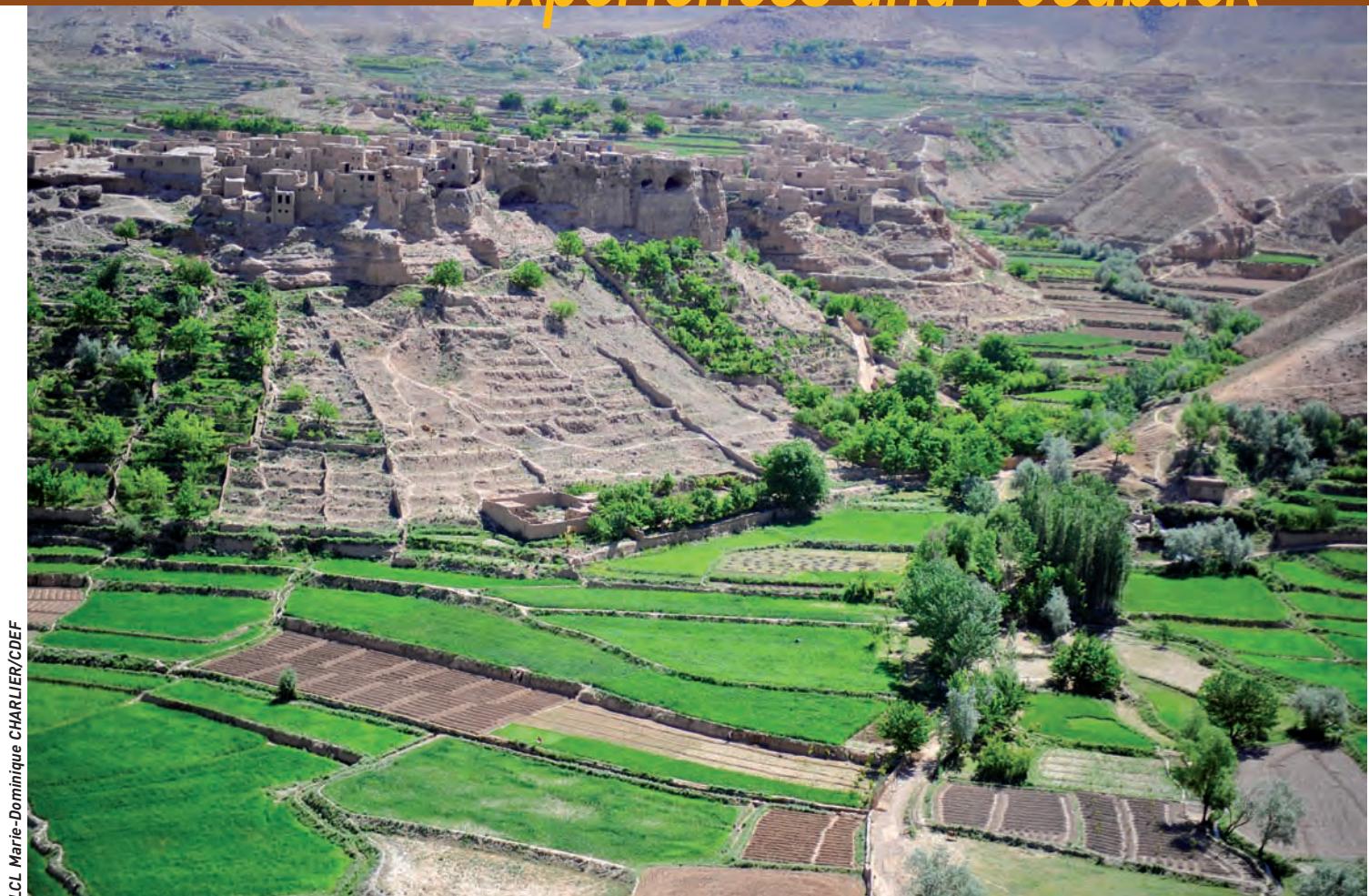


Villageois à Kunduz

A Political Mission With Operational Implications

Polad's mission may have direct operational effects. Thus for example, the AirLand battle doctrine specifies that commanders and tactical-level staff be politically advised: Polad's concept is more than capable of meeting this requirement.

Experiences and Feedback



LCL Marie-Dominique CHARLIER/CDEF

Conclusion

From now on, the end state at strategic-level includes many non-military variables that the Commanding General should systematically integrate in his operational decisions. The political culture becomes one of the keys to success. It is actually essential to make the situation clear and think about war, in a parallel but complementary way with regard to the various areas that are handled by the military HQs (planning, operations, intelligence, logistics ...).

Without any doubt, we need to let time take its course in order to allow people's minds to adjust to the importance of the political aspect in the military action. This principle, favored by Clausewitz is often recommended but remains difficult to implement.

For the military, this acculturation implies acceptance and integration of experts in governance, political science and international relations. These specialists should have gone through military education and should have accepted the challenge of making two worlds - political and military - meet. This dual culture will be one of the keys for a successful mission.

¹ For an in-depth analysis of these various phases: Army, «Winning the battle. Building peace». Land forces in present and future conflicts. FTo1, 2007, 84p.

² This method was initially used by the British, then by the Americans around 1985. As far as France is concerned, Polad has been used in the field since the Balkan conflict.

³ From February to August 2008.

⁴ Precisely: *Political Adviser Staff Officer Coordinator* (Polad So Coord).

⁵ Successively General McNeil, then US General McKiernan, current ISAF Force Commander.

⁶ American, Canadian, Italian, German, Romanian and French.

⁷ ISAF Commander.

⁸ North, South, East, West regions.

⁹ Local players (members of Parliament, governors, village leaders) and international players: UN, NGOs, embassies.

¹⁰ This rating is mainly based on the assessed “level of corruption” of representatives and their regions, on their support for President Karzai’s policies and on their opinions about the insurgents, Taliban and ISAF Coalition Forces as well.

The Operational Command: the Inevitable Tool for Counterinsurgency

BY MAJOR HUGUES ESQUERRE, CID

The revolutionary war¹ requires in its planning and conduct to make actions coherent which overstep a purely military framework and deal with all aspects of the society. This kind of warfare highlights the operational command which is the only one to have those capabilities with enough precision and long-sighted views. Despite those abilities, a change in the structures of the operational command is however necessary to face an immaterial war, with neither enemy battalion nor physical decisive victory to win.

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan provides a very interesting picture of this concept, particularly due to the deep structural and conceptual changes which have occurred within its staff in 2008 to better meet the demands of the counter-insurgency struggle.

The strategic choices decided in view of a military campaign must be implemented on the concerned theater of operations. This mission is devoted to the operational command level which is of vital importance. Indeed, only this level has enough autonomy, distance and proximity to have a coherent view of the whole situation to keep the strategic level informed about the ongoing or future evolutions, orientate and coordinate the action of the subordinate tactical commands. Responsible for the military coherent action, the operational command is also in charge of the integration of its activities with all the theater players – local civilian and military people, private or official foreigners – and the buildup of a local political dialogue to favor the achievement of its objectives.

If it is clear that this level of command is the cornerstone of the success in a campaign, this observation proves to be particularly true in the case of a revolutionary war which has very different characteristics from a conventional one.

Widely theorized since Mao's Long March², the revolutionary war has been thoroughly analyzed in the Western countries during the decolonization period. Some principles have been drawn from this theorization which must lead the armed forces facing this type of conflict. The main part of those principles clearly establishes that any solution leading to victory cannot be purely military. Winning "the hearts and minds" of the population is the foundation. The overall

counterinsurgency fight is therefore the essence of this kind of war. The media power, the legal aspect of the military commitment as well as the reinforcement of the international law which characterize our period are making it even truer. A first approach therefore easily allows to highlight a kind of spontaneous appropriateness between the operational level and the revolutionary war mainly due to its capability of coordination and integration of efforts in its area of operations. However, as a military command primarily designed to lead a conventional campaign, the operational command will be obliged to show mental as well as structural adaptation to face this kind of conflict.

These intellectual adaptations will be instrumental since they will influence the very course of the campaign. Firstly, in its planning and particularly in the definition of its lines of operation, the operational staff must absolutely involve, either in an active or passive way, all the players on the theater. Some of them will certainly shift from military to official or private organizations responsibility. Secondly, it must not hesitate to review and reassess the concepts of center of gravity and decisive points. On the one hand it can then identify those whose control and implementation will go outside, while keeping their vital importance in the current plan. On the other hand it can set up realistic criteria – sometimes immaterial – of progress rates. In this approach the *EBAO*³ concept gains all its importance.

Experiences and Feedback

Thus in Afghanistan, the buildup of a good government system (strategic objective which has been the subject of a dedicated line of operation) relies on the success of the electoral process which will lead to the presidential elections in spring 2009 (decisive point identified by *ISAF* and jointly dependant on NATO and the UN) which itself will be only possible in the absence of winter humanitarian disaster and therefore relying on the World Food Program food deliveries (decisive point identified by *ISAF* on which it has a minor influence).

The Afghan government, the international community and *ISAF* are therefore the three points of a triangle which represents the mutual interdependence and support. Each player has objectives – which could be qualified as decisive points – on which relies the implementation of other objectives. The final success of this campaign fundamentally relies on the close link between them and on its real efficiency.

As for the structural adaptations, they consist in modifying a headquarters which is traditionally organized around about ten staff sections more or less important to rebalance in support of functions which importance have increased due to the characteristics of the revolutionary war. The aim of this restructuring will therefore be both to improve the leverage capability of the forces over the population and the enemy, to simplify the operational structure and lastly – but above all – to highly increase the importance of the “stabilization⁴” capabilities.

That is why within the *ISAF* headquarters the following changes occurred in October 2008:

- Establishment of a strategic public affairs office cell directly under the command of the chief of staff and encompassing public affairs, operational information and psychological information;
- Establishment of a deputy chief of staff (DCOS) “joint operations” instead of two DCOS “land operations” and “air operations”;
- Reinforcement of the DCOS “stabilization”, by subordinating him from now the former Force Commander’s⁵ direct advisors to create a specific merging level in order to make action more coherent and efficient.

These modifications, in the form and in the spirit will enable the operational command to strengthen its action:

- *military*, in what could be qualified as the “conventional” aspect of its mission, it means to permanently ensure the coordination and the de-confliction between subordinate commands and integrate in the planning the organic means of its level;

- *civilian and economic* by its central and coordinating action within the international community, its planning, protection and support capabilities as well as its capability to assess the human needs and the rebuilding requirements thanks to the ground grid provided by the subordinate units;

- *political* by a daily involvement in the development and/or the augmentation of the military and civilian capabilities of the unit fighting the concerned insurrection and the coordination of the action of all the international players for the development of governance capabilities at all levels.

Considering all these parameters and the nature of the crises which currently trouble the world, an increase of the importance of the operational command will likely occur in a very short term according to the properties which have been just described. The French doctrinal thought, the structure of our headquarters and their training will altogether follow this trend and be required to evolve.

That is why, the participation of French officers in NATO “theater” staff and the integration of officers in the permanent command structure are an opportunity which importance must be assessed in the scale of the future engagement prospects in which counterinsurgency should have a primary importance.

¹ According to the terminology of LTC Galula, the revolutionary war corresponds to the confrontation between the insurgency on the one hand and the counterinsurgency on the other hand. The author denies «*to grant Mao that the opponent to the revolutionary is the counter-revolutionary, since this designation has become synonymous with reactionary*». He therefore chooses to speak of counterinsurgency.

² That must not lead us to forget the forerunners such as the Generals of the Army (Maréchaux) Gallieni and Lyautey, T.H. Lawrence or Brigadier General Némo.

³ *Effect Based Operations*, opérations basées sur les effets.

⁴ According to NATO terminology, in the framework of a global approach, the stabilization mission consists in weaving information and influence links with adequate partners in the fields of governance and r&d, both at national and regional levels, and to provide the Force Commander with analyses, briefing sessions and precise recommendations so as to support the mission to the benefit of the Afghan population.

⁵ Political advisor (*POLAD*)/conseiller politique, Legal advisor (*LEGAD*)/conseiller juridique, Development advisor (*DEVAD*)/conseiller développement.

The Operational Communication in Afghanistan: Taking up the Challenge of the Communication “War”

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL JÉRÔME SALLÉ, DEPUTY PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER AND SPOKESPERSON FROM DECEMBER 2008 TO APRIL 2009

«If the public opinion in the Western countries declines, if it gives up in the face of the first difficulties, if it does not understand the necessity to defend the liberty, the security of our country on those territories, then the enemy scores an additional point¹».

To convince is today at least as important as to win, the fight in the field of communication is permanent; the Afghan theater has taken into account the media constraint and everything is implemented to take up the challenge of the communication «war» in a difficult context.

A Unfavorable Media Context

A national surge is what soldiers engaged in Afghanistan were waiting for after the Uzbeen ambush. It was exactly what occurred first. But very quickly after the mourning, the media debate has got the upper hand. The press has issued around 2,000 articles and more than 120 journalists came on the theater in less than two months. Some media seemed to have tried to investigate looking for a hidden truth. Media have logically given a higher priority to the impressions of the survivors or the killed soldiers' relatives rather than the official communication and they even tried to oppose these views. That has created a medley of partial points of view, commented by journalists who often are not specialist. Subsequently a blurred and globally negative image was produced.



Despite good opinion polls about how French people are perceiving their armed forces, it seems that today the public opinion voices some lack of concern for the engagement of soldiers on theaters of operations. The opinion rediscovers the reality of the missions only when a drama occurs. Generally

speaking, to give one's life for the homeland is no longer so obvious, especially when the citizen does not immediately understand the legitimacy of the commitment.

To take part in this conflict remains subject to debate in the political community and the opinion. Like in most main European countries, the French public opinion in its majority does not support the commitment in Afghanistan. In the last poll, more than 50% opposed it. We must notice on the contrary that more than 60% of American people are supporting the deployment of reinforcements. In such a context it is essential that everything must be done on the spot to show the reality of the operational mission.

To be Ready to Face up

The public affairs office must be capable of escorting the numerous journalists on the terrain but also to carry out all the tasks related to the media function: media analysis, internal communication, participation in planning tasks... This is the reason why the public affairs structure has been reviewed at the end of 2008 to grow from 5 to 8 officers. As for the image team, it has been punctually reinforced by a second team. The officers, picked up from the armed forces pool of officers, are assigned quite early so as to be able to take part in the different operational preparation before deployment like any other soldier. They are therefore able to face difficult situations. An image team from the CNPI² used its weapons during the 6th February 2008 engagement in Kapisa.

The layout will only be complete and operational in April 2009 after the final installation in a media center able to host journalists in time of crisis and with the recruitment of an interpreter responsible for the analysis and the contact with the Afghan media.

Delegated by the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces (CEMA), the French Representative (REPFRANCE) Brigadier General Stollsteiner is responsible for communication on the theater. Given the fact that he is also subordinated to the *ISAF*³ commander as commander of the region capital, it is logical for his deputy/communication to be also his "chief *PAO*⁴" within the *RCC*⁵. Thus the deputy/communication is not in a frozen structure. He is able to organize his people into different missions and to shift efforts according to the needs. The public affairs deputy is also the spokesperson. As such, he is permanently entitled to speak to media.

The public affairs office is tasked to prepare all soldiers to be in direct contact with the journalists. Communication is on the agenda of the induction course delivered to any newcomer. It aims at making him understand that he is a «potential communicator» and explaining him which attitude to adopt with a journalist. This one is neither his enemy nor his «spokesman». Everyone is reminded that he must express himself at his own level of responsibility,

it means always refer to his own story and not the others' ones by giving his impressions or peddling rumors. Lastly, precaution and discretion recommendations due to operational reasons are given. This awareness should ideally start during the operational preparation for deployment including exercises with simulated media pressure.

From the operational point of view, communication is a fully-committed function closely linked, from the beginning, to the planning of any operation and integrated in the conduct of operations. The deputy/communication suggests the communication annexes and provide key message points as requested.

During the numerous media visits journalists are facing the operational reality. The journalist who escorts troops must not be a burden and must know how to react in case of problem. It is detrimental to a team leader to be diverted from his operational mission to take care of a journalist being in a difficult position. This is the press information officer's task, but it is also the journalist's responsibility to be in a good physical and psychological condition to carry out his story in good conditions. In September, a mission had to be incidentally stopped to evacuate two embedded journalists who were unable to follow the platoon.

To Ensure Credibility

A lot of journalists are induced to escort our troops during all the operations and sometimes to be in contact with the enemy. This enables them to show the reality of the mission to our fellow citizens and to prepare the minds to all kinds of situation. This hosting effort has been initiated from April 2008 with the setting up of the OMLT and followed by the one of the Battalion TF Kapisa in July.

Coordination is the key of to communication success in a crisis time. A lot of players are internally interacting at that time. To avoid discord or conflicting speech, which are synonymous with blurred communication, it is essential to coordinate as much as possible all potential players. Any cacophony might be immediately used either deliberately by the enemies or to underline some non professional skills. The Public Affairs Office from the Staff of the Armed Forces naturally ensures this coordination between the terrain and the strategic level.

But during crisis, a lot of other players can communicate on the same level than the force and sometimes before it. Most of the time, the Afghan authorities, but also the insurgent group, are giving their own version of the facts. That always produces a negative result in the opinion when being informed about French soldiers via foreign sources.



Today with the news passing speed through mobile phones or internet, information is very quickly dispatched worldwide. To officially inform the public opinion as soon as possible enables to tone the communication, to avoid rumors or wrong interpretation spreading even attempts of disinformation. However this speed is often incompatible with a thorough information. Thus we must be careful not to deliver details without absolute certainty, particularly as for figures or chronology (details which could appear later on as references). Failing that, the one who speaks exposes himself to be blamed later for having told a lie. This situation is all the more tricky, the first impression given by the first communication is often decisive and the first declarations will be used as a reference by media.

On the Afghan theater, communication has from now on all assets to face a crisis situation and to manage it in good conditions.

The steady reminders done to the different elements leaders about the importance of communication encourage to be confident. However, everyone knows that no crisis is similar to another one and that everything might happen on the theater. To have it understood by French people demands to work with journalists. This is how democracy works and everyone must accept it.

¹ General Jean-Louis Georgelin, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, France Inter, August 24, 2008.

² CNPI: Centre national de production d'images, équipe audiovisuelle de l'armée de terre. /national center for providing images, Army video team. In Afghanistan an image team from the Defense audiovisual production and communication establishment is permanently on the ground.

³ FIAS: Force Intérimaire d'Assistance et de Sécurité, force de l'OTAN en Afghanistan/ISAF: International Security Assistance Force, NATO force in Afghanistan.

⁴ PAO: Public Affairs Office.

⁵ RCC: Regional Command Capital.

The Logistic Support Challenge in Afghanistan

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL (P) ARNAUD WEIXLER, FRENCH NATIONAL SUPPORT COMMANDER FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 2008

Land of experience and truth for the operational logistics, the Afghan theater puts to the great test men and equipment. That is the reason why it is necessary to have a perfectly coordinated support, robust and permanently looking for efficiency. Mandates Pamir 19 et 20 would have been marked by a high speed logistics implementation to cope with numerous peaks of intensity without any operational pauses. Thus, under a strong organization constraint (manning), all the logistics players on the theater have daily experienced a particularly stressing situation due to the buildup of the French disposition¹ in summer 2008 and as a follow up of the Uzbeen events.

Based on the principle of the bare essentials and having urgently carried out a deep transformation, the French National Support (SNF)² has been able to meet the numerous and exciting theater challenges thanks to a permanent maximization of the means and a very important involvement of all the players of the logistic chain (homeland and in-theater).

Towards a «Restructured» Operational Logistics face to an Adverse and Complex Environment

In a context of a deep force transformation (activation of the BCS³, deployment of the Battalion task force (GTIA) Kapisa, of the *OMLT*⁴ Uruzgan, France as the *RCC*⁵ lead nation, deployment on the Nijrab, Tagab and Tora *FOB*⁶ ...), the SNF has had to simultaneously carry out the end of the buildup, (in addition to people, the processing of 7,000 tons of equipment and resources brought by more than 100 Antonovs in one month) as well as all the logistics structural changes while ensuring permanent support operations in the 12 fields of the logistics function.

Thus, the «restructuration» of the logistic tool has become the priority of the DIVLOG⁷/SNF, heiress of the COMSOUT, being the only unit able to carry out, at the same time, the logistic conduct and evolution. For this, the main actions undertaken to establish the theater logistics have been:

- To make the end of the buildup successful, particularly the deployment of personnel and equipment resources on the *FOB* within the prescribed time;
- To master the complexity of the different support systems of the French units on the theater (*NSE*⁸, *ISAF*⁹, *EDA*¹⁰/outsourcing, subcontracting, joint key assets

pooling, technical agreements between allies...) by establishing support matrices and later by better complementing each other.

- To gain an overall joint (4 *APOD*¹¹ on Douchambé, *KAIA*, *BAF* and *KAF*¹²) and combined support vision (GTIA Kapisa under *RCE (US)* OPCON, *OMLT* of the 201^o corps partially supported by the US and the *OMLT* in Uruzgan alongside the Dutch and the Australians, the DETAIR of Kandahar partially supported by *NAMSA*¹³);
- To establish an evolving PRALF¹⁴;
- To define or precise the basic principles by setting up and stabilizing procedures, reports, requests and in-theater flows between all logistics echelons (homeland, theater and supported units);
- To specify the SNF running during *RCC* planned operations or in case of crisis in order to clarify everyone's responsibilities while monitoring the satisfaction of the units needs;
- To establish the DIVLOG perimeter, regarding the conduct of support, as the unifier-coordinator of the different logistics fields within the French high representative staff;

- To monitor the strict dividing line between the logistic levels of conduct (DIVLOG) and the execution one (BCS). Similarly the tasks related to level 1 logistics (sub-units, battalions) and to level 2 (theater) are to be clarified. In this scope the continuity of all theater logistics operations should be guaranteed;
- To ensure adequacy of CSS constraints with the operations tempo and the individual and collective requirements from deployed units by favoring emphasizing dialog and visits on the terrain.

A Huge Experimentation Laboratory for Today's Operational Logistics

In Afghanistan, the terrain, the threat and the joint and combined environment have a very important impact on logistic operations to be carried out and more particularly on the priorities to be specified. More than ever, anticipation and responsiveness are necessary to provide the force with a fully tailored support. The conventional three-pillar structure «RAV-MEC-SAN¹⁵», without really disappearing, however has stepped aside in favor of other more important and sensitive subjects such as the issues related to infrastructure support (including protection, space management,...), new SH et MAINT¹⁶ equipment, supply convoys and escorts, outsourcing (capabilities, control, ...), resources problems (delivery, storage, monitoring,...), **FOB** self-sufficiency (water, food, power, ...), assets linked to the CPO¹⁷... the list is non-exhaustive!

The well-defined parameters of a massive support in a strict timeframe, based on important pushed flows, consumption rates according to Cold War time and corresponding to a unique logic of means and operational results, do not apply to the Afghan theater. On the contrary, people implement a dedicated logistics of flows in an always renewed space – time framework, with more adapted consumption rates drawn from allied as well as French lessons learned, all this meeting the requirements of a reasoning of needs and means rationalization. Starting from the planning phase, those principles have been transformed into propositions and recommendations in the framework of the GPPO¹⁸ in order to have available as soon as possible a logistic tool and ad hoc means to conduct operations.

However the substitution of a specific maneuver of the different logistics fields for the former overall logistic maneuver must neither lead to self-sufficiency carried at the utmost of any field of support (under the pretext of specialization) nor to the supreme ruling of all kinds of «experts». Therefore, in the scope of his responsibilities, the DIVLOG commander has constantly kept a strong link of coordination and federation of all fields, making effort on coherence, functioning and responsiveness

of the theater logistic chain. As such, a great part of carried action has come under many support fields requiring a precise coordination of all players. We can mention:

- The winter protection measures taken on all sites by SH and completed by the infrastructure cell;
- The mortuary affairs processing which has pertained to a joint work between the DIRCOM¹⁹, SH and the battalion;
- The rebuilding of the contingency ammunition depots on the **FOB** provided by the AMAT/Mun²⁰ in liaison with the CSS;
- The installation of Bachmann-type tents in Camp Warehouse and the FOB managed by the infrastructure cell and the AMAT;
- The combined preparation of resupply convoys (military and outsourcing origin) towards the **FOB** including the BCS, the CCITM²¹, the EDA and all DIVLOG cells;
- The permanent research for visibility, identification and marking of resources and equipment brought into the theater has been a very sensitive issue between the CCITM, the BCS, the DIVLOG experts, the battalions as well as Army and joint organizations (CFLT, CMT, CICLO²²...);
- The water supply problem on the **FOB** dealt by the COMSANTE, the EDA, the ASIA and the CSS;
- The implementation of the transportation – handling capabilities outsourced by the EDA, the OPC²³, the DIVLOG experts and the units (around 80% of the transportation linked to the force buildup has been ensured by the EDA service providers of service).

The logistic support in Afghanistan is also characterized by a high responsiveness based on the immediate exploitation of events by combining the adequate remedial measures. Thus the first operational engagements have underlined the necessity to have available a logistic capability (at battalion level) for resupply and evacuation under armor protection under the direct command of battalions logistic officers. Moreover, these operations have confirmed the necessary review of the DI and CDI²⁴ notions. Regarding ammunition, the basic load must be equivalent to an operational need linked to a stowage capability (fighter and vehicle) and the complementary basic load being more associated to theoretical consumptions according to combat intensity. Lastly, the development of a capability close to the one of an operational center (with the assignment of liaison officers to the **RCC**) by the SNF has been one of the major lessons learned from the operations planned and carried out by **RCC** staff. This measure in particular for support, has clarified everyone's responsibility while maximizing the assumption of the operational needs of committed units.

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The Heavy Trends of Tomorrow's Logistics

To ask oneself about the future challenges of the operational logistics is to put in perspective the major logistics principles established until now with the current realities to which the support is facing on the theater of operations in Afghanistan more specifically.

What were these principles? The tail supports the teeth; the continuity of the support; the balance between stability and distances, between the lightening of the first echelon and the logistical autonomy given to units; the tactical and technical priorities; the step up of efforts; the importance of the medical maneuver.

Even if in the absolute these principles are not obsolete, the «new» operational logistics currently encompasses a widened perimeter fed by heavy trends.

This new perimeter is linked to the evolution of the daily management of the logistic conduct aiming at:

- the quality of the support, particularly the equipment, which is problematic and very sensitive above all when based on a principle of differentiating quite difficult to explain and to implement;
- the mastering of the delivery timeframe and therefore the joint procedures with CICLO, CMT, EMOT and CFLT;

- the permanent maximization of the flows and above all the human and material means dedicated to support;

- the reinforcement of logistic players coordination.

Three «fields» of logistic support therefore become from now on more sensitive than the others:

- equipment support, keeping a DTO²⁵ matching a very important inventory grouping and at the same time main aging and high technology equipment with a very high rate of use ; difficulty also to combine the needs of a preventive and curative support with the operational tempo;
- infrastructure support which has generated a lot of projects, some having more a higher priority than others, and which success has affected the set up of the force. These issues, which have a direct impact on the level of unit protection and accomodation are characterized by a non reduced timeframe, huge budgets and cannot be dissociated from vital issues such as drinking water production and supply (mainly on the *FOB*);
- welfare with increased demands as regards the living conditions and particularly the private communications means (internet, telephone) closely linked to the outsourcing degree.

Logistic Support

What are currently the strong trends in which the logistic support is in line in Afghanistan and on most theaters? Numbering three - the joint, the combined and the outsourcing approaches- they are the very nature of current operations and have a real impact on the aspect «support». In addition to the permanent research for the support interoperability in these three fields, the main objective will be to combine them to meet the desired end state on the ground.

The LMTGHOB²⁶ is the perfect achieved example of this logistic joint and combined complementing. It is a complex process both as for the planning and conduct, it has been shaped with pragmatism by the «players» on the ground of the theater (team leader of the 1st RTP, DIVLOG and DETAIR commander at Douchanbé). In less than 6 months, it has managed to list and validate several ZMTs²⁷, to create a planning and report exchange procedure and to insert it in the air planning process of *ISAF* and the *RCs*²⁸. Then, in the framework of 12 normal and “operational” missions, it has enabled the air delivery of 120 tons to the French units. Today the mastering of resources enables, during the winter time, to consider the resupply in very good time frame and security conditions of all the *OMLT* and the units deployed in the *FOB*.

There are many other examples, in Afghanistan, of this support interoperability between armed forces and allies. Firstly, the support of several French units (GTIA Kapisa, *OMLT*) is the result of combined contribution and secondly, France, lead nation in Camp Warehouse, offers several logistic services to the allies stationing there on the long term or temporarily. This shared logistic support is based on several contracts and technical agreements which are regularly updated.

Then, the in-theater transport operations systematically come under a joint and combined perimeter:

- a slot of air logistician has been created within the SNF structure to be more responsive with the 3 theater *APOD* concerning the air stops coordination, the follow-up of the KAF logistic requests, the preparation and the conduct of the LMTGHOB and the shifts, the move of the *APOD* towards *KAIA* north, the establishment of the SIDM²⁹ on *BAF*, ...;
- the resupplies by road are in fact real combat operations (named *Combat Logistics* by the Americans and the British and nicknamed “aircraft carrier” by the French) which have no longer anything to do with simple logistic convoys; planned in conjunction with the *RCC* and *RCE*, they foresee and implement several joint and combined supports to the benefit of military and civilian transportation vehicles.

In the light of Operation Pamir experience, we must now ask ourselves about the next support major issues which might:

- aim at a better harmonization of the different chains of supplies as well as resources providers accounting; (similarly to the NATO reform implemented concerning the *Supply Chain*) to enhance the visibility on all resources;
- achieve a better burden sharing among allies about the stationing support issues (costs, camps space management, ...);
- aim at a significant increase of French officers participation within the NATO staffs G4, J4 and J8;
- proceed with the progress made in interoperability in some technical fields such as ammunition, refueling, evacuation and recovery, ...;
- study the creation of common CPO-*Welfare* projects with the allies by being inspired by the current achievements on the American and Dutch bases, ...;
- improve the outsourcing policy in operations with the EDA and other service providers in a non-permissive and non-stabilized environment. The example of the outsourcing carried out on the *FOB* in Afghanistan shows that it could be conceivable, provided that the limits are precisely defined (in particular assessment and remote control remain impossible) ; should we instead go deeper in the current services (daily life, transportation-handling, fuel, welfare, ...) or widen the outsourcing to other fields considered as «earmarked» (medical, maintenance...) ? Whatever the solution, outsourcing is considered on the theater as, must be permanently controlled, (reversibility posture, performance) in a «win-win» spirit, bearing always in mind the operational interest and without downgrading the related costs. In this framework, the OPC in the DIVLOG is the privileged focus between the operational logistics and the outsourced support and endeavors to maintain the overall coherence of the force logistic support.

To conclude, Afghanistan is really a tremendous land of experience for the support which challenges prefigure the logistical stakes of future operations both for conduct and organization. The unavoidable shift of the logistic boundaries towards the three-pillar structure –joint-combined-outsourcing -, in conjunction with the highly centrifugal trends of some support fields implementing more and more technical expertise, requires

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to pay a particular attention to coordination, as well as command and control of all logistic experts. The overall coherence of the force might indeed be seriously harmed. The high level of performance expected from the combat service support must be related to the operations level. However there is a risk to dangerously increase an already high rate of employment and to create a detrimental discrepancy to the force cohesion.

Could we speak about a logistic mutation?

Without any doubt, since the non-permissive theaters of operations well definitely prefigure the new schemes of the logistic support. The logistic function confirms its universal character which makes it more omnipresent than ever everywhere operations take place. The success of this evolution will not only be the logistic support players' business but will involve everyone.

1 Battalion task force (Bn TF) Kapisa, Headquarters and logistic battalion, OMLT Uruzgan.

2 Under the command of the joint support deputy commander, the French National Support (logistic part) is one of the three components of the French high representative headquarters (EM REPFRANCE) following the example of CIS and France confidential theater Intel.

3 Headquarters and logistic battalion/bataillon de commandement et de soutien (BCS).

4 *Operational mentoring liaison team.*

5 *Regional capital command.*

6 *Forward operational base./base opérationnelle avancée.*

7 *Logistic division./division logistique (DIVLOG).*

8 *National support element./élément de soutien national.*

9 *International security and assistance force./force internationale d'assistance et de sécurité.*

10 *AAFES closest US equivalent/économat des armées (EDA).*

11 *Airport of disembarkation.*

12 *Kabul international airport Bagram Airforce and Kandahar Airforce.*

13 *NATO maintenance and supply agency.*

14 Plan de rattachement administratif logistique et financier./logistic and financial administrative attachment plan.

15 Ravitaillement-maintien en condition-santé/Supply-Maintenance-Medical.

16 Soutien de l'homme et maintenance/soldier's support and maintenance

17 Condition du personnel en opération/Welfare.

18 The operational planning multidisciplinary groups are activated by the EMOT, (Army operational headquarters) to meet a mandate issued by the CPCO (Joint operations planning and command & control center).

19 Direction du commissariat./Army Quartermaster Corps Directorate

20 Adjoint matériels/munitions/ equipment-ammunition deputy.

21 Centre de coordination interarmées des transports transits mouvements./Joint coordination center for transportation, transit and movements.

22 Commandement de la force logistique terrestre, centre multimodal des transports, centre interarmées de coordination de la logistique des opérations./Land logistics command, transportation multi-modal center, operational logistic coordination joint center.

23 OPC : Officier pilote des contrats/the lead officer for contracts, under the DIVLOG command, is the force privileged interlocutor with the EDA as well as the allies in the framework of technical agreements.

24 Dotation initiale et complément de dotation initiale./basic load and complementary basic load.

25 Disponibilité technique opérationnelle./operational equipment readiness

26 Largage de matériels à très grande hauteur et ouverture basse/HALO High altitude parachute extraction system with low opening.

27 Zones de mise à terre/Landing sites.

28 *Regional command.*

29 Système intérimaire de drones Male. Drone UAV interim system MALE.



A HQ and Logistics Battalion (BCS) for PAMIR

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL JEAN-LUC CHAPEU, COMMANDING OFFICER, BCS OPERATION PAMIR FROM OCTOBER 2008 TO MARCH 2009

The increasing strength of the French forces in Afghanistan has led to the deployment of a BCS on the theater. As soon as it has been created, this battalion has had to face the ambitious challenge of simultaneously ensure its buildup as well as the one of Task Force KAPISA.

A «Swiss knife-type» Battalion

Whereas the French disposition in Afghanistan has experienced since the beginning of its deployment an undoubted stability, its strength slightly varying, the deployment of Battalion Task Force KAPISA at the end of spring 2008, the takeover of the RCC by a French staff and the following buildup of deployed forces lead de facto to an under-manning of the currently deployed support forces. It has been therefore decided to deploy as from June 2008 a headquarters and logistics battalion.

Designed to support all the French elements, the *RCC* command support and the command of Camp Warehouse, it is of course organized around these three functions:

- operational logistics with a theater maintenance company, direct support (CIMAT), a logistic multirole sub-unit in charge of transportation, human and POL support (UML), and finally a medical and surgical team (GMC);
- C2 support with a CIS company more specifically designed to provide the *RCC* HQ with the required C2 links;
- support and protection of the camp thanks to a site command composed of, in addition to a C2 element, a working dog team, Air Force firemen and backed up by a FRENCHBAT infantry company under the BCS TACON.

Enabling or not Enabling? That is the Question

The first mandate, urgently deployed, will have to simultaneously ensure its own buildup, the consideration of the support of the elements already deployed and contribute to Battalion Task Force KAPISA setting up. The challenge is important. In a first time it is necessary to discover a new theater and to take the grip (grasp) over its geographical, climatic and security characteristics and above all take the mission into account. Then it is necessary to gather all means which enable the battalion to become fully operational: assets coming from France and recovery of equipment already on the theater. At last, the support of already deployed and currently deploying elements must be ensured as soon as possible. The BCS, faced to this threefold challenge does not have systematically the means to make effort everywhere and in all fields. For example, the transportation function is suited to resupply on a cruising speed basis and «normal» flows. The flows created by the deployment of a battalion in KAPISA, with all its means, are well beyond BCS capabilities. To resort to local transporters is naturally required provisionally. During 4 months, the battalion will gradually establish procedures, drill to practice its skills and step by step complete its setting up. It is officially created in August, after more than one month on the theater and becomes a first category unit in September. A buildup of forces is a difficult exercise in itself. When coupled with an immediate assumption of missions, and

particularly the buildup support of a second unit, it becomes especially complex. Moreover, all the components of a maneuver do not produce their effort at the same time. If the support burden in cruising speed remains limited, it is always more important during a deployment or a withdrawal of forces. In our case, the employment of a reinforced battalion as «enabler» would have permitted to prepare the Task Force theater entry and above all supported its deployment in the best conditions. Once the unit is deployed, the extra number of logisticians might have to go back home, leaving on the theater only a well-suited battalion as it is currently the case. An effort in the field of support, granted prior to any deployment, enables a better assumption of the needs of the supported units.

About Outsourcing

Face to the initial working load plan, the battalion is compelled to resort to transportation outsourcing. The key is attractive, it avoids deploying additional people and assets, it allows to contribute to developing local activities. But it quickly becomes a nightmare for the convoys leaders. Afghan drivers of course do not speak French, sometimes but very rarely English; the language barrier is the first obstacle in transmitting orders before departure or during the convoys. These drivers, afraid because their lives are threatened particularly through IEDs attacks, think that all military vehicles are equipped with a jammer able to protect them; therefore they have a natural trend to stick very close to the escort protection vehicles regardless of orders and danger. If we add to all this a driving practice which is far away from the European standards and particularly pitiful service conditions of the vehicles, breakdowns and crashes are frequent during the convoys. Transportation outsourcing shifts from handy into dangerous for the force soldiers who escort these civilian trucks. To deliver the flows in unsafe areas, which is the job of the military transporter, cannot be achieved in good conditions.

If the outsourcing of road transportation is not satisfactory, other examples are more convincing:

- transportation of resources from France by civilian large airlifters which, on this landlocked theater is satisfactory;
- provision of the support of Camp Warehouse by the French Forces Exchange Services which in this case are perfectly suited to the customers.

To resort to a service provider outside the armed forces, to mention only these two examples,

is therefore suited to the needs of the deployed elements in the current security context. However as depicted in the aforementioned example, it must not be systematically implemented in a constrained and not very tolerant tactical environment.

And Then?

Working in support of all the French elements under the aegis of the French national support, subordinated to the RCC as for movements, stationing and security, daily carrying out a multinational action on Camp Warehouse, the BCS, subordinated to a sole system commander, the general officer commanding the RCC and Frenchrep, is still carrying out its buildup. Thus in January 2009, to have a pool of key capabilities and maximize the means focused on Kabul, the FRENCHBAT becomes a CRE2. A new prospect is therefore becoming apparent: a BCS as a base and some maneuver battalions.

Centered on one administrative and finance component, common for the whole theater on the one hand and on an operational logistic component designed for supply, maintenance and medical support on the other hand, the BCS might, in the long term, support battalions exclusively allotted to operational missions and unburdened from almost all administrative or technical constraints. The evolution, if considered, will have to be slowly implemented in order not to deprive the Bn TF of a component necessary to its maneuver. The reorganizations planned in 2009, by the modification of units locations on the theater will perhaps be a first step in this direction. What remains certain is that they will be the new challenge for the next mandate of the BCS.



LIST OF ACRONYMS

- BATFRA** : bataillon français/FRENCHBAT (deployed in Kabul and in SUROBI)
- BCS** : bataillon de commandement et de soutien/headquarters and logistic battalion
- CIMAT** : compagnie de maintenance adaptée au theater/theater maintenance company, direct support
- COMSITE** : commandant du site/site commanding officer (Camp Warehouse)
- CRE2** : centre de responsabilité élémentaire de niveau 2/primary responsibility center at level 2
- EDA** : économat des armées/equivalent of AAFES (Army and Air Force Exchange Services)
- EEI** : Engin explosif improvisé/Improvised Explosive Device (IED)
- GMC** : groupe medico-chirurgical / medical / surgical team
- GT** : Groupement Tactique/Battalion Task Force
- RCC** : Regional Command Capital
- UML** : unité multifonction logistique/logistic multipurpose sub-unit

Two Months Spent as a Reserve Medical Officer in Kabul

BY MR. PHILIPPE JUVIN, MAYOR OF LA GARENNE-COLOMBES, VICE PRÉSIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF HAUTS DE SEINE, RESERVE OFFICER, ANESTHETIST IN THE MEDICAL/SURGICAL TEAM IN CAMP WAREHOUSE FROM MAY TO AUGUST 2008

Mr. Philippe Juvin, you were deployed in May and August 2008 within Operation Pamir in Afghanistan. Before telling about that mission, can you say a few words about yourself?

I am Professor of Anesthesiology and Head of the casualty department at Beaujon Hospital, which is a university hospital of the healthcare services of Paris Hospitals. But I have an additional job, being Mayor of La Garenne-Colombes, a town of 30,000 inhabitants in the Hauts de Seine, and Vice President of the Council of this *Département*. I was actually deployed to Afghanistan from late May to early August 2008 as an Anesthesiologist. I had performed my military service within the *Brigade des Sapeurs Pompiers* de Paris (Paris Fire Brigade) and hitherto my activities as a reserve officer were confined to a few doctor-on-call sessions performed each year during my holidays for the Paris fire brigade. This year I volunteered for this oversea operation.

Why Afghanistan?

The reasons are presumably similar to those that induce my active service colleagues to commit themselves and go there. An inclination to serve, sheer curiosity, and the quest for what you may imagine is adventure, human and professional experience, the idea of unknown danger, and other more personal reasons. Also, one or two important meetings with active servicemen who were really remarkable and bore a peculiar impetus about them. Perhaps I wanted to see them



Philippe JUVIN

again as well as what they were when going there. Do not take me for a naïve person, but I have always thought highly of the medical department. For me it epitomizes what is most to be valued about France: universality of its values and self-

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denial. Even if political correctness may misunderstand it, the stereotype of the medical officer in Africa is also the picture of France which will provide for others. Quite simply, I also wanted to experience all this. France is only true to itself when it carries universal values. Lastly, I am a politician, with a taste for understanding a world which is being built up. And what is better than going into the field in order to try to understand?

What Part Did You Play Over There?

France is the lead nation of the role 2 facility in Camp Warehouse in Regional Command Capital. Three French surgeons work there, as well as one anesthesiologist. The anesthesiologist was myself. Our hospital included three surgical units, 3 anesthetic shock care boxes, 4 anesthetic care beds and 20 hospital beds. I was there together with two other reserve personnel, one dental surgeon and one critical care doctor. We were supported by two surgical teams, one German and the other Bulgarian. The main task was to provide medical care for French troops, Western and Afghan national army allies. And also to do what the medical department can do so well: winning the hearts by treating civilians.

I Suppose You got an Idea of the Living Conditions in Kabul?

I was lucky enough to be allowed to go outside Warehouse many times. Medical Command tasked me with going round the Afghan civilian hospitals, which I did. The main idea was to know hospital infrastructure of the Afghan capital so as to be to transfer as soon as possible Afghan wounded in the best conditions. Several came over to visit our role 2 facility. I found that some of them liked France or even spoke French, which may be regarded as assets for France, provided we know how to make use of them.

What Part Did the Civilians Play In your Activities?

The civilians were the majority of our patients. Most of the time they had been wounded by explosive device fragments. But crime was rampant; we quite often had to provide care for people attacked by criminals. Traffic accidents are also quite frequent, with pedestrians being injured most of the time. We also sometimes went to villages for consultations. In particular, I remember one mission when I attended to nearly 200 people within one morning, in the one room of the house of the village mayor. The latter had previously chosen himself which villagers could see us. With a colleague, we had explained to the padre of the Régiment de Marche du Tchad (a French Mechanized Infantry Battalion) how to examine the children's eardrums. He eventually

performed quite well. This was probably due to the legendary resourcefulness of soldiers from the *«infanterie de marine»*... These activities were actually for me what I call the medical diplomacy mission, which I consider to be the finest trademark of the medical department.

On the Whole, How do You Feel About your Stay?

I had the opportunity to meet people with exceptional human qualities, among the personnel in the medical /surgical team as well as among the other French personnel. I spent a little more than two months in Warehouse, between May and August 2008. I went back for a few hours in mid August with the French President. He had decided to go there after the murderous ambush of August 18th. He had asked to bring me along because he knew I had just come back from this place. I remember the very strange feeling I had when I found myself in Warehouse again on that occasion. I had left the spot less than two weeks before with the feeling of a place with feverish activity. On that occasion, however, I was immediately struck by the dead, impressive silence. Even the welcome ceremony for the President sounded muted. Warehouse looked dead, as if the death of our ten soldiers had also put its stamp, in the literal physical sense of the word, on the camp itself. This was very impressive, and quite moving. I tried to describe that specific day on my website¹.

We stayed for some time in front of the ten coffins to pay homage, and then visited the Team. I met my friends again. Then I went with the President to meet President Karzai as planned. Without wishing to reveal what I then saw and heard, I can assure you that the French president was particularly definite when he explained to our ally the requirement for perfect collaboration on the military plane; definite, clear and, to use a specifically diplomatic term, quite persuasive...

What is your Opinion About the Means Implemented in Afghanistan?

First I'd like to remind that I am not a soldier and consequently I do not want to speak like a would-be general. I only want to explain what an outsider like me may have realized about our assets and shortcomings. On the medical plane, the assets which have been implemented are top quality, practically as good as European standards. The main difficulty we had to face was about the means for routing the wounded. Treating and saving wounded people within our Group is fine, but you also have to keep them alive while conveying them to our site. I must say our heli-lift capabilities were not up to the situation, because we had only two CARACALS for all these missions, whether of a medical nature or not. These air assets cannot be substituted with road assets, because road travel is difficult in Afghanistan. I remember travelling

several times with patrols a few dozen kilometers away from Kabul; this would take up the whole day! I had told about all this from Kabul on RTL (Radio Télé Luxembourg) radio channel. Even as a reserve officer, I was still a public figure. This earned me a few face-to-face arguments which are parts of my best memories! At the time some answered that the weakness in equipment could be compensated for thanks to collaboration with allied troops, which was true in theory... I had an interesting debate with the French Army Chief of Staff on that subject. He is a man who can very quickly and thoroughly analyze all the data of a problem. I have noticed with pleasure that since that time heli-lift assets have been beefed up. The second difficulty lies in the learning of English, a language with which French military personnel are not familiar enough. Now, the future for French troops is definitely to work in multinational situations. I think there is some progress to be made.



Philippe JUVIN

As a Politician, What Lessons have you Learned from that Experience?

The first lesson is an observation. I actually witnessed what French troops bring to the Republic: commitment and self-denial. The second lesson relates to the French armed forces medical department. Some people consider substituting it with civilian doctors under contract. Others mention sending out medical department doctors to civilian hospitals where they would work until they are called up to duty. I believe all this would be a heavy mistake. « Esprit de corps » gives meaning to missions: it would disappear if medical officers were no longer originating from a mould with structuring traditions. Moreover, operational efficiency requires having immediately available experts who are familiar with the peculiar specificities of the military. The third lesson learned concerns the populace. In spite of

the medical attendance we provide, the Afghans I had occasion to speak with all mention the issue of civilians killed by Western strikes. This issue is a public debate in Kabul, so much that President Karzai had to speak against the Americans. I fear that similarly French forces will be increasingly felt as an occupation force by the people that we are supposed to protect. The fourth lesson relates to the use of words and politics. To speak of insurgents as if they all were Taliban is over simplistic. The truth is that our enemies have many faces: terrorists certainly, but also petty local leaders who would like to keep control of their valleys, others who we are disturbing in the course of their private business, criminals, traffickers... Tomorrow we shall have to speak with today's insurgents. The fifth lesson concerns the multinational aspect of our commitment. No single country can now deploy military forces on its own outside its territory, for political, financial and operational reasons.

Even the Americans suffer from being alone in Iraq. Like all modern armed forces, French forces' vocation now is to be an international force. The point is not to feel nostalgia about the time when we could act without worrying about other nations' wishes. The point is to draw the lessons, and France's return into NATO is one answer. Last, the sixth point has to do with a specific idea of France. We can, without additional assets, boost our influence and gain an additional chance to win the hearts. For example, two American doctors perform surgery every day in the Afghan army hospital, whereas no French doctor ever goes to this place. This is a waste of French influence, while it is known that we could easily rely on the hospital director. He speaks French, was trained in the Val de Grâce Hospital in Paris, and likes France. What is certain is that we won't win this war if we remain shut up in our camps.

We should go among the populace all the time, and even probably wonder how we can live with these people. I'm not saying that there are no security problems, actually there are plenty. But I know that if we do not understand this, if we do not amend our ways resolutely, it is unlikely that we shall win the hearts.

¹ <http://www.philippejuvin.fr/index.php/2008/08/20/kaboul-aujourd'hui-avec-nos-morts-et-nos-blesses/>

Medical Support of Troops on the Afghan Theater and its Multinational Environment

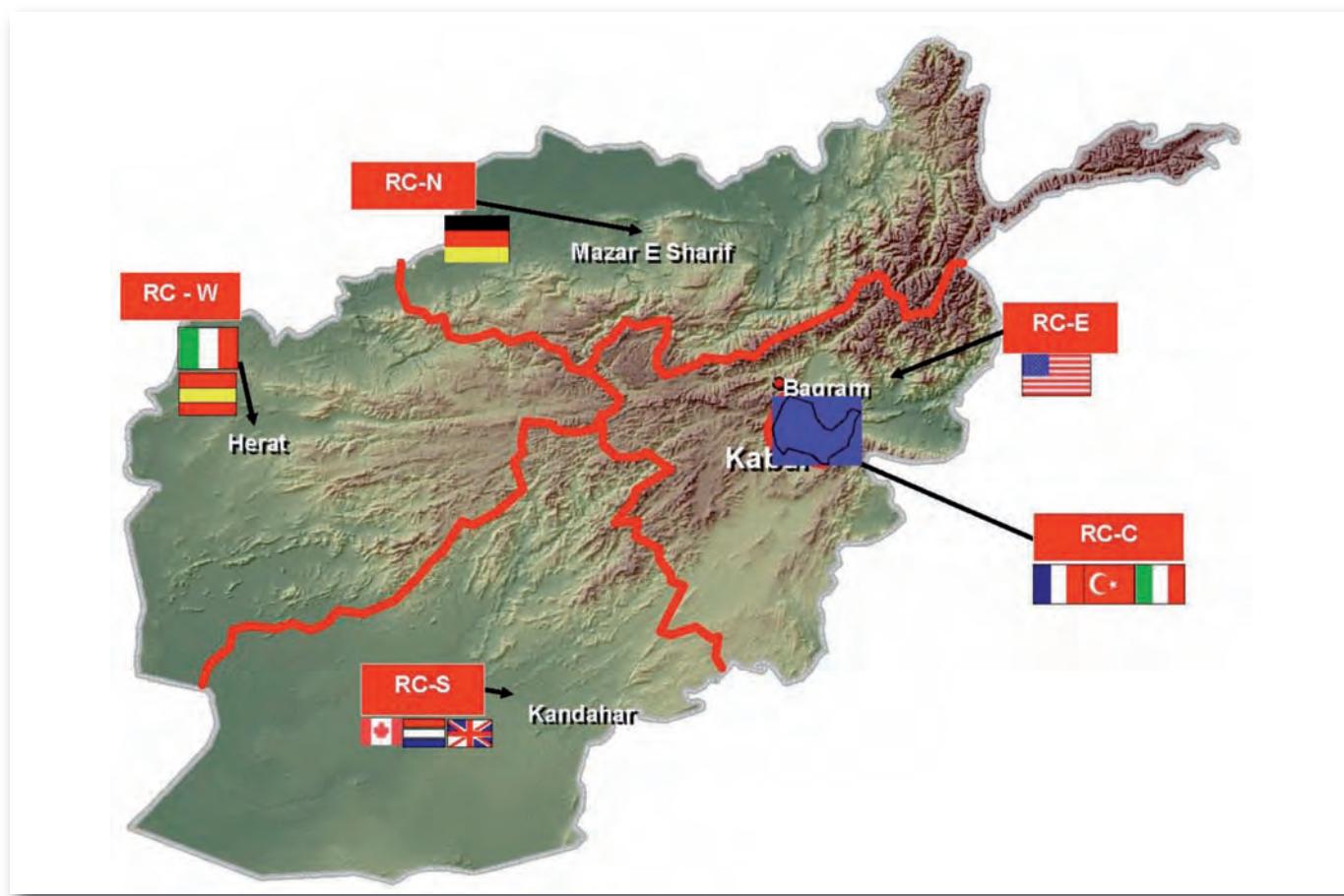
By COLONEL LASSELIN, MEDICAL ADVISER FROM OCTOBER 2008 TO FEBRUARY 2009 IN KABUL

Description of the Afghan Theater

Afghanistan can be divided into 5 areas: North, East, South, West and Center; in each of these areas there is a lead nation in a *Regional Command (RC)*, most of the time located in the main city of the area (Mazar e Sharif in RC.N, Bagram in RC.E, Kandahar in RC.S, Herat in RC.W and Kabul in RC.C).

All these areas are under command of a central echelon located in Kabul: HQ ISAF.

At each level, a management cell is the representative of the medical department of the lead nation, under orders of a medical officer ("*Regional Command Medical Adviser*"), supervised at central level by HQ ISAF Medical Director.



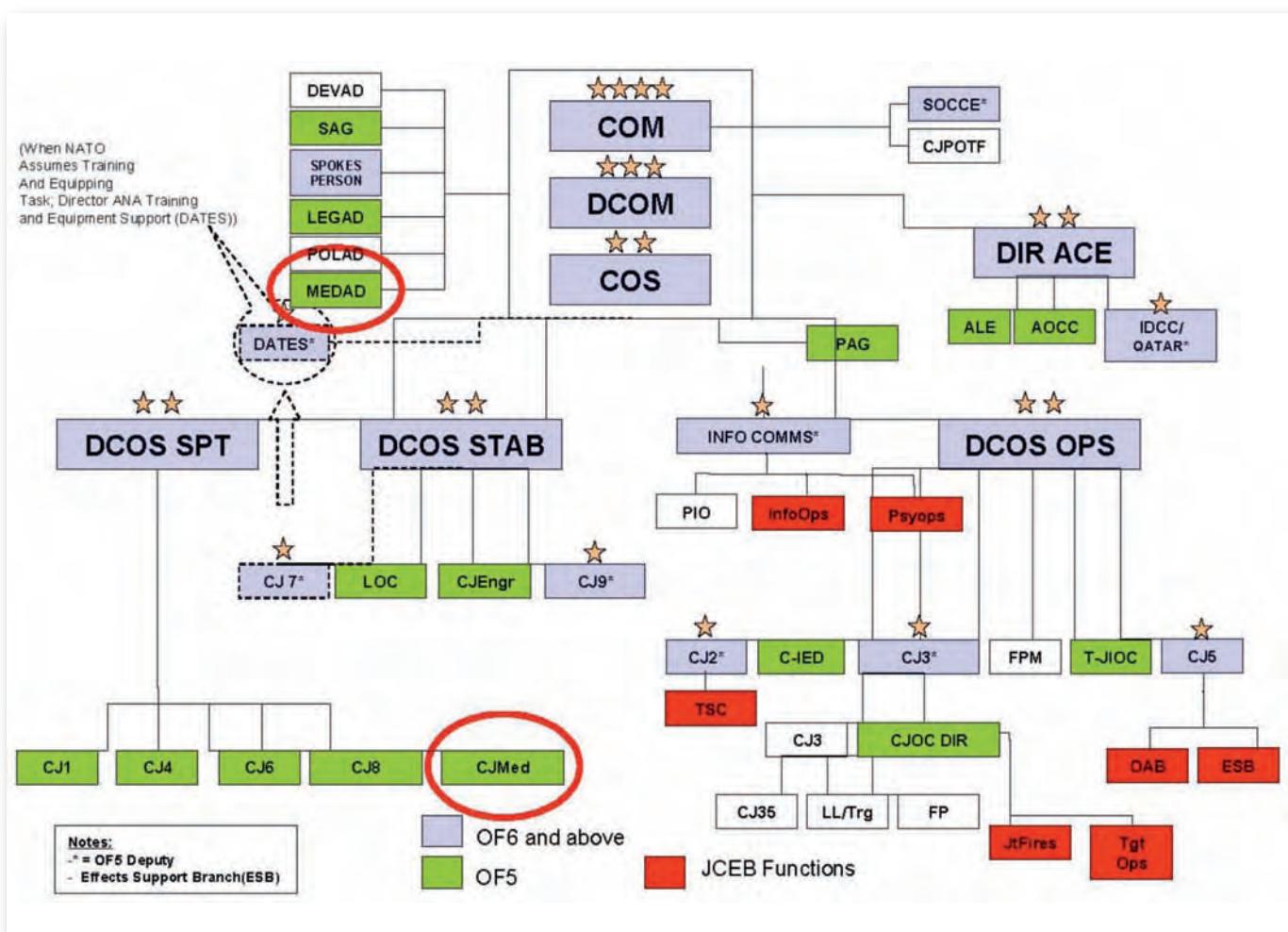
NATO Medical Doctrine in Afghanistan

Each nation has to have its own role 1 facility (first-aid post) except in the case of a specific agreement between 2 nations. As for roles 2, 2E (*enhanced*) and 3 facilities, they are available to all, according to how far structures are regionalized. Some of them are not under national command, but under *ISAF* operational control (*OPCON ISAF*), as is the case with the French role 2E Medical / Surgical Team (GMC) at Warehouse in Kabul.

No wounded is to be more than one hour's routing from role 1, and no role 1 is to be located more than one hour's routing from any role 2. The latter must not be located more than two hours from a role 3 facility. To achieve this, there are on the theater some ambulance transport assets (armored or not) available, as well as airlift assets (helicopters and tactical aircraft) which will enable the evacuation of the wounded in the best conditions, taking into account terrain, military hazards (mines, *IEDs*, ambushes) and remoteness of relevant surgery facilities.

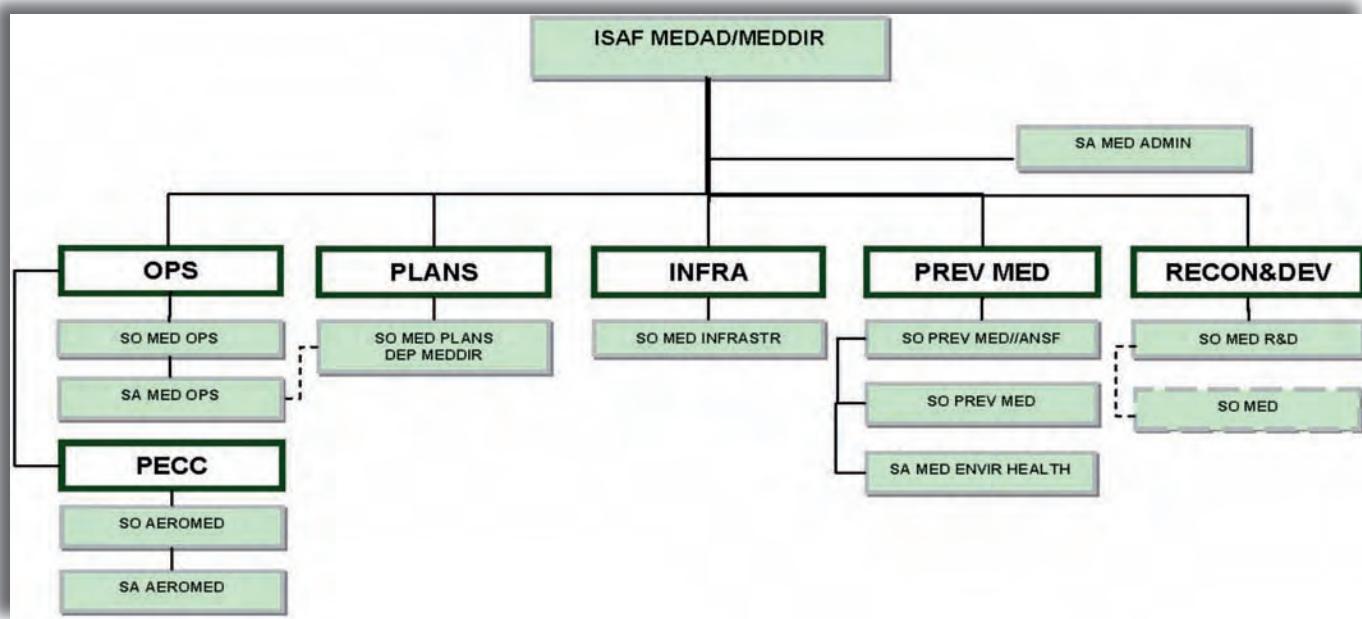
International Medical Support

The *ISAF* Chain of Command



The *MEDAD* is the medical adviser to *ISAF* HQ. He oversees 5 cells which assist him: operations, planning, infrastructure, preventive medicine and public health, and support to populace. The *CJ MED* reports to *Deputy Chief of Staff Support (DCOS SPT)* in charge of support to the Afghan theater.

Experiences and Feedback

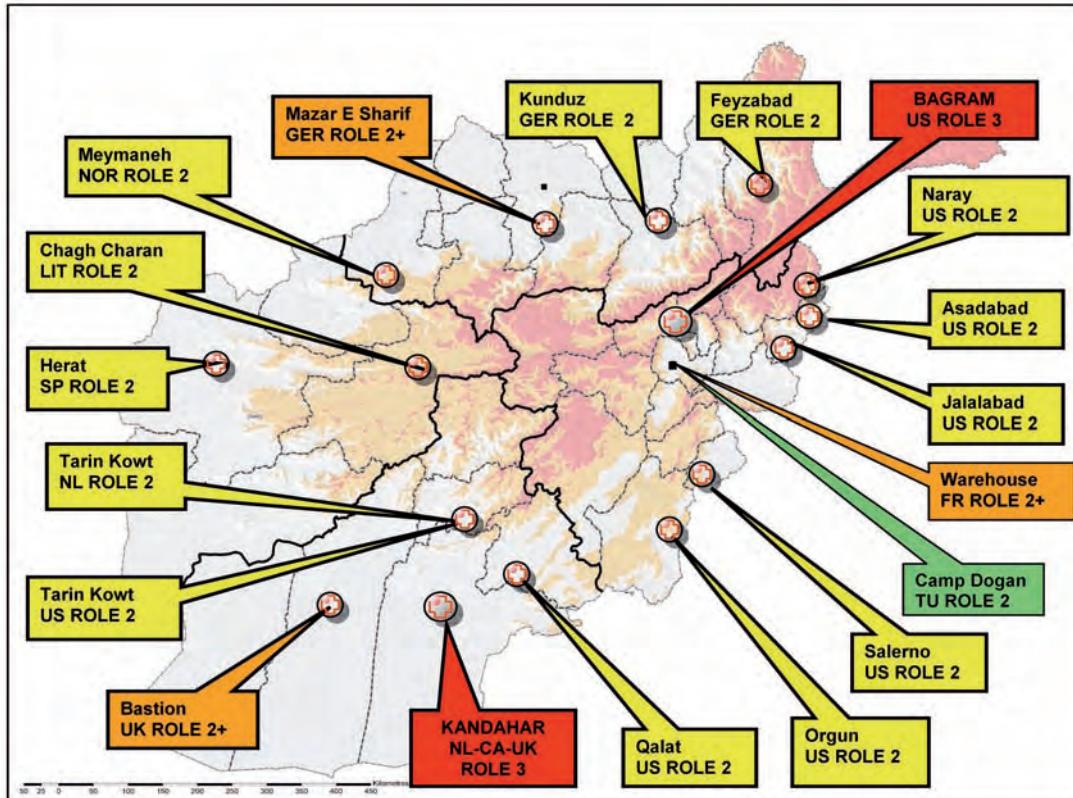


Assets

The *Medical Adviser HQ* or *Medical Director* leads the *CJ MED* which for him is actually an HQ composed of the 5 areas as described above, as well as MEDEVAC regulation: the PECC (*Patient Evacuation Coordination Cell*). *MEDAD HQ* commands the *MEDAD RC* of the 5 areas (1 for each area, a French one for RCC as long as *COMRCC* is a French general officer). These oversee the various medical assets included within their areas, which are the following:

- all role 1 facilities, located closest to troops and which manage medical consultation and support of their national elements in the field
- the “hospitals” (roles 2 and 3 facilities) located over Afghan territory as shown on the map.

Therefore in *RCC*, French *MEDAD* has authority over several role 1 facilities: two French, two American, one British, one German, one Belgian, one Italian and one Greek.



French Medical Doctrine

Over the Afghan theater, the officer in charge of French medical elements is both responsible for **MEDAD RCC** as mentioned above and for **COMSANTE** (Medical Command) in his capacity as joint medical commander of French forces of PAMIR and medical adviser of REPFRANCE. He is appointed by head director of the joint medical department. Three officers act as his assistants and thus constitute medical leadership:

- One veterinary who is responsible for food quality, fresh water supply, prevention of zoonoses of working dogs, and operational medical monitoring;
- One officer from the technical / administrative branch of the medical department;
- One administrative NCO of the medical department.

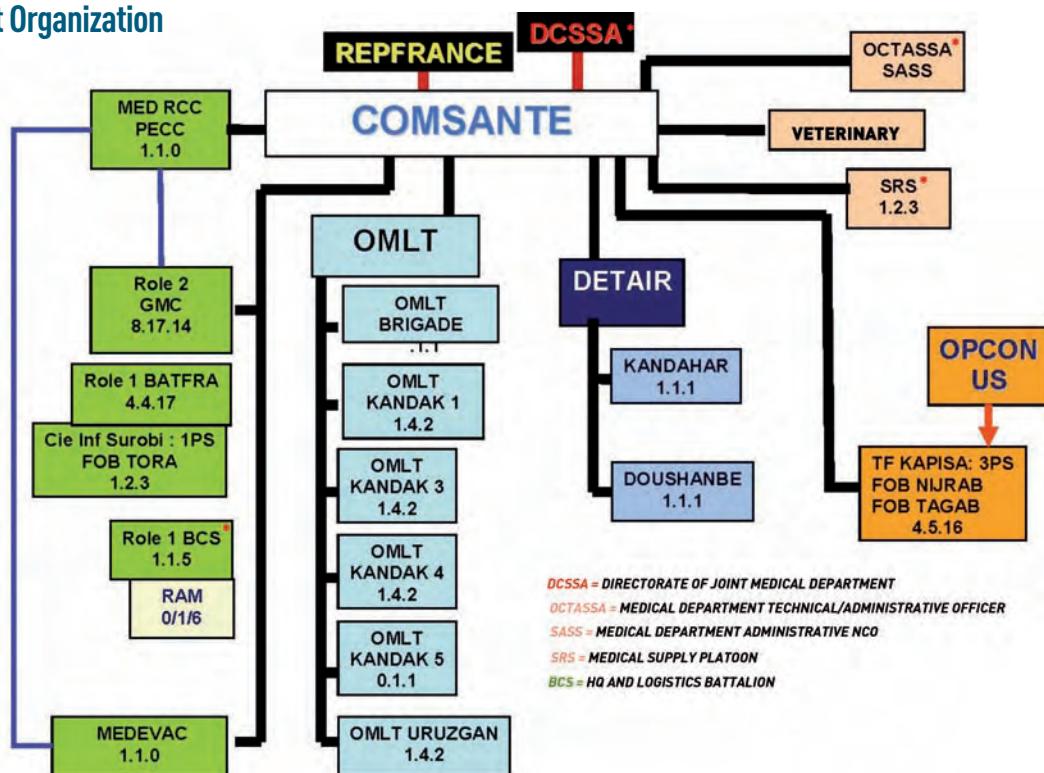
The following are under his command:

- One role 2E level medical surgical group and one medical supply platoon;
- One MEDEVAC team for in-theater medical evacuations, assigned within DETAIR HELICO;
- Role 1 facilities composed of 1 or several first aid posts, each equipped with a medical armored wheeled vehicle to lift the medical team (1/1/2) close to combat, thus allowing early care to the wounded.

The mission of that medical chain is to allow stabilization of the condition of the wounded as early as possible, to evacuate them to a theater-level surgical facility where a cross-disciplinary surgical team is tasked with performing recovery and surgical activities required for ensuring fast aero-medical transportation (medical repatriation (RAPASAN) or MEDEVAC) to homeland hospitals.

French Medical Support Organization

Chain of Command



The Medical / Surgical Team assets

• The Medical / Surgical Team

Erected over an area of about 2,000 square meters, this medical / surgical facility has been located on the Warehouse camp since 2006. Sheltered by a metal and textile structure, it is subdivided into several parts, each of which devoted to a specific activity:

- ✓ Administration and reception of patients
- ✓ Consultation rooms
- ✓ 3 emergency care beds
- ✓ One biology lab
- ✓ One imagery unit (radiology / ultrasound and scanning);

- ✓ One recovery unit equipped with 4 intensive care beds;
- ✓ 3 surgery rooms:
- ✓ 20 hospital beds;
- ✓ 1 dentist's surgery room;
- ✓ 1 management cell.

The personnel included in this unit originate from the various military homeland medical centers (being both schools and hospitals) as well as battalion units. It is reinforced by 2 foreign medical teams, one German and the other Bulgarian.

A transportation component is added to it, including 4 medical wheeled armored vehicles, together with associated drivers and medics.

Experiences and Feedback

- Role 1 facilities

They are made up with one or several aid stations whose standardized TOE enables to support one unit. There are eight of them located over the territory in the close vicinity of units:

- In Kabul, there are two at Warehouse camp:

- 1 for BATFRA
- 1 for BCS (Bataillon de commandement et de soutien headquarters and logistics battalion).

- In Darulaman, 1 at OMLT staff level;

- On *FOB* TORA, 1 reporting to BATFRA;

- In Kapisa, 2 locations:

- 1 on *FOB* NIJRAB where the TF 700 staff is located;
- 1 on *FOB* TAGAB, attached to the former.

- In Kandahar, 1 on the multinational airbase, in contact with air squadrons.

- In Dushanbe, in Tajikistan, 1 in support of the air force element.

Depending on their missions and risks taken, these services are allotted ambulances which may be hard skin (VABSAN: medical wheeled armored vehicles for the Army) or soft skin (JUMPER for the Air Force). The overall number is 15 VABSANs and 2 JUMPERS allotted for these role 1 facilities.

- The SRS (section de ravitaillement sanitaire = medical supply platoon)

This medical supply platoon, garrisoned at Warehouse camp in the vicinity of the GMC (medical /surgical team) is commanded by a pharmacist. Its task is to receive equipment and medicine and to supply all theater medical facilities. The stocks of this theater pharmacy are sized in order to ensure 3 months' operation without any resupply from outside.

- The BCS casualty collecting platoon

It includes 7 personnel (0/1/6) and 3 VABSANs reporting to BCS role 1, tasked with accompanying road convoys for delivery of equipment to the *FOBs*.

- OMLT Kandak first aid stations

All these teams are 1/4/2 task-organized and are equipped with 1 VABSAN each. They have to perform two major missions. In the first place, they take part in the initial training of Afghan units with which they are associated, but they also perform close support of the French elements embedded in the local army, and even go into the field along with these units in order to fight insurgents.

Medical Repatriation and Evacuation to Homeland

Medical repatriation and evacuation are the responsibility of each nation. Repatriations (RAPASAN: rapatriement sanitaire) are managed at theater level and are performed in support of soldiers who have to be conveyed back to homeland for more

appropriate diagnosis means and treatment because they suffer from wounds or diseases. Flight reservations on military or sometimes civilian airplanes are the responsibility of COMSANTE (Medical Command). Reception in homeland is organized by the DRSSA (Direction Régionale du Service de Santé des Armées = Regional Command of Joint Medical Department) in Saint Germain en Laye, to which is assigned the Vincennes MEDEVAC platoon (PES: peloton d'évacuation sanitaire).

Medical evacuations are initiated on the theater by COMSANTE who informs the DCSSA (Direction Centrale du Service de Santé des Armées = head directorate of joint medical department) about the seriousness of wounds. Request of aeromedical vehicle, appointment of the medical team on board as well as ambulance assets are the responsibility of the DCSSA. These MEDEVAC operations may be individual ones, with air assets managed by the Joint Operations Planning and Command & Control Center (CPCO) of the Ministry of Defense (2 FALCON 900s and 4 Falcon 50s) or collective ones by means of the C135 FR fleet of the FAS (forces aériennes stratégiques = strategic air forces) (MORPHEE Plan). The medical and paramedical personnel on operational duty on airbases and medical centers (school hospitals) (HIA = hôpital d'instruction des armées) as regards recovery care, neurosurgery or psychiatry experts, are appointed to go to departure sites as soon as possible.

Conclusion

All measures are taken at international as well as national level so that early care to the wounded may be actually achieved, and suited to the situation, however serious. The French Joint Medical Department was the first to realize the requirement for improving its elements by providing medical training sessions (CITERA = centre d'instruction aux techniques de réanimation de l'avant = training center for forward resuscitation techniques), targeting modern techniques for taking care of wounded in action, including necessary military training, guaranteeing perfect integration of medical elements into the units.

So as to shorten time allowance for intervention, an unprecedented effort was achieved by armed forces to train and equip combatants for a single purpose: *decrease the number of soldiers killed in action, mainly due to hemorrhage*. In this view, equipment and even the training techniques for learning survival methods have considerably improved these last few years, and the new medical kits issued on the theater a/o 2009/01/01, carried by all soldiers in Afghanistan (Trousse Individuelle du Combattant / TIC = soldier's individual first aid kit) now enables to soothe pain, to stop hemorrhage and compensate for loss of blood with packages of aqueous solution.

OPERATION EPIDOTE:

an Additional Aspect or the Cornerstone of the French Deployment in Afghanistan?

By COLONEL NICOLAS PIC, EPIDOTE DETACHMENT COMMANDER FROM AUGUST TO NOVEMBER 2008

EPIDOTE is the name of the French operation for training Afghan soldiers; it has been performed since 2002, with basic training provided directly within Afghan National Army (ANA) battalions. The mission is now part of an international organization, essentially composed of the American *Task Force PHOENIX* garrisoned in Kabul, whose task is mainly to restore the Afghan State's security forces.

The force is supervised by a concepitive staff, the *Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A)*, whose orders are executed, as regards training of Afghan troops, by the *Combined Training and Advisory Group (CTAG)*. These two organizations provide advice for top executives of the ministry of defense (MoD) and for the *Afghan National training Command (ANATC)*, which is the equivalent of the French CoFAT (Commandement de la Formation de l'Armée de Terre).

EPIDOTE, which is the French contribution to the *CTAG*, has for several years been focusing on training of both company grade and field grade officers; it also provides, on a case by case basis, training courses for military intelligence officers. The training of junior officers is performed at the *Kabul Military Training Center*, a large military camp located in the eastern outskirts of Kabul. On that site may be found

newly enlisted soldiers, NCOs and officers in their basic training course. Thus, no fewer than 7,000 personnel are in training permanently, instructed by Afghan officers and NCOs in noticeably insufficient numbers, themselves advised by coalition members. The latter often find themselves addressing trainees directly through lack of Afghan trainers. Thus some fifteen French instructors are included within

the *Officers Training Brigade (OTB)*, a small organization in charge of the captains' course (*Captains Commanders Course – CCC*), an integration course for former resistance fighters or former soldiers demobilized after the war which caused the fall of the Taliban regime (*Moudjahidins Integration Course – MIC*) and basic training for officers (*Officers Candidate School – OCS*), a course organized in partnership with a team of British instructors.

Cadets' and captains' training is quite similar to that of a Western junior officer or infantry captain. Initial training lasts six months, during which the young recruit learns the soldier's basic knowledge before reaching platoon leader level. French instructors work in close cooperation with Afghan key personnel; they



LCL PHILIPPEAU/CDF

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give them advice to organize training sessions and control the quality of teaching. The captains' training, which lasts two months, is essentially oriented on learning infantry tactical skills applied to actual fighting in Afghanistan (response to ambush, setting up of a *Check Point*, reconnaissance of a specific place...). Concerning this latter course, the teaching focuses on the capability to mount an action and issue clear orders within a simple tactical environment.

Besides, France has since 2004 been committed into the training of field grade officers and rebuilt in the last few years the Staff Course Academy in Kabul, which epitomizes the success of French – Afghan cooperation.

The memorandum of agreement initially signed between the two nations is becoming a successful part of the wider plan of restoring security forces, designed by *CSTC-A* and with *US CENTCOM* as lead organization. No fewer than 1,000 senior officers have been trained in this academy, which will be still further developed in 2009; the *MoD* will then implement the *Professional Military education (PME)* for Afghan officers, a professional career curriculum which, unsurprisingly, has a strong Anglo-Saxon flavor.

It includes four higher training phases for officers:

- the *Junior Command and Staff Course (JSOC)*, which has no equivalent in France and is intended for young captains after company command phase,
- the *Command and General Staff Course (CGSC)*, which is an equivalent for the French DEM (diplôme d'état-major),
- the *Higher Command and Staff Course (HCSC)*, an equivalent for the French CID (Collège Interarmées de Défense),
- and the *Strategic Command and Staff Course (SCSC)*, an equivalent for the French CHEM (Centre des Hautes Etudes Militaires).

Each of these four courses is “sponsored” by one nation which is committed to develop it for five years by training the teachers and providing part or all the subsidies for it. France has been developing CGSC for four years, and this year took over responsibility for *HCSC*. Thus our country keeps playing an important part in that defense academy. It performs its task in close cooperation with the other nations working in partnership for officers' higher education, the US (*sponsoring SCSC*) and Canada (*sponsoring JSOC*).

The results of Operation EPIDOTE, and more generally of the coalition's commitment in ANA reconstruction, are a very long term perspective, and it is difficult to assess the progress achieved by key personnel, or measure how far a particular academy has gained autonomy over a short period of time.

The *CSTC-A* observes with moderate optimism that the ANA is not behind schedule in what was planned for its development. However, in the field, results are much mitigated, and the measure of autonomy of a given academy often very closely depends on the quality of the Afghan officers assigned to training duty or to training support. While some key personnel were very adequately selected and quickly proved to be competent for performing training tasks or for assuming positions of authority (training director, head of curriculum...), others will never be able to make progress. After their departure it will be possible to consider finding somebody else who will be up to the job, competent and educated. This rather disappointing assessment essentially concerns the long-standing officers who had been trained by the Russians, lived through numerous regimes. These officers now find in their function, which is remote from battlefields, a situation enabling them to have a comparatively well-paid job while undergoing very hard living conditions, even in Kabul.

Generally speaking, officers' educational level is low, sometimes very low, with the noticeable exception of younger generations. This state of affairs is undoubtedly due to several years of civil war, followed by a period of obscurantism imposed by the Taliban. This period has caused a massive emigration of elites and made acquiring an education unattractive, while more urgent and vital concerns consumed the people's energy for several years. Therefore in Kabul it is not very easy to teach notions which may seem elementary to Westerners but mean nothing to an Afghan because these notions, even if they are basic ones, have never been learned or are totally alien to their local culture. This assessment makes necessary for advisers to tackle their missions with humility, to use a lot of energy to catch the student's attention, and confine the teaching to simple reasoning within some familiar fields such as logistics or support.

Then and last, is Operation EPIDOTE a mere (complementary) aspect of the French military deployment, or is it one of the cornerstones of our activities in Afghanistan? No doubt it is both, but we may be sure that there will be French advisers there for a long time: the EPIDOTE mission still has not borne all its fruit. Its initial action, performed within the framework of a coalition, focuses on the instructors' training.

It is complemented by that of the OMLTs or ETTs which carry on individual and collective training of combatants or staff officers within units. It contributes to asserting the part played by France in Afghanistan alongside its allies, and perpetuates the traditional links which have united Afghanistan and France for a century.

OMLTs¹: a Relevant Concept

By COLONEL GIRAUD, OMLTs COMMANDER FEBRUARY – JULY 2008

A powerful motivation, a demanding concept in terms of expertise and professionalism, implementation of the *OMLT* concept in Afghanistan will enable not only to achieve the «war aims», but should also prove to be an excellent means to upgrade the level of army units and personnel.

The mission of OMLTs is clear: «*In order to contribute to building a self-sufficient, competent and efficient Afghan army (...), French OMLTs are deployed within ANA's 201 Corps² so as to:*

- *Provide advice in everyday life, for education and training of Afghan National Army units;*
- *Advise leaders as regards operational planning, accompany them in combat and implement on their behalf coalition air and land support assets;*
- *Provide required assets and skills to facilitate liaison and enable command and control as well as conduct of operations.»*

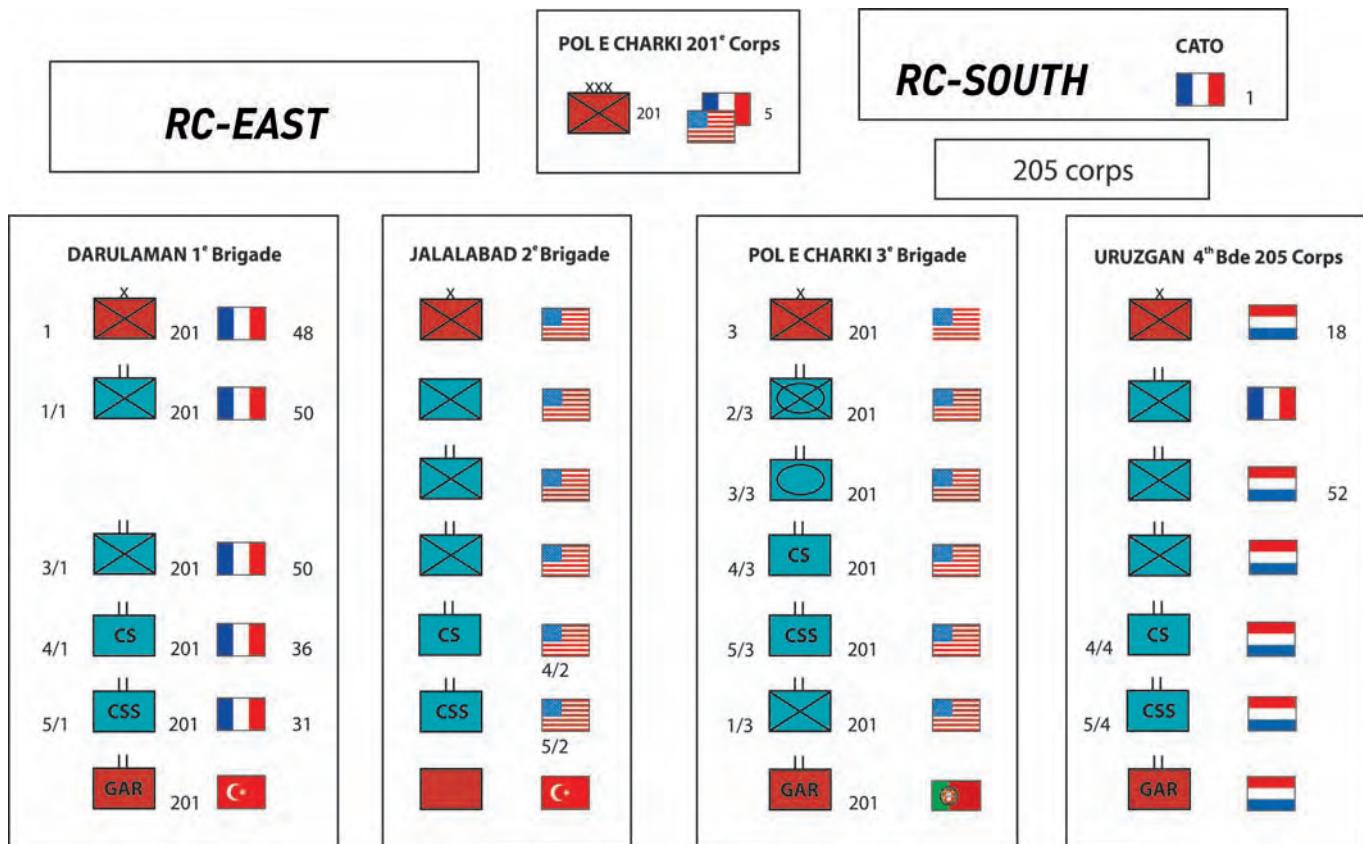
Summarized by the word “*mentoring*”, that mission takes shape through the **permanent presence** of French *OMLTs*³ alongside the Afghan National Army, during training and operations over the whole Afghan territory⁴. The aim is to enable ANA units to achieve quickly full operational capability level.

The latter is assessed every three months and is described in a report which specifies the achievement of objectives and states the time leads for a given unit before being described as “self-sufficient” by the Americans.

OMLTs suggest but do not compel, and work on four levels. Structure and organization of the detachment are mentioned in the diagram provided [page 84](#).

- The first level is that of Afghan 201 Corps, a command which is both organic and operational. The team commander is adviser to his COS, in close coordination with American personnel of the *RCAC*⁵.
- In decreasing order can then be found the mentors of 1st Brigade, advising the brigade commander and his

Experiences and Feedback



staff, then those of the 1, 2, 4 and 5 battalions (kandaks) the first two are infantry units, the other two are combat support and combat service support respectively.

- Lastly, company-level mentoring teams are attached to the various combat companies.

«Mentors» of all levels must achieve their missions on an autonomous basis, providing their own protection and medical, and logistic support. This concept is totally different from that of our American friends and allies with their *ETT*⁶. Actually, these operate only with cover, CS and CSS of *Task Forces*, which are combined-arms units positioned over the territory.

Last, *OMLTs* must have full knowledge of combined arms and joint combat, by using NATO procedures.

For France, considering its capabilities and resources, the *OMLT* concept must be retained, and the number of *OMLTs* increased. Indeed this course of action seems to be the most appropriate to achieve ISAF's⁷ aims as regards security.

The “low” investments in contact troops (220 personnel for staffing an *ANA* brigade) may indeed be regarded as extremely rewarding, because this enables the brigade both to perform necessary operational missions efficiently, and to make progress towards autonomy from a pedagogical point of view.

Moreover, the *OMLT* concept, at a low cost, shows our NATO allies and the Afghans that French commitment on the theater is tangible, with the lives of our troops exposed when required, and contributing noticeably to the international effort. Thanks to integration of our soldiers within the Afghan army, it prevents our troops from being perceived as occupation forces by the local populace.

Lastly, thanks to its compelling requirement for training, thoroughness and level of competence, by making soldiers be confronted with actual combat, this concept doubtlessly evidences the level of our units from all arms as well as of our staff officers.

As a conclusion, we can safely say that within the framework of the training mission intended to make Afghan security forces autonomous, this approach proves to be particularly relevant, with a view to eventually restoring peace in the country.

Characterized by flexibility of employment, commitment over the whole territory, and integration within Afghan units, OMLTs seem to be more efficient than a massive deployment of full-blown foreign units. These, bound to their AORs (8), expected to get results in the field, acting by themselves and being responsible for potential collateral damage, may eventually become undesirable intruders in the eyes of the populace, thus crystallizing all resentment and hatred.

Lastly, the OMLT concept enables, and this is not to be overlooked, to provide an option for an honorable withdrawal for nations wishing not to get bogged down. These will actually be able to leave the theater of operations once the units they are tasked with advising are CM1⁹ certified.

The solution for the Afghan issue lies necessarily in the hands of Afghans. It cannot be found without them.

1 OMLT (*Operational Mentoring Liaison Team*).

2 ANA: *Afghan National Army*.

3 Some nations have a more restrictive view of the mission, confining 4 In June 2008, 1st Brigade of 201 Corps was deployed over Kandahar, performing a 500 km-range raid.

5 RCAC (*Regional Corps Advisory Command*): an American command organization at each Afghan corps level, in charge of coordinating ETT/OMLTs, from a pedagogic point of view (doctrine to be taught, pedagogic control / coordination) as well as of procurement of office equipment and equipment and pay of Afghan forces.

6 ETT (*Embedded Training Team*): an American concept of the OMLTs, based on training teams which are integrated, are lighter, have the same mission as OMLTs and perform all combat missions. Moreover they control funding and monitor ANA strength.

7 ISAF (*International Security Assistance Force*).

8 AOR (*Area of Responsibility*).

9 CM1 (*Capability Milestone 1*): Operational level 1. Level 4 is the achievement of full strength and platoon-level engagement; level 1 is the capability to perform 5 basic combat missions at battalion level.



Photo fournie par l'auteur

Civil-Military Cooperation in Afghanistan

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL PELLETIER, GIACM*

In Afghanistan, *civil-military cooperation (CIMIC)* is compelled to operate in an unsecured environment which has been devastated by thirty years of war. Because of these features, CIMIC has had not only to adapt its work procedures, but also to widen its scope of action in order to comply with the guidelines provided by NATO and ensuing missions.

* GIACM (*Groupement Interarmées des Actions Civilo-Militaires = Joint Civil-Military Operations Group*)



L'ancien palais du roi à KABOUL

An Unsecured Environment

The point is to perform *CIMIC* tasks while taking existing threats into account. Unlike what occurs on other theaters, contacts with the populace have become difficult. Repeated attacks against the Force, as well as the opponent's capability to take advantage of the smallest weaknesses,

compel *CIMIC* teams to regard each situation as potentially dangerous. Consequently they move only in armored vehicles, escorted by an infantry or armored platoon, or even within a company, which not only significantly decreases the number of their sorties, but does not facilitate contacts with the populace. It is therefore more difficult to monitor the achievement of projects.

In order to make up for these constraints, particular attention is given to contacts with civilian organizations, whether local or foreign. Most of them have been operating in Afghanistan for many years, and make it possible to obtain essential information for a full understanding of the country. Thus it is possible to perform a detailed assessment of the French area of action, so as not only to achieve projects which are appropriate to populace requirements, and consequently have a more efficient impact, but also to understand the environment in which the Force operates and advise the zone commander

some decades ago. Similarly, handicraft production has almost disappeared in the country because many craftsmen have left for Pakistan or Iran. Many skills have been forgotten or even lost. The international community therefore has to perform reconstruction not only of economy, but also of almost all components of the Afghan society. Consequently it has defined a number of objectives to meet these requirements; it is trying to achieve this goal by relying on various players, among which ISAF is one of the most important.



Photo fournie par l'auteur

Setting-up police stations with district deputy-governor and police head

A War-Devastated Country

Afghanistan has suffered thirty years of conflicts, first against a foreign force, then an internal conflict. There are unfortunately numerous harmful consequences.

The society has been all the more easily disrupted as it is composed of a myriad entities with geographical, religious and ethnical differences. A delicate balance had been achieved in the 1970s, but wars and ensuing displacement of population have disrupted that society which finds it difficult to restore a hierarchic organization approved by everyone.

The economic system, 95% of which relies on agriculture, also suffered during that period. Over and above the direct effects of the various wars, the lack of irrigating systems maintenance, deforestation (mainly due to wood required for heating), a decreasing number of agricultural product storing and transformation facilities, have all caused Afghanistan to be dependent on external assistance, and to have to import food which the country was still producing

The NATO Guidelines

Activated in 2002 by NATO member nations, ISAF has defined several lines of operations (security, governance and development) which should enable to achieve its final goal: to establish security and stability and encourage development in Afghanistan.

Currently the line in which the French force is principally committed is the first mentioned (security). This has to be achieved because the other two lines depend on it directly. No progress in the fields of governance or reconstruction will ever be possible in an unsafe area. Conversely, the current situation in Afghanistan shows that any improvement in the field of security must, in order to be long-enduring,

be associated with some progress in the other two lines of operations. Consequently, in spite of the difficulties that this situation entails, these three fields of activity must be taken into account simultaneously, and not one after the other.

The Tasks of French *CIMIC* in Afghanistan

Taking all these data into account, the following tasks have been assigned to French *CIMIC* in Afghanistan:

- *Contribute to securing the country*, particularly by facilitating approval of the Force by the populace. That generic task, whatever the theater, must enable the Force to be accepted, or even to gain the support of the local populace. It is indispensable, particularly in a country whose culture and history are so specific. It is carried out through micro-projects or distribution of products meeting the populace's basic needs.

Experiences and Feedback

But *CIMIC* can also enhance security by activities in support of local forces. Thus it has security check points set up in critical places, allowing the Afghan police to perform their missions adequately (currently some of these posts are just tented shelters, which protects policemen neither from weather nor from insurgents' fire).

Similarly, building or revamping of communication lines will benefit the populace, but will also enable security forces to have access to areas which had been previously un-trafficable.

- *Reinforce the robustness of local authorities*, by involving them into planning, achievement and monitoring of projects. Thus they will be perceived by the populace as taking their requirements into account and perfectly integrated into a reconstruction process supported by the international community. This participation provides greater awareness of the actual problems of the Afghan populace, because local authority is more familiar with the country than the representative of a foreign force. Moreover it also prepares the force withdrawal, leaving the management of the problems to the country's government.
- *Participate in the improvement of Afghans' living conditions*, which contributes to restart the economy on a case by case basis. Even if *CIMIC* does not have

the means to reconstruct an area (and this is not its expected mission), it can take part in its development by achieving projects which are consistent with the Provincial Development Plan (PDP) in areas which are not yet secure enough, in order to allow action of civilian organizations.

It also contributes to restarting the local economy through implementation of micro-projects which enable not only to increase the incomes of those concerned, but also gives them an active role in the improvement of their living conditions. Thus many Afghan families have participated in the achievement of agricultural projects launched by French *CIMIC*. This enabled them to be no longer dependent on humanitarian assistance, and to provide for their own needs.

- *Establish a link between the Force and the civilian environment*, so that the activities of the Force may be known and understood by the various civilian players, and vice versa. Besides, far from acting on an autonomous basis, the Force takes part in and completes a course of action, defined by the international community, in liaison with the local authorities. It is therefore essential that links between all players should be established.



Photo fournie par l'auteur



Photo fournie par l'auteur

crops cultivated on terraced hillsides

CIMIC Organization

CIMIC activities are effective only if they can support the force efficiently. For that purpose the *CIMIC* cell should take part in planning and conduct of operations and consequently be embedded in the center of operations of the Force which it supports.

Within the framework of the reorganization of the Force in Afghanistan, it is desirable to have the following structures available:

- One G9 cell integrated within the PCIAT (PC interarmées de théâtre = joint theater HQ) during activation of the future brigade, so as to be able to perform the missions described in the above paragraph.
- One S9 officer will be assigned in each GTIA (Groupement tactique interarmes = combined arms battalion task force). His role is to command and control his two *CIMIC* teams and advise the Operation Commander about *CIMIC* employment.

- A French or foreign *PRT* (*Provincial Reconstruction Team*), set up in particular to achieve the objectives defined regarding «Governance» and «reconstruction».

Conclusion

During its seven-year-old presence in Afghanistan, *CIMIC* has provided support facilitating acceptance of the Force in its environment. It also has delivered assistance to the populace, which is crucial after thirty years of conflict. Its task is now to enable to hand over part of its responsibilities to local authorities, while facilitating the return of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and therefore reconstruction.

Basis for and Lessons Learned from Agricultural Tasks Performed by AFRANE in Afghanistan

BY MR. YVES FAIVRE REPRESENTANTATIVE OF «AFRANE DEVELOPPEMENT» NGO

AFRANE is a humanitarian organization (in accordance with French 1901 Act), created in 1980 and founded on French-Afghan friendly links, and independent of any political or religious influence.

This organization is operating in Afghanistan only. It is strengthened by a network of 700 sympathizers. It is among the first that launched a movement of solidarity for Afghanistan, first through emergency operations, then through development and education activities. It was constantly active during the hardest periods, and supported clandestine schools for girls.

AFRANE regards education as one the crucial keys to an enduring reconstruction of the country and to overcoming its injuries and internal disagreements. It operates within the framework of the memorandums of agreement signed with the Afghan government.

Excerpt from AFRANE website¹

With rains about 300 mm/sq meter and 1,800-m altitude in the Kabul area, Afghanistan can be categorized as a country with a semi-arid mountain climate. Its topographical features are very uneven with a myriad valleys, and make it a landlocked country where each *mantega*² is more or less isolated from its neighbor, just like its inhabitants. Agriculture is performed in oases, with grassy areas where there is some water, and deserts of earth, not of sand, where there is no water. Another feature includes vast high-altitude plains, like the Ghazni or Logar plains. Population is to be found in oases, always with great density.

The Land Estate Structures and Their Consequences

These structures are complex and include small and big owners who, as regards the latter, exploit their lands through the work of farmers, sharecroppers and day-workers. We are accustomed to think that whereas owners can generally achieve self-sufficiency, and the biggest can even become wealthy³, it is not the case for the others, who are getting poorer and have more debts as years go by. Now, this pauperized population obviously constitutes the majority of the people. Therefore the Khans' paternalism maintains a delicate balance. In their homes, the guest rooms, which are impressively large, always accommodate a lot of guests.

But that traditional system, disturbed by war, gave birth to a new category of owners, the *Jihad*⁴ commanders, among whom many do not originate from the Khan category, but asserted themselves through the force of arms. Far from having the same charisma as the Khans, their only aim is to get rich whatever the means. Therefore there is today in Afghanistan a large part of the rustic population who has been pauperized and is dissatisfied; this is made worse by the chronic draught which has prevailed for a decade.

Some Elements to Understand the Production Systems

Agricultural lands have come into existence gradually through accumulation of dust originating from erosion by the wind. They are deep, muddy soils with little organic matter, which makes them particularly easily eroded and turned into *wadi*. Their cultivation requires large-scale anti-erosion construction works (terraced hillsides following contour lines), but also a lot of water within an intensive system⁵, because evaporation is high in summer⁶.

Afghan agricultural systems are particularly robust, as was seen during the last 30 years of conflict. They are based on cultivation of irrigated winter wheat, the priority being to produce the bread needed by families. Clover or alfalfa will be sown after wheat, which will allow feeding their sparse livestock. Moreover clover and alfalfa enrich the soil with nitrogen.

AFRANE Activities

During the war, the effort of our organization was mainly focused on agriculture. After Soviet troops left, the priority was to restore the irrigation systems⁷, then to bring seeds, fertilizers and phyto-sanitary products, as well as grow fruit tree orchards. The destruction of everything that could draw ploughs by the Soviets who wanted to weaken resistance forces by bombing karez, canals and even oxen, made us decide to import small tractors into Afghanistan from neighboring Pakistan. These tractors were immediately popular, which made that paradoxically some degree of mechanization was achieved during the war, and was further developed.

More recently, since 2003, thanks to first-rate cooperation with French CIMIC⁸, we have among other things developed new-generation projects intended to demonstrate the efficiency of water control methods which hitherto had been unknown in Afghanistan. These projects rely on the setting up of drainage basins, the only method which will in the long run enable the country to cope successfully with an increasing drought, while in the short run solving the erosion problems and growing soils which hitherto have never been made use of.

Our organization has worked in the Logar and Ghazni for long, but we have only been partly successful in this challenge. In Logar, switching to intensive agriculture has caused a new class of farmers to appear, specialized in the production of vegetable seedlings. In Ghazni, in the Andar and Ghiru districts, the unstable situation and the drought have not enabled us to succeed.

Alongside the French CIMIC, we are launching new projects in the Sarobi district, which lies in a strategic position east to Kabul. One of the aspects of this project deals with boosting security, with an absolute necessity for funding its agricultural component.

2009 will be a key year East of Kabul.



Yves FAIVRE

Soissons, a French variety which works satisfactorily in cold areas, here in Logar

Conclusion

The very nature of the Afghan territory, its uneven topographical features, make it necessary for us to work very patiently, going round every Afghan village in order to meet people and bring them small-scale projects tailored to their needs.

In spite of a great diversity in landscapes and population, Afghan agricultural systems are quite homogeneous (but there are of course some specificities), which is surprising in this context. Therefore, requirements are often similar when voiced by the people, whatever the area: water control requirements (protection against erosion, repair of karez water systems and canals, building of small water tanks, need for top quality seeds (wheat, alfalfa, clover), for mineral fertilizers (due to the lack of nitrogen and phosphorus in soils), for organic fertilizers (compost) and grafted fruit trees.

Intensification of Afghan agriculture is dependent on intensive growing of irrigated wheat. Actually, only appropriate and certified varieties enable to increase yield; that increase will in turn allow to make lands available for high-value cultivation, like vegetables or fruit trees.

¹ [Http://www.afrane.asso.fr](http://www.afrane.asso.fr)

² A mantega is a set of villages ethnically, culturally, geographically, and economically united. Afghans identify themselves more readily by their belonging to a mantega than to a village.

³ Big owners are called « Khans ».

⁴ « Jihad »: holy war waged against the Soviets.

⁵ We should distinguish between (1) the intensive system which includes irrigated lands on terraced hillsides with small dykes on which are used mineral and organic fertilizers, and stand for food self-sufficiency for the Afghan farmer, from (2) the extensive system, with no irrigation or fertilizers, a system which is also called « lalmi » or dry farming, whose production mainly depends on spring rains, and hence is considered to be uncertain.

⁶ In farming water requirements are estimated in terms of potential evapo-transpiration which, in the Kabul area, is around 700 mm.

⁷ Irrigation systems include karez, or underground canals which catch water from the feet of the mountains and bring it to irrigated plots, which is a millennium-old system, and to above-ground canals, the whole thing being managed traditionally in each village by « mirabs », or water-masters.

⁸ CIMIC: civil military cooperation.

The Bundeswehr in Afghanistan

Situation Mission and Assets With Particular Attention Paid to Employment of the Army

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL KLAUS SCHIRRA, GERMAN ARMY

The author of this article, Lieutenant Colonel Klaus Schirra, is a field grade officer of the German Army. He holds a degree from CSEM/CID (Cours Supérieur d'Etat-major/Collège Interarmées de Défense = French General Staff College/Joint Defense College). He is currently serving in Berlin as executive officer in the operating center of the German Joint Operations Planning and Command & Control Center.

The Bundeswehr is currently taking part in 13 international operations, with strength over 7,000 troops, almost 50% of whom originate from the army.

Thus the army has been the greatest troop contributor for 16 years. This state of affairs will not change, even in the next few years, because today as tomorrow land operations will be crucial in the achievement of missions determined within the framework of international and conflict crisis management. Concerning these missions, they may be peacemaking operations, stability operations which may involve high-intensity combat, or nation building operations performed in order to restore state structures or, lastly, assistance in the case of natural disasters.

Requirements to which the army is subjected as a troop contributor are growing more numerous, as illustrated by the operation performed in Afghanistan.

German participation in ISAF is intended to provide assistance to the Afghan government agencies in their effort to maintain security in the North of Afghanistan as well as in the Kabul area, so that the Afghan government and UN personnel may operate in a secure environment. Among the missions assigned to German units are the following:

- Performing of tactical missions, particularly patrol,
- Convoy protection,
- Protection of military camps,
- When requested, protection of the German embassy, protection of executive agencies of the Afghan government,
- Flying reconnaissance TORNADO¹s within the framework of ISAF mandate,



Photo fournie par l'auteur

- EOD Explosive Ordnance Disposal mission),
- Contribution to training of Afghan armed forces thanks to the *Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs)* and building up of military schools,
- Since 1 July 2008 setting up and making available of the *Quick*

Reaction Force (QRF) within the Regional Command North (RCN) area.

German participation in Afghanistan is judicially legitimized by a mandate issued by the German Bundestag, according to which 4,500 troops may be deployed on the theater of operations. German strength of the current 18th ISAF contingent amounts to around 3,900 troops, 1,700 of which originating from the army, 600 from the air force, 30 from the navy, 1,150 from the joint support service, and 350 from the medical department.

Commitment in Afghanistan is for the Bundeswehr the top priority and all planning processes performed by

the army as well as measures taken are the expression of it. The aim is a comprehensive and integrated approach, combining civilian and military tools, based on experience, according to which there can be no reconstruction without security, and no security without development or reconstruction.

Thus, one of our main efforts on the military level is to widen the scope of our commitment in order to set up Afghan security forces. German armed forces serve in support of the ISAF general HQ, of the *Regional Command Capital (RC-C)*, and most of them in support of RC-N, over which Germany holds command. The Bundeswehr covers 25% of the Afghan territory, including 30% of the population.

The *Provincial Reconstruction Teams* (KONDOZ and FAIZABAD PRTs) are the heart of the disposition through which we carry out our commitment on behalf of northern area inhabitants. These teams include both a civilian and a military component (between 500 and 600 personnel: engineers, protection elements, logistics, reconnaissance, military police, signals and CIMIC elements); they reflect our approach, particularly through their inter-departmental composition.

Along with its partners and other troop contributors engaged in the northern area, Germany is currently considering creating, in provinces where there are today no ISAF units, some *Provincial Advisory Teams (PATs)* as divisions of the *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*. A PAT is permanently manned, and its task is to support the development of the province involved.

Since 2006, Germany has also been providing some personnel in order to man the *OMLTs*. *OMLTs* are the key element of the building up of operational and enduring Afghan security forces; without them, no «exit strategy» may be considered. They not only train Afghan soldiers within the barrack premises, but they also accompany them in operations so as to make them gradually able to conduct operations on an autonomous basis. *OMLTs* are

specialized in the training of either combat infantry units or combat support units.



Training of Afghan soldiers

Within the framework of building up the Afghan national army (ANA) whose strength is to increase from 80,000 personnel in a first stage up to 120,000, Germany will increase the number of its *OMLTs*, so as to eventually command 7 teams, 4 of which will be exclusively national and 3 multinational. An *OMLT* is generally composed of 10 officers, 9 NCOs and 11 soldiers in the case of routine activities: the total number of German officers serving in *OMLTs* will be around 200 in 2009. Detachment of officers and NCOs to serve in *OMLTs* has considerable consequences on units which stay in Germany in so far as they will no longer be available to perform the training of the latter.

Along with the increase in the number of *OMLTs*, training has been provided since April 7th 2007 in the Afghan forces school of logistics located in Kabul, which was built by Germany in cooperation with France and Italy.

Besides, Germany is currently considering the project of contribution to the building up of an engineer school in Mazar-e-Sharif, under army responsibility. The first decisions have already been taken in this view. Many things will depend on whether partner nations will participate or not in this new and important project, in terms of funding as well as personnel. The Bundeswehr also takes part in the training of Afghan military police and in the setting up of an officers' academy ("Afghan defense university"). Support measures have been carried out on a large scale with the providing of materiel and

equipment as well as with the training of key personnel of the Afghan army in the Bundeswehr schools in Germany. Thus, between 2007 and 2009, the overall support provided for Afghan security forces will be increased threefold.

Let us now focus on army forces and the way operations are being performed.

Army forces are committed in particular in protection and intelligence missions. Since July 1st 2008, the army moreover has provided for *QRF*. Currently *QRF* is mainly composed of one infantry company which can deliver mortar fire support as well as control air support operations; it is reinforced by logistic elements. It is about 200 strong, including command team. Its size is to be increased this year to reach battalion size.



QRF infantrymen with MARDER 1 A 5 armored infantry fighting vehicle (mine protected)

Among the main missions of the *QRF* are the following: patrol, protection, crowd control, evacuation operations, arrest and search, offensive operations against *"Opposing Militant Forces" (OMF)* in cooperation with ANA, commitment as a tactical reserve force of *Commander RC North*.

The *QRF* has been allotted a mixed set of vehicles, which are air transportable, protected (Wiesel, Wolf, Eagle IV, Dingo 2) and armored (Marder 1A5 armored infantry fighting vehicles, Fuchs 1A8 armored personnel carriers). Soldiers have state-of-the-art modular combat equipment: «infantryman of the future» – body armor, night vision devices, G 36 A2 rifles, mixed squad equipped with MP7 submachine guns, MG4 machine guns,

anti tank rocket launchers and G82 12.7 mm sniper rifles. Depending on the situation, the *QRF* may be reinforced by command support experts, medical department personnel, engineers and EOD elements, and intelligence personnel; moreover, air transport assets and military police personnel may be added. Even air support provided by other troop contributors of ISAF is possible, if required.

Within the framework of the operational command and control of *Commander RC North*, the *QRF* has already demonstrated its strike capability. Our main experience includes the following:

- During mission handover in the area, a training center for night-and-day all weapon firing is necessary to make troops familiar with climate and terrain.
- Comprehensive IED training, based on lessons learned from recent operations, is absolutely necessary, considering the threats which troops have to face in Afghanistan.
- Patrolling, convoy escort and offensive operations are the basic activities.
- Training performed with Afghan security forces is essential before operations are achieved in common (including exchange of maps, operation plans, etc.)
- QRF achieves best results when implementing grouped dispositions, thus enabling to impose one's will on an opponent waging asymmetrical warfare as well as to retain or, according to situation, to gain initiative.
- The minimum strength of a QRF maneuver element is platoon strength (mixing of vehicles, capabilities and weapons).
- EOD and engineer elements are essential to any operation.

- It is advisable to have non-lethal weapons so as to have more freedom of action in case the situation deteriorates.
- The most significant threat originates from IEDs, suicide attacks and ambushes laid with direct fire weapons.

- Thorough area reconnaissance and intelligence concentration are essential to operation preparation (necessary time allowance).

- Employment of mortars and close fire air support, within the framework of show-of-force activities, has proved to be efficient.

- Combined use of different types of vehicles warrants flexibility and has proved efficient. However, heavy armored vehicles are necessary (infantry mounted combat, quick succession of different courses of actions with complete combat equipment, protection level, capability of imposing one's will, etc.)

- All weapons must be set on their mounts, stabilized and fitted for night fighting.

Lessons learned by the first *QRF* have already been integrated into the training curriculums organized by the army warfare training Center for the following courses of trainees assigned to the *QRF*.

To conclude, we must observe that the overall assessment of Bundeswehr activities in Afghanistan is impressive:

- Germany, which is the third biggest troop contributor, is in charge of the northern area, twice as small as Germany, where 30% of Afghan population lives.
- Command of *RC North*, in close cooperation with France, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania and Belgium.
- Setting up of the *QRF* since July 2008.



Photo fournie par l'auteur

Airlift with CH 53

- Germany performs 50% of airlift support in the whole of Afghanistan
- Germany contributes to the creation of Afghan armed forces and police through action of *OMLTs* and with support from military police; it is setting up the engineer school; releases Bundeswehr materiel, and performs training sessions in Germany for Afghan officers and NCOs.
- Training and equipment of our committed units are permanently improved, based on lessons learned in the field (over 80% of the 1,000 vehicles used by troops are protected).
- Planning intended to commit other assets (in particular the COBRA helicopter, the « Panzerhaubitze 2000 » howitzer, Leopard 2A6 MBT), even at short notice and depending on situation, has already been achieved.



Photo fournie par l'auteur

Intelligence collection by LUNA UAV

1 A multipurpose heavy fighter aircraft, the Tornado is built through cooperation between Germany (MBB), the United Kingdom (BAE) and Italy (Aeritalia).

US Army Logistics in Afghanistan

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL KELLY M. CARRIGG, TRADOC LIAISON OFFICER TO CDEF, 7 APRIL 2009

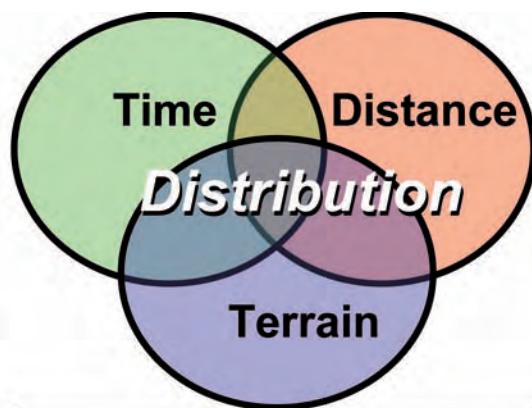
*“The Last Tactical Mile is Historically the Hardest Part of Logistics in Afghanistan.”
(2008 AAR to the Combined Arms Support Command, Ft. Lee, Virginia)*

In the U.S., the media focus has been on *Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)* for quite some time and *Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)* in Afghanistan has become a quiet footnote. But now, with the recent changeover between the Bush and Obama administrations, the imminent drawdown of troops in Iraq and the augmentation of forces (17,000+) in Afghanistan during the summer of 2009, the spotlight has suddenly shifted to the latter. Logistics support is a challenge in every war and no two conflicts are ever the same. The U.S. Army has learned over the past seven + years that logistics in Afghanistan and Iraq is similar only if one compares apples with oranges.

Iraq and Afghanistan are very different countries and present very different challenges. Afghanistan is a larger country in both size and population than Iraq, but it has just a small fraction of the infrastructure that Iraq enjoys. The Islamic calendar reads 1387 AD, and sometimes in Afghanistan, it appears as though the Julian Calendar reads the same year. Hard working people, many of whom are illiterate, are struggling to overcome generations of war and oppressive rulers. Extremely limited technology, infrastructure destroyed by years of conflict coupled with restrictive terrain creates many challenges unique to Afghanistan. These challenges require creative solutions – the source for many *U.S. Army* Lessons Learned.

BLUF: Afghanistan is a Distribution Fight.¹

The time – distance factors driven by the transportation infrastructure and security challenges, combined with the terrain of Afghanistan, make distribution by ground (and air) more difficult than nearly anywhere else in the world. Host Nation Trucks do not reach anywhere quickly and often take days to make a journey that would be a few hours in the US, France or Iraq. Old, overloaded vehicles are traveling on roads that are mostly unimproved, covered in gravel, and if paved, are in



Afghanistan is a distribution fight

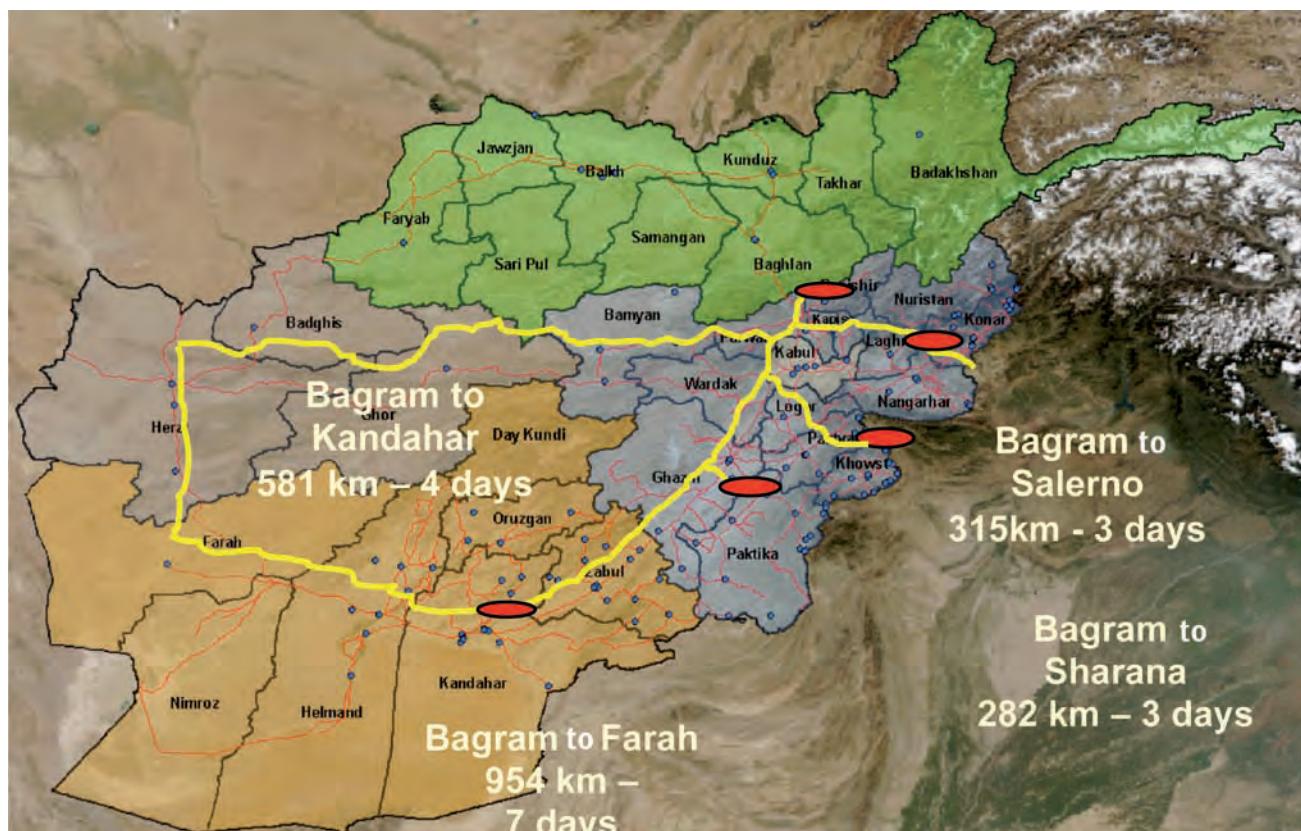
varying states of disrepair. In fact, only 2,800 km of 18,000 km, or 16%, of roadways are paved in Afghanistan!

Many roads cannot handle the increased traffic or the increased weight of U.S. up-armored vehicles and/or large Route Clearance vehicles such as the Buffalo. And, roads which go through mountain passes are prone to closure in the winter months due to heavy snow; distribution can be

slowed down by weeks due to waiting trucks and single-lane traffic. In the Spring, roads washout due to water runoff once the snow melts.

Finally, there is the distance. U.S. forces have, sometimes, over 500 miles, or 800+ kms, between

supporting and supported locations. The distance of distribution only tells half the story of the challenges faced - the poor road network, combined with the extreme terrain and weather changes all make reasonable distances that much more daunting.



Highway 1 (highlighted in yellow on the map above) is the “Ring Road” with some of the supporting routes to key locations. One can see the mileage and number of days required to reach each destination.

In addition to the infra-structure challenges, Afghanistan has other recurring issues. The U.S. is heavily reliant upon both Host Nation and Pakistani drivers as well as dock and refinery workers. Many of these people are practicing Muslims and therefore,

their religious observances must be planned for in advance. The Hajj, Ramadan and other holidays must be anticipated in order to overcome the inevitable disruptions to supply distribution.

As seen in the news, the use of the Pakistan Ground Line of Communication (*GLOC*) is tenuous and always subject to disruptions from fuel strikes, driver strikes, and challenges at the border with customs fees, inspections and paperwork. (The U.S.

Military is not allowed in Pakistan, therefore, all supplies arrive via Host Nation or civilian assets). As a result, when only part of the supply chain is disrupted, it can have a significant ripple effect across the whole battle space and potentially impede combat operations.

Summer has its own set of challenges with air delivery. The increased temperatures in Afghanistan cause the ACLs (Allowable Cargo Loads) in fixed wing aircraft to decrease

significantly. For example, out of 18 pallet positions available in a C17 Globemaster, only 10 pallets can fly on the plane. And, Short Take-Off and Landing (*STOL*) aircraft have flight restrictions due to the heat, reduced lift, and turbulence. These challenges can be mitigated by maximizing each flight and prudently pre-positioning critical supplies.

In addition, sling load operations (with helicopters) can also be used when roads are not navigable. Hardship being the mother of invention,

the Army has devised a new aerial resupply capability in the form of the “*Speedball*” Low Cost, Low Altitude (*LCLA*) Aerial Delivery System². The *LCLA* program is an innovative means of aerial delivery currently being employed throughout portions of Afghanistan. It differs from the Air Force’s high velocity Container Delivery System (*CDS*) drops in that bundles are smaller in size and delivered at a very low altitude from a smaller civilian-style aircraft with almost pinpoint accuracy – usually within 20 meters of the established point of impact. (*P*).

LCLA is very economical because the total cost of the system is less than \$100/each and, the bundles can contain all classes of supply (to include larger bundles of Class III fuel blivets and Class V ammunition up to 155 mm rounds) ranging in weight from 250 – 560 pounds. Most importantly, this type of aerial delivery can resupply platoon-size units during missions when normal sustainment delivery means are impossible due to the factors of *METT-TC* (mission, enemy, terrain, troops, time and civilians).



The Low Cost, Low Altitude (*LCLA*) Aerial Delivery System in Afghanistan

Another endemic problem in Afghanistan is pilferage. It is a significant, culturally driven, moving target that changes with each preventive measure taken. U.S. Logisticians have diligently tracked this issue by using truck and driver registrations, truck labeling/bar coding, the Amnesty Truck Program (ATP), new fuel tank seals, and Documentation Authentication Tables

as Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (*TTP*) in order to combat and prevent stealing.

The *ATP*, for example, has saved the U.S. hundreds of thousands of dollars since its inception. Sometimes, selling fuel on the open market can be more lucrative to a driver than delivering the fuel for the agreed upon transportation delivery fee. Under

the *ATP*, a truck company must deliver 95% of the fuel contracted for delivery. If a driver only delivers 90%, his company does not get paid. At the end of a given month, the number of unpaid missions and gallons of fuel lost by one carrier are totaled and that company has the opportunity to deliver replacement fuel. If the carrier is successful, then, he will receive payment. In the end, pilferage is reduced.

Although Host Nation Trucking is a challenge with no internal Army assets on-site, it is a critical area of Afghan development for U.S. Logisticians on the ground. During monthly meetings with the leadership of trucking firms, the Americans have been successful in mentoring the Afghan companies in both asset management and tracking truck missions. U.S. Logisticians also helped create a system of cooperation; when one company fires a driver for theft or forgery, his name is shared among the other companies to prevent one driver from repeatedly causing problems.

Thousands of truck missions take place each month in order to distribute

supplies and equipment throughout the theater in Afghanistan. New Host Nation trucking companies have been created which has also increased the competition for truck missions and, in turn, has had a positive effect on the Afghan economy. As a result, U.S. Logisticians can play a direct role in Effects Based Operations and more specifically, in achieving Non-Lethal Effects to support the COIN mission by building the Afghan economy.

A similar example is the recent creation of Intra-Theater Bottled Water Plants in country, one of which is the Bagram ARIA Bottled Water Plant. It converted an old Russian minefield into a \$10 million investment and

generated 500 jobs for Afghan workers. By establishing confidence in local nationals, the American military can help win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people and, win the war on terror.

The threat to U.S. Forces in Afghanistan is multi-faceted as it is in Iraq. Convoys face IEDs, Decoy *IEDs*³, *VBIEDs*, Suicide Bombers, ramming, small arms fire, sniper fire and crowds. Due to the nature of these threats, some of the trucking missions in Afghanistan have had to adapt. In order to conceal military vehicles as they travel to forward locations, for example, U.S. transporters modified the standard 20-foot container.



Photo fournie par l'auteur

Notice the cutouts on the sides designed to hold an Up-Armored *HUMMUV*, or *UAH*, with FRAG KIT 5 door additions. Traveling with a *UAH* on the back of an exposed Host Nation Truck was asking for the truck to be shot at, and then, it would need maintenance upon arrival to its final destination. The fabricated container successfully mitigated this challenge. Even without such security concerns, the additional weight and high center of gravity of the *UAH* load creates challenges for drivers. And, given the conditions of some routes in country, this situation can result in roll-overs/accidents.

As seen in Iraq, Combat Logistics Patrols (*CLP*) are also critical in Afghanistan for moving sensitive cargo via ground. Mail, CL V (ammunition)⁴, critical CL IX (repair parts) and sensitive cargo must be moved via *CLP* if air movement is not available or possible. Prior to 2008, there was no tactical ground transportation above the Brigade level in Afghanistan; this forced the Brigade Combat Teams (*BCT*) to place *CLPs* at unit locations or to come to Bagram in order to pull sensitive supplies into their Areas of Operation (*AO*). Finally, in

February 2008, the Joint Logistics Command (*JLC*) received a Light Medium Truck company (minus) to allow the Brigades to focus their *CLP* capacity within their respective battle spaces. These truck platoons helped enable the «push» system of logistics and distribution management upon which the future of logistics is predicated.

Additionally, Lessons Learned in Iraq and Afghanistan have taught all U.S. Logisticians that they have to focus on basic soldier skills (Warrior Tasks



Fabricated container to conceal military vehicles

and Battle Drills) and anticipate what they can encounter during convoy operations such as:

- Stay vigilant and alert; pay attention to surroundings.
- Maintain a ready and aggressive posture with weapons pointing outward.
- Demonstrate a willingness to engage threats.
- Drivers concentrate on driving and not shooting.
- Drive in the center of the road.
- Move left to allow traffic to pass on the right (avoid potholes).
- Speed and interval are your friends.
- Place slowest vehicle near the front of the convoy as the «Pace Setter».
- Contacting the Quick Reaction Force (*QRF*)/*MEDEVAC*/attack helicopter assets can be difficult; confirm ability to contact each before departing Forward Operating Base (*FOB*); have a back up plan.

¹ *BLUF* = Bottom Line Up Front.

² For more information about the LCLA, see the article, "An Innovative Approach to Combat Logistics: Low Cost, Low Altitude Airborne Resupply in Afghanistan." LTC Michael Peterman, MAJ Paul J. Narowski II, MAJ Ernest Litynski and SFC Edwin Clouse. *Infantry Magazine*, September-October 2007, pp. 10-13.

³ In this type of IED attack, a convoy is first hit by a remotely detonated IED. When convoy personnel stop to treat the wounded and a first aid vehicle moves up to provide support, then, a second IED is remotely detonated to target the vehicles on-site.

⁴ Normally, all ammunition must be flown into Afghanistan from Kuwait and/or the Continental United States (CONUS).

In summary, logistics in Afghanistan is a complex process. With the thousands of additional U.S. troops heading to the theater in the summer of 2009, the current infrastructure will have to greatly expand in order to meet the increased demand for all classes of supply. This will undoubtedly create more challenges for U.S. Logisticians on the ground who must be able to anticipate and in turn, accomplish the mission.

The British Perspective Experiences As An Operational Mentoring And Liaison Team Commander in Afghanistan 2007

BY MAJOR M.P MARTIN DAVID MC¹ GRENADIER GUARDS

Major David Martin was awarded the Military Cross for his bravery whilst leading the Grenadier Guards OMLT in Afghanistan. He is currently working as a staff officer in Headquarters Infantry in the British Army's Land Warfare Centre in Warminster.

This article aims to summarise my experiences as an Infantry company commander in the First battalion, The Grenadier Guards, deployed in the role of *Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT)* commander in Helmand Province, southern Afghanistan, from March to October 2007. At the outset, I must say that this almost seven month period was without doubt the most challenging and rewarding period of my career to date. I think it unlikely that anything will surpass it.

In Afghanistan, we were to mentor the 1st Kandak, 3rd Brigade, 205th «Hero» Corps, Afghan National Army (ANA). This was a standard Infantry Kandak (or battalion), made up of three rifle companies, a fire support company and a headquarters company. We would be based in Camp Shorabak, a large US-financed brigade-level base a few hundred metres from Camp Bastion the main United Kingdom Forward Operating Base (UK FOB) in Helmand Province. Within Shorabak, the *OMLT* occupied its own small compound with its own life support facilities – but we essentially lived with the Afghans. 3rd Brigade was a very nascent organisation and had commenced deployment to Helmand in March 2006. The 1st Kandak had been there since April 2006 – barely 11 months.



Photograph supplied by the Author

The Queen's Company and its Fire Support team prior to deployment on its first ANA battlegroup-level operation in Helmand Province

Prior to deployment, I had to reduce my company down to 36 men. The remainder were detached to other battalions and an additional manœuvre company that our battalion formed that operated independently for the tour. The 36 men that I kept were based on the platoon command structures and company headquarters. My platoons consisted of six men tasked with mentoring the rifle companies and were made up of platoon commander, platoon sergeant, three section commanders and a sixth Guardsman or Lance Corporal. The Fire Support Company mentors were made up of the Battalion's mortar platoon commander, the anti-tank platoon warrant officer, machine gun platoon warrant officer and three other NCOs/soldiers who had appropriate experience. The remaining two six-man teams were made up of my company headquarters and included my company second in command, the company sergeant-major (CSM), the company quartermaster sergeant (CQMS), signallers and storemen. They would mentor the Kandak headquarters and associated elements such as the signals platoon and G1 staff. Each six-man team was mounted in two Land Rover *WMIKs* (Weapon Mounted Installation Kits). Each two-vehicle patrol had one .50 Heavy Machine Gun (HMG), one 40mm Grenade Machine Gun, two 7.62mm General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMG), 2-3 5.56mm 'Minimi' Light machine Guns (LMG), three to four 5.56mm SA-80 rifles, three to four Underslung Grenade Launchers (40mm grenades) and 6 pistols (currently the SIG Sauer). In addition, using the fire support company mentors, I had 2 JAVELIN² Command Launch Units (CLU) and missiles available and two 81 mm mortar barrels. For communicating, we carried, in each six-man team VHF, HF and TACSAT radios. Each patrol also had the full Electronic Counter Measures (*ECM*) suite.

Our battle group mission was «to train, mentor, enable and strike in support of the ANA 3/205 Brigade, both provincially and regionally,

in order to enable the continued progress towards 3/205 Brigade becoming a self-sufficient, sustainable and operationally proven all-arms Brigade».

Subsequent rotations have lead to this changing. Broken down, these tasks were as follows:

- ⇒ Train: Individuals and the collective.
- ⇒ Mentor: Guide, advise, oversee – both in barracks and on operations.
- ⇒ Enable: Offensive support, aviation support, casualty evacuation, advanced medical care.
- ⇒ Strike: Fight alongside the ANA.

The 3rd Brigade was meant to be on a readiness cycle of leave, training and operations. Invariably, the tempo of operations in Helmand meant that the training element of the cycle was discarded in favour of operations. This had a negative effect on the morale of the 3rd Brigade which found itself either deployed or on leave. Little worthwhile training took place. The ANA soldiers were tired and scared – the continual pressure of combat operations was wearing them out.

On deployment, my company found the 1st Kandak still on leave. This was perfect. It allowed us to hone our skills in the correct environmental setting and with the correct equipment. Simultaneously, we tried to evaluate the Kandak's administration with its Rear Party element that was not on leave.

On the Kandak's return, we started a training regime. Key to this was an evaluation of their training standards, which we assessed through a number of basic exercises. We quickly learnt that we had to keep training simple; we had to train by example using demonstrations, making extensive use of models and visual aids and constantly thinking about safety when on the ranges or on live firing exercises.

Towards the end of April, we were given our first mission. Operating alongside a British battlegroup, we were to conduct the first ANA battlegroup-level operation in Helmand Province, clearing Taliban from an area north of Gereshk.

We deployed with three rifle companies at about 90 strong, broke down the fire support company to provide platoons of HMG and Recoilless Rifles to support the companies and re-roled the Headquarters Company to be the Battlegroup Headquarters defence company. The operation lasted about five days, of which three were in heavy contact with the enemy. It was a success. There was no doubting the ANA's willingness to fight and take risks.

Key lessons were the importance of tactical level battlespace management (*BSM*) when dealing with the ANA who could not properly use maps and therefore understand boundaries, the weakness of the officer corps, and the ANA's inability to think more than 24 hours ahead. *BSM* became the art of translating boundaries into physical features on the ground and ensuring that, during any planning activity, boundaries followed natural features. The British commanders quickly realised that they would, essentially, be commanding rather than mentoring. We also realised that logistic support, or the lack of it, would feature prominently for the rest of the tour. The ANA were completely reliant on our guidance and support for resupply. They never thought ahead without prompting – very much a «tomorrow is another day» mentality.

The end of this operation saw the construction by British Army engineers of a number of patrol bases. We occupied these for the next 70 days or so, constantly being promised a relief in place, but this never materialised. We used this time to consolidate the gains made during the operation. We brought the area under government control, maintained reassurance with constant patrols and fighting patrols to keep the Taliban at

bay. I coaxed \$2 million for reconstruction projects from the US Logistic Support Team that provided the 3rd Brigade's funding and logistic support. We used ANA engineers, working alongside small groups of British Army engineers with their plant to build bridges in the area.

We formed a Joint District Coordination Centre in the centre of Gereshk where I eventually based myself with the Kandak Commander. This allowed us to meet with the mayor, Afghan National Police (ANP), National Directorate of Security (NDS) and other key civic leaders on a daily basis. We had the ANA engineers run mine awareness presentations to all of the schools using aids and equipment provided by the British. It was a successful and rewarding period.

At the start of July, we launched another battlegroup-level operation alongside a British battlegroup headquarters and one British rifle company to clear another five kilometres up the west bank of the Helmand River. Once again

operating in the «Green Zone», the lush, jungle-like strip of land either side of the river, we experienced the hardest fights of our lives. Over a nine day period of which many were in contact with the Taliban, we had over 250 x 105mm artillery rounds, 300 x 81mm mortar rounds, 22 x 500/100 pound bombs and numerous strafing runs fired or dropped in support of the *OMLT* and the 1st Kandak. Again successful, and this time with a break back in Shorabak for a few days afterwards, the 1st Kandak were greeted back at base by a turning out of the rest of the 3rd Brigade who welcomed them as the «Lions of Adin Zai», the village where the fiercest fighting had taken place.

A couple of weeks later, we moved up to Sangin in waves of Chinook helicopters to relieve in place the Kandak up there that provided the town's framework force. This required us to operate alongside a British rifle company from another battalion, whom we vastly outnumbered. We occupied somewhere

in the region of ten patrol bases. This made mentoring a real challenge, but we always based the platoons with their ANA company headquarters. The ANA performed well, having almost daily battles with the Taliban, who would attempt to ambush us at every opportunity. One key aspect of this period was the training we gave them in counter-IED drills; this resulted in the 1st Kandak finding 26 IEDs over the 2 months we were there.

Now for some personal thoughts and reflections.

Firstly, on the responsibility of command. Our young officers and NCOs are today taking far more responsibility than they have ever had to before. The huge responsibility of leading an indigenous force and being responsible for any errors that are made is enormous. Also the huge array of firepower at their disposal, and the responsibility for loss or preservation of human life and the destruction or preservation of property, requires considered actions



British Grenadiers taking cover in an irrigation ditch

at all times. They had to lead from the front, constantly motivating, trying to minimise casualties and avoid unnecessary destruction. They were, to a man, impressive and the training they are receiving was demonstrably meeting the mark. Our soldiers too were outstanding – selfless, gallant, inspiring and humbling. They are the true youth of today and we can be justifiably proud of their achievements.

Our training is excellent. But the maxim of 'train hard to fight easy' is not quite correct. The fighting will never be easy, so train as hard as you possibly can, the harder you train the easier it will be, but never simply «easy». Joint, Combined and All Arms operations are what Afghanistan is all about. Train for that and you will be able to operate effectively. Understand the capabilities that other Arms and Services bring to the operation and how and where you will use them. The Fire Support Team Concept (consisting of Artillery observers, Infantry mortar fire controllers and the forward air controller with supporting signallers) that our Artillery now use was fundamental to our success in Helmand – we trained together before deployment, so the trust and understanding was there from the outset.

The effect of members of the *OMLT* being killed or wounded in action could not be underestimated. I lost one Grenadier killed and 12 wounded of which 11 were evacuated back to the United Kingdom. The 1st Kandak lost 8 killed and had 22 wounded. In addition, of those of my men detached to other units, 2 were killed and 2 wounded. Whether it was a young Guardsman losing an eye, a suicide attack or ANA soldiers caught in an IED attack, I never had to motivate the men to keep going. To their credit, they took it all in their stride and carried on. At times, though, it was the enemy dead and wounded which had the greater impact, as it was these instances where the men saw at first hand what they had done to another human being. Fortunately, the medical support we had in theatre was quite outstanding and this gave the men the confidence they needed to take risks. Usually a wait of

no more than 20 minutes would see the Incident Response Team Chinook helicopter turn up with a full medical team on board. These were our life savers and save life they did.

The exhaustion and consequent degradation I saw in the men over seven months was staggering. Significant weight loss of sometimes more than 15 kgs and constant tiredness meant that commanders, although suffering the same, always had to be alert to a dropping of standards. This never occurred, but probably due to the commanders keeping an eye on things. Never underestimate the degradation over a tour like that.

A number of men suffered trauma stress reactions. Thankfully, our Trauma Risk Management programme allowed us to identify these men early and get them the appropriate help or monitor them more carefully. A number are still seeing psychologists 18 months later. The stigma of psychological injuries is one of history and this allows us to give people help far more readily and in doing so return them to duty far earlier.

Operational planning never followed the usual 1/3 – 2/3 rule and the British chain of command never considered the *OMLT* requirement to plan with the ANA. As a result, this is what we came up with, all squeezed into the same 2/3 time:

- ⇒ OMLT commander receives orders whilst Kandak Commander receives his orders from ANA chain of command (this latter step did not always happen).
- ⇒ OMLT commander conducts estimate and initial British orders group.
- ⇒ OMLT commander conducts estimate with Kandak Commander.
- ⇒ British platoon commanders give initial brief to Kandak company commanders.
- ⇒ Kandak Commander holds ANA orders group.
- ⇒ OMLT commander conducts confirmatory orders.

⇒ British platoon commanders' final coordination with Kandak company commanders.

As a result, our own battle preparation was always rushed.

And finally, language. Everything I have described was done through interpreters. Their worth cannot be underestimated. Find ones you can trust; invest in them, train them and they will see you right. Never once did I feel I could not trust an interpreter. We lost two interpreters killed during the tour.

We found the ANA to be a fascinating and very agreeable force to operate alongside. Islam, whilst important and omnipresent, was not the be all and end all of their existence – their approach to religion was considered.

Afghans are proud of their nation, despite the seemingly endless ethnic groupings and external influences. We found the ethnic groupings got along well, the ANA spearheading a new moderate inclusivity that was good to witness.

Language remained an issue with the amount of Pashtu and Dari speakers more or less balanced, more so for us and the requirement to have trilingual interpreters. Literacy and numeracy were almost non-existent outside of the officer corps.

Drug use, whilst not endemic, was prevalent amongst certain small cliques in the Kandak. Try as we might to stop it, it was impossible to do so. Notably, the ANA officers were extremely anti-drugs.

Their understanding of what we would regard as the fundamentals of being a good soldier – such as understanding a strict hierarchical structure, reactions to orders, discipline and self-motivation - were not always on display. Their understanding of doctrine was limited and based on translated US doctrine. Weapons, vehicles and equipment were at the time unreliable and inadequate – this is now changing with the issuing of M16s, M60s and



Photograph supplied by the Author

Watched by the OMLT, an ANA company commander briefs his men on the second day of a battlegroup-level clearance operation

HUMVEEs. Secure communications is a major capability gap. Bar the commanding officer, almost the most influential man in a Kandak is the Religious Officer – gain his trust and confidence and you your ability to influence is made easier. Above all though, the officer corps was weak with few notable exceptions. This will change with time but will require considerable effort in the mean time – a lack of respect for their soldiers, an inability to lead properly from the front, an inability to map read or use GPS.

I would say that the attributes required to operate as a successful *OMLT* are:

- ⇒ Knowledge (of the indigenous force and their culture, equipment, doctrine).
- ⇒ Humour (because laughter breaks down barriers and you will be sorely tested at times).

- ⇒ Humility (to meet the indigenous force culture head-on – when was the last time you held hands with a battalion commander?).
- ⇒ Patience (because they will test you – Afghan time was quite different to European time with 5 minutes invariably becoming 30).
- ⇒ Perseverance (to drive home a message, to change their way of doing things when you know their way is not right and often dangerous).
- ⇒ Enthusiasm (for a task that is quite different to what you are used to, that is more akin to Special Operations Forces' tasks of the not too distant past and that will require immersion in a foreign culture).

And some considerations in forming an *OMLT* are:

- ⇒ Rank: Some of my best mentors were young Guardsmen – they had the ability to cross cultural barriers and form strong personal relationships with the Afghans).
- ⇒ Order of Battle: Make sure you are ordered and properly equipped for the task in hand. Enthusiastic and determined men are required.
- ⇒ Cultural awareness: You cannot have enough cultural awareness. Find out everything you can about the indigenous force.
- ⇒ Language Training and the Use of Interpreters: Get as many people language trained as possible as this will make life much easier and reduce the reliance on interpreters.

Learn how to use interpreters and always have redundancy – remember they get shot as well.

1 *Military Cross*.

2 JAVELIN is a shoulder or tripod-launched man-portable anti armour weapon system with a secondary target and surveillance capability. It is composed of a CLU and a round.

⇒ **Basic Military Skills:** Your basic skills will be the most important as you will always be concentrating on the indigenous force. Your skills need to be second nature and automatic. The areas we found to be of critical importance were:

- Fitness.
- British Weapons and Shooting (ANA Weapons Familiarisation). We carried a vast array of weapons.
- First Aid: Every man in my OMLT was trained as a Team Medic.
- Driving. All drivers need to be familiar with all vehicles, even the officers. There is little redundancy in an OMLT patrol.
- Communications: VHF, HF, TACSAT.
- Equipment Support: Especially for vehicles, all patrol members need to be able to carry out immediate repairs.
- Actions On/Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): These need to be automatic as you will be paying more than your fair share of attention to the indigenous force.

In summary, the task of being in an *OMLT* is fantastic and rewarding both from a personal and military point of view. I would urge anyone to volunteer for a tour with the *OMLT*. However, do not underestimate the risks involved, mainly due to small teams operating in very isolated circumstances.

The ANA are still a very nascent organisation, but getting better all the time. Work and train them hard for they are, essentially, our exit strategy. Once we can hand over security to Afghans we can start to reduce our commitments.

In the meantime let us ensure our nations as fellow NATO partners in Afghanistan maintain our levels of commitment and see this campaign through to a successful conclusion.

The British Military Experience in Helmand (2006-2009)

BY COLONEL MICHEL GOYA OF FRENCH ARMED FORCES STAFF

In April 2006, Defence Secretary John Reid announced the British takeover of Afghan Helmand province, saying: «*We would be perfectly happy to leave in three years and without firing one shot because our job is to protect the reconstruction*». Six months later, *Task Force Helmand (TFH)* had already consumed one million rounds and thirteen thousand shells.

«Hell Land»

In order (according to the mission terms) «*to ensure the security conditions necessary for the economic development and improvement of governance*» in the Helmand province, 58,600 km² and including 780,000 inhabitants, the British deployed only 3,300 troops in 2006, reinforced by 250 Danes and 150 Estonians, organized into one task force. The fact is that having available seven 105 mm guns (as well as 2 MLRS in 2007), 8 *WAH Apache* attack helicopters, and 6 (and then 11) GR9 Harriers (not to mention American air support which stands for 80% of the whole), each platoon leader has as much fire power as a brigadier general had in 1944. Thus the limits of the concept of a contact unit were reached, as that unit was originally designed as a target designator for indirect fires, all the more so as, under Afghan political pressure, platoons are scattered in cities along the river and in mountains in the north.

The death of Captain Philippson on June 11th 2006 put an end to any illusion of a «soft stability mission». The populace lives on opium cultivation and hates governmental authorities even more than the Taliban. Therefore those Christians who want to eradicate poppy growing and protect corrupted policemen are not exactly welcome and the «implant» of soldiers among the populace is not achieved. Consequently the *platoon houses* are turned into besieged places, in particular in Musa Qala, where 24 of her Majesty's soldiers resisted for months the siege of hundreds of Taliban, while resupply proved to be more and more difficult.

Men's courage and meshing of fires enable to avoid disasters and even to cause heavy losses among the Taliban but the brigade is entirely fixed within «Hell Land». By late September 2006, 29 British soldiers had already been killed since the beginning of the operation. In frontline combat, chances for a soldier to be killed are 1 against 36, while they were 1 against 45 during the Falklands campaign.

In October 2006, the situation in Musa Qala was such that the British commander agreed to the local chiefs' proposal of a simultaneous withdrawal of both conflicting parties. After several months' peace, however, this policy proved to be also illusory since in January 2007 Taliban came back in force and seized the town.

Recapture

With the next two rotations, the British tried to recover real maneuvering capabilities thanks to an increase in strength, two and then three task forces by the end of 2007 (four of them in 2008), and the fielding of high mobility tracked BV206 Viking vehicles. Permanent posts were replaced by temporary bases, and task forces tried hard to reverse the feeling of insecurity by conducting mobile combat operations, which were efficient thanks to coordination of various assets, but handicapped by a small-sized CH-47 Chinook fleet of only 7 helicopters.

The most significant of these operations was conducted around the Kajaki dam, in the north of the province, where the British undertook the setting up of a new turbine, which could supply electricity for 1.8 million inhabitants. Just as in the «bridge on the River Kwai» episode, the securing of the area, road works and transportation in August 2008 of seven 30-tonne turbine elements required one year and a half of combat. The battle over the dam has not come to an end yet, since the turbine will not work until 2010. An operation within the operation, the setting up of that turbine provided a challenging incentive for the troops, a topic for the media, and a lure for an enemy who is usually quite elusive.

The second large-scale operation of the period was the recapture of Musa Qala, which since January had been used as a base of departure for most attacks by the rebels. The whole period between September to November 2007 was devoted to a gradual encirclement of the city, while an air siege killed several hundred Taliban. A few weeks before the assault, Abdul Salaam, a top Taliban leader, engaged into direct negotiations with the Afghan government, and defected, together with a third of rebel forces. From then on resistance became but residual, and the ultimate assault conducted on December 7th by 2,000 allied soldiers was performed largely on emptiness. An Afghan battalion took control of the city, in the vicinity of the *Edinburgh* British base.

The recapture of Musa Qala for some time put an end to the recapture operations. British casualties were then 86 dead (plus 6 Danes and 2 Estonians), 60 of whom due to enemy. More than 4 million shots had been fired to kill several thousand rebels.

The Sisyphus war

In the spring of 2008, the security level achieved in the province enabled the 52nd brigade to focus its action on the populace. In order to perform its influence campaign, the brigade first of all implemented a number of innovations, like the «influence» officers in battalions, the «non-kinetic effect teams» in companies, reconnaissance or the *SAND (Situational Awareness and Knowledge Database)* database. Thanks to these tools and based on a new organization of permanent strong points, the forces strove to liaise between the populace, Afghan security forces, among which many advisers were integrated, and the *provincial reconstruction team, PRT*). Results are encouraging.

Even if rebels no longer attack British forces directly, they nevertheless still make their presence felt, with as a favorite course of action the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), as in Iraq. Then we can observe that the increasing forces strength in the province has actually increased the number of road convoys and therefore

the number of potential targets. From September 2007 to June 2008, 19 British soldiers were killed by the enemy but none by gunshot. Vehicles ordered as operational emergency supplies in the summer of 2007, like the *Ridgebacks*, the *Jackals* (to replace the Land Rover Snatch), or the new type of the *Vikings* (BvS10), together with the 4 Danish Leopard 2 MBTs, were fielded in the late summer of 2008. They provide better protection but at the cost of a more aggressive posture and above all of reduced mobility.

In October, the Taliban caused another surprise effect when launching an offensive operation over Lashkar Gar, the capital city, with several hundred men advancing along several converging axes. The attack failed, but evidenced that the Taliban were again re-established in some areas. Therefore, at the end of the year were again performed large-scale mopping-up operations, west and north to Lashkar Gar, some of which were conducted in pouring rain and mud, reminding WW1. With 51 soldiers killed (plus 13 Danes and 1 Estonian), the year 2008 turned out to be the most murderous for *TFH*, in spite of good initial prospects.

After three years of presence, overall assessment of *TFH* activities may seem frustrating in spite of some encouraging signs, like the new attitude of the populace and the action of the new Governor Gulab Mangal. The British remember that it took an average contingent of 15,000 troops to pacify 800,000 Irish Catholics, with a toll of 700 soldiers killed. More than a sprint, counterinsurgency is like a long-distance race, but the British are good long-distance runners.

Freedom of Speech

NATO

Counteracting Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED)

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL JEAN-FRANÇOIS AURAN, JOINT COMMAND LISBON PORTUGAL

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL JACQUES DELARBRE, JOINT WARFARE CENTER STAVANGER NORWAY

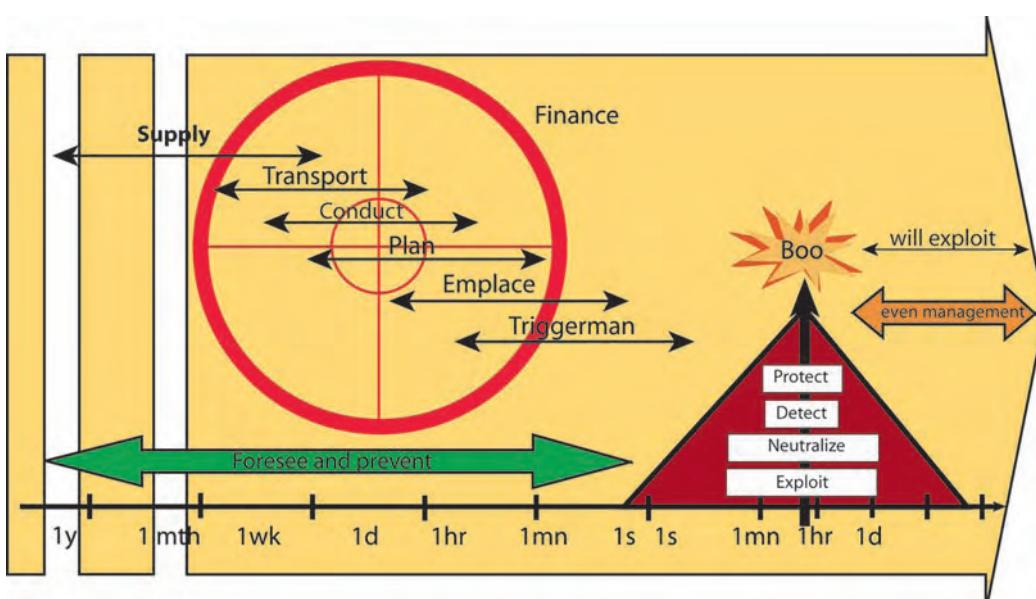
In November 2008, the 26 NATO member nations ratified (some of them with some reservations) *Allied Joint Publication (AJP) 3.15* which defines the new NATO doctrine **C-IED** fight. This publication aims at facing the main threat that the Alliance armed forces have to deal with in Afghanistan, but also on any other NATO potential theater of operations.

Even if **IEDs** are not a new threat, NATO took it into consideration rather recently, in particular because their intensive employment has caused a growing number of casualties within *ISAF*. Extensive research work and experiments have been performed, with a view to destroy **IEDs**, or at least to minimize their effects and to understand why and how an insurgency can make use of such low-cost tactical weapons, which however generates quite significant effects in the fields of strategy and the media.

All command levels (strategic, operational, tactical) are involved and complementary in their actions to thwart this threat, which is growing ever more efficient and shifting.

From Concept To Doctrine

Dr POULIQUEN, a French scientist who has been assigned to *ACT* (*Allied Command Transformation*, Norfolk) has highlighted all the parties involved in an **IED** network.



This template clearly shows that for a given insurgency, the *IED* weapon is only a tiny visible part of a formidably lethal network, upstream for preparation as well as downstream for propaganda. However diversified these players may be, this *IED* network has weaknesses which can be exploited by NATO intelligence services.

Moreover this template enabled to develop a structured concept relying on three pillars:

- *Defeat the system.*
- *Defeat the device.*
- *Training and education.*

Even before *AJP* 3.15 (available from “<https://nsa.nato.int/> protected”) was published, the *C-IED* concept had been signed jointly by the chiefs of staff of *ACO* (*Allied Command Operations* in Mons, Belgium) and *ACT* on June 28th 2007. This concept had enabled doctrinal developments and the taking into account of the problem by staffs facing the *IED* threat, while emphasizing the crucial use of military intelligence to dismantle an *IED* system. Actually *AJP* 3.15 defines six key operational activities (*KOAs*) in order to counter an *IED* threat efficiently:
Predict/prevent/detect/neutralize/mitigate/exploit.

Even if some of these *KOAs* will no doubt turn out to be included on the tactical level, it is quite clear that on a theater of operations scale, the coordination requirement is at least occurring on the operational (*Joint Force Command*) or even strategic (*SHAPE: Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe*) level.

While allowing some degree of flexibility in the organization of a *C-IED* cell within a HQ, *AJP* 3.15 very clearly defines countering *IED* as a resolutely cross-disciplinary function¹ which should be taken into consideration as soon as possible in any planning process. According to the threat level, various patterns can be used:

- Inspired from the US pattern, like the «*Paladin Task Force*» in Afghanistan, the «*Combined Joint Task Forces*» are provided with significant technical and human assets together with their own command capabilities. This type of organization is sustainable and requires a substantial mobilization of resources.
- On the *JFC* Brunsum model, the *C-IED* cell includes experts (J2 (Intelligence), J3 (Operations), EW (Electronic Warfare), FP (Force Protection), J-ENG (Engineering), J7 (Training) in various numbers under J3 authority).
- The minimum organizational level within a NATO command structure is the (*C-IED*) *working group*. This organization has been adopted by the other two operational commands in Naples and Lisbon. Gathering at variable intervals, these *C-IED WGs* are tasked with advising commanders and their staffs, while participating in *IED* threat assessment and in the drafting of specific standard operational procedures (*SOPs*).

AJP 3-15 does not provide answers for all issues a planner has to face, but it formalizes the many initiatives and substantial research work hitherto performed in order to eradicate that formidable threat characterizing terrorist and insurgent movements. Moreover, as regards the whole of the community involved in *C-IED*, it enables the use of a common vocabulary which, only because of the many faces of *IEDs* goes far beyond the usual lexicon of engineering experts.

NATO Capabilities

The responsibility of *C-IED* is shared between *ACT* and *ACO* strategic commands; while the former is in charge of the development of doctrine and upstream education, the latter is responsible for the training of units on theaters on operation as well as for their employment.

Allied Command Transformation (Norfolk Virginia USA)

ACT has an *IED*-marked team whose task consists in developing the basis of the NATO concept as well as its organization concerning the fight against networks generating improvised explosive devices. Moreover, *ACT* is responsible for the drafting and update of *C-IED* doctrine (2294 and 2295 *Stanags*)².

The numerous educational sessions provided under NATO authority, often in partnership with civilian companies (RONCO: <http://roncoconsulting.com>, Hazard Management Solution: <http://hazmansol.com>) are intended to increase awareness and expertise of personnel either from HQs or from contact teams I. They are open to national HQs personnel as well as those of member nations of Partnership for Peace (PfP); they are real opportunities for exchanging information about new techniques, methods of investigation and fight against potential networks. While the requirement for relevant and updated *C-IED* education and information sessions is obvious³, NATO's overt aim is actually to reduce field training as much as possible.

Allied Command Operations (Mons, Belgium)

SHAPE has a role of primary importance in preparing units for operational engagement on the various theaters. Within *ISAF*, a «*training*» cell is tasked with updating the skills of the new units deployed on the theater. Mobile training teams go to regional commands in order to «*train the trainers*». The *Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs)* are among the first to be trained. The aim is always to reduce as much as possible the educational phases on the theater so as to have available operational teams as soon as they arrive on theaters of operations.

The Development Of National Capabilities

NATO's purpose is to promote the development of national capabilities. *ACT* has Mobile Advisory Teams (*MATs*) who go over to the Alliance member nations or PfP countries in order to provide the educational training which they need.

Freedom of Speech

Besides, many nations have developed their own training capabilities in order to have them approved by NATO. Among those national initiatives, the most significant are those of:

- Turkey: certified by NATO in August 2006, the Center of Excellence in Ankara is specialized in counter terrorism warfare: it provides training in awareness as well as *C-IED* activities.
- Slovakia: in October 2008 this nation opened its center of excellence dedicated to *Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)*.
- Spain: in close cooperation with *ACT*, Spain has provided for the opening of a *C-IED* center of excellence in the fall of 2009 in the vicinity of Madrid.

The French Case

As in the case of other Western countries, experience of French armed forces in IED environment is far from being a recent one, but lessons learned by NATO and nations recently committed in Iraq should not be overlooked. The Alliance does not only favor a technological approach, but also steps into the more comprehensive scope of counterinsurgency (*COIN*)⁴.

Acquisition of equipment such as *Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP)* vehicles, Electronic Countermeasures jammers, employment of UAVs or aircraft dedicated to *C-IED* missions require reflection about our own concept. However the clues suggested by some nations which are definitely to be taken into consideration as regards doctrinal issues should not be neglected.



To conclude, NATO provides numerous opportunities and forums enabling to exchange information and even skills, while facilitating tactical and operational interoperability of *C-IED* assets and procedures. As France has significant and recognized experience in this field, our nation will subsequently be in its own right a member of *C-IED*-expert countries.

1 See RD1 STANAG 2294 : EOD for the device, INTEL for the network

2 Stanag 2294 dealing with training for C-IED activities is in the process of being ratified by the 26 Alliance member nations by March 2009.

3 Among the various events occurring within the C-IED community we can mention: *Tactical Operations in an IED Environment Course*, *Train the Pre-deployment Training Course*, *NATO Operational C-IED Seminar*, *NATO Weapon Intelligence Training Course*, *NATO C-IED Staff Awareness Course*. Moreover, subject to registration, ACT operates a number of links on the Internet like *KNIFE (Knowledge and Information Fusion Exchange Inscription* on <https://Knife.jcom.mil>, or more simply that of NATO Standardization Agency.

4 APJ 3 SD1 is being developed by the Netherlands.

Account and Geostategic Analysis in Afghanistan During the First Semester 2008

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARIE-DOMINIQUE CHARLIER

POLITICAL ADVISER TO ISAF COMMANDING GENERAL FROM FEBRUARY TO AUGUST 2008



LCI Marie-Dominique CHARLIER/CDEF

Meeting at the Governor's in the Province of Kapisa with an Afghan translator Polad from UNAMA

Preamble :

Sent to Afghanistan as a Political adviser¹ to the ISAF Coalition Force Commander², Lieutenant-colonel Marie-Dominique Charlier served as an «individual augmentee» officer and could perform her mission throughout the whole Afghan territory with a total freedom of movement, allowing her to meet the various players of the Afghan political community.

It is worth noticing that, unlike the commonly accepted idea, Western female officers are generally welcome into the Afghan male circle which easily opens up during interviews, since, of course, local protocol is respected.

Freedom of Speech

The general law and order environment on the Afghan territory is deteriorating significantly, in particular due to the increase in terrorist attacks using improvised explosive devices (IED) and suicide attacks. The various interviews of Afghan representatives highlight a slow but certain **erosion of the adherence of the Afghan population to the commitment of the Coalition Forces**. The population feels insecure, shocked by the large numbers of civilian «collateral» casualties. Moreover it does not trust in the current government of President Hamid Karzaï.

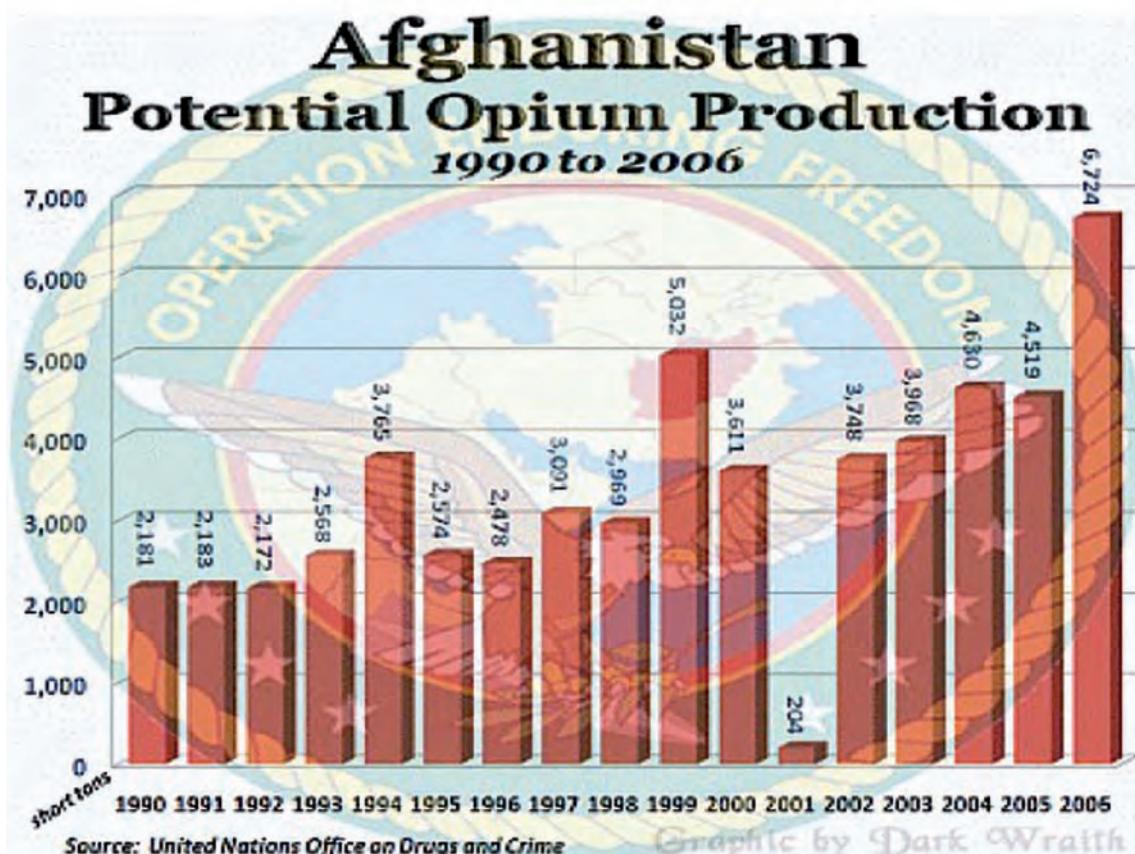
A Pernicious Law and Order Context

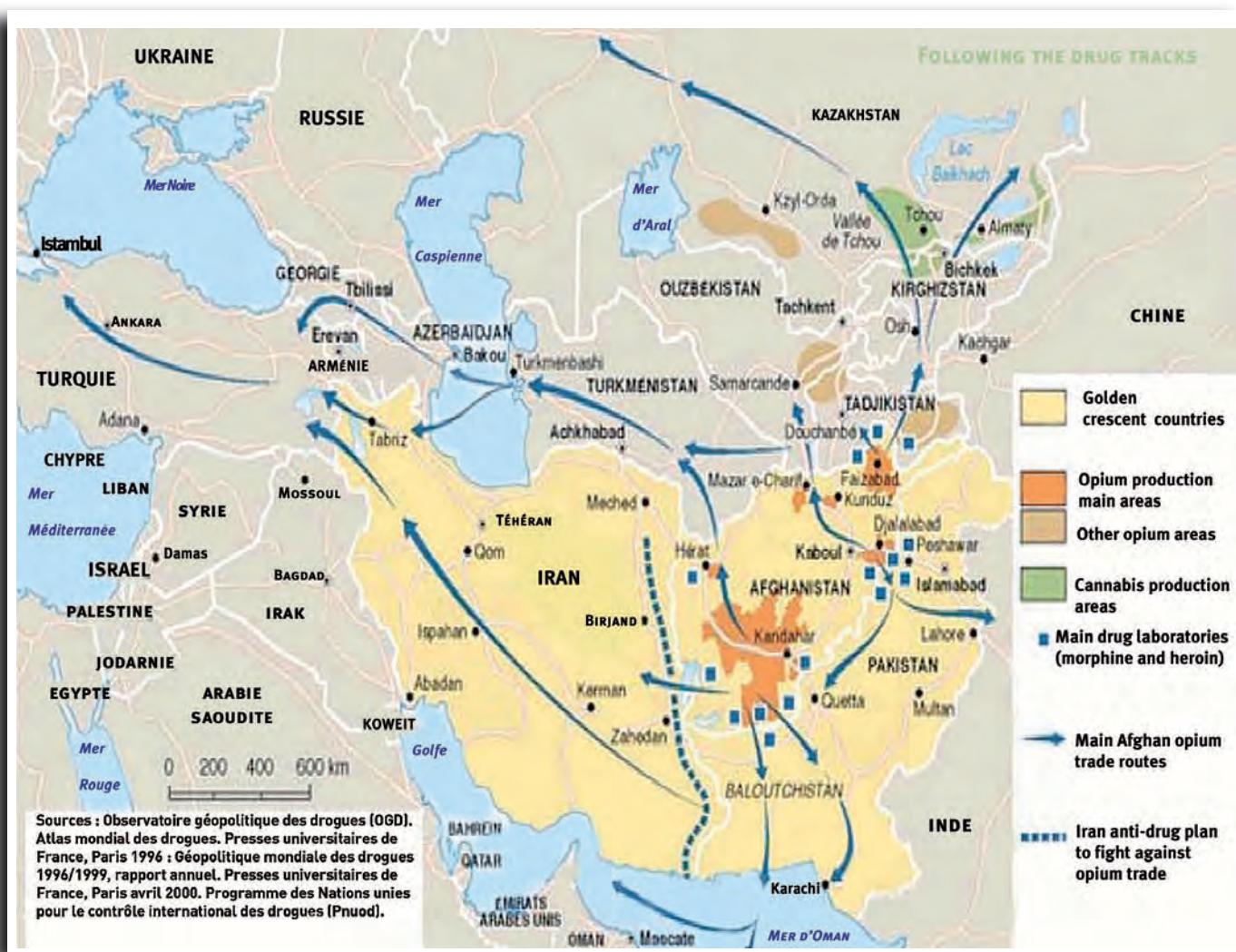
I have noticed, how the assassination attempt, allegedly aimed at President Hamid Karzaï on April 27, 2008³, as well as the attack against the Indian embassy, had a deep impact on the way the Afghan population felt about ISAF. These

events occurring a few months after the attack on January 14, 2008, against the Serena Hotel in Kabul, symbolically marked a change in the operations led by the insurgents. This instability mirrors a radicalization of extremist movements. **However, it is spreading to the northern and western provinces of the country which had so far been spared by violence. This has led the US and NATO to refocus their attention on Pakistan.**

This continuous decline of the law and order environment is in proportion with the continuous growth of the opiate and heroin production on the Afghan territory. As a result, it worsens the image of the international community which is divided over the measures to take to solve this major issue.

Indeed the increase in opium production has been estimated 34% per year for 8,200 tons, which represents 94% of the world production and, significantly, allows financing of extremist movements and arms trafficking.





Moreover, sensitive relationships with bordering countries (Pakistan, Iran) weaken the regional law and order environment. This leads to many civilian casualties and heavy exchanges of fire on the borders.

Besides, the progressive closing down of Pakistani refugee camps affects social, economic and demographic balances in Afghanistan by unsteady migration patterns and by an increase in the number of private military societies (PMS) responsible for border surveillance in particular.

A Fragile Governance and Rule of Law

The parliamentary system shows some weaknesses especially due to a high level of absenteeism among elected representatives. The relationship between the Head of State and the Lower House is extremely tense and appears as

more delicate since there is a very clear majority of traditionalists inside this Assembly. **In the same way, many warlords take advantage of occupying key positions inside the parliamentary system while compromising any positive evolution to the rule of law.**

Following an interview with General Dotsum⁴, it is abundantly clear that, to a certain extent, some warlords are responsible for stability and balance inside the country.

Despite massive aid from foreign nations which contributes to the rebuilding of the country, the permanent issue remains the very low standard of living resulting from severe increase in the cost of raw materials⁵ and the lack of strict control in the distribution of financial aid.

Finally, despite an apparent progress regarding women's rights, the rule of law has taken a regressive step characterized by a significant decline in the protection of civil and individual rights⁶.

Freedom of Speech

Various Cultural Behaviors

Aboard a US «white Toyota» armored vehicle, the tension of US soldiers is extreme. They live on their nerves and have been going through a very profound and “conditioning” preparation of the initial itinerary. Moreover, most US officers here have already lost a relative in Iraq. This can be observed on the road where the US way of driving is more aggressive than for the other nations.

This behavior can largely be explained by the fact that ISAF camp, like many confined environments, favors an unusual removal from the war, a condemnation of the enemy, an irrational fear of the outside. The behavior of the US soldier is also influenced by religion, if not mysticism, so that his attitude resembles more a warrior than a soldier. They always wear their credo (religious soldier code that is engraved on a metal plate) around their neck.

One of the solutions which could possibly initiate the beginning of national cohesion, could be the establishment of either an adapted military service, as in the French overseas territories, or a civil service.

The latter would allow an inter-regional mix, civil training, while developing professional education.

Moreover, training for governance should be better thought out. As such, the formation **of a «Governance Rapid Reaction Team»** could usefully answer this need. The result would be the founding of an **Afghan ENA** (stands for Ecole Nationale d'Administration - National School of Administration) as in France. This school would be able to provide the country with a group of highly educated elites who are trained in Government and Public Affairs management.

Clearly, it is a matter of urgency to «think a new governance» by a «Afghanization of peace», i.e. that the Afghan have to take more responsibility for their own security.

A Disturbing Development Regarding Security

It is surprising to see the importance of the development of private military societies (PMS), and of the whole security equipment market in general. On the road heading to the ISAF camp, five different private military societies are responsible for security. Paramilitary equipment newspapers are easily sold and at a good price. One should note that buyers are not only civilians but also many soldiers. Therefore we can see a progression towards **a war aesthetics, a war fashion** developing, with its accompanying clothing accessories, equipment, anti-IED glasses, bags, gloves, multi-pocket jackets...

Improvement Hints and Conclusion

The Afghan society is affected by a lack of social coherence partially due to old ethnic and religious differences. This inadequacy, combined with one of the highest illiteracy rate in the world, has a considerable harmful influence on the efforts for stabilization of the Afghan society.

1 To develop this function, one could refer to the article about the Polad function, in this Doctrine issue.

2 General McNeil, then General McKiernan (both US Generals)

3 Reconstruction of this attempt by ISAF showed that it was not aimed at President Karzai, but had been organized in order to destabilize the Coalition Forces and the Afghan national Army.

4 General Abdul Rashid Dostom is Uzbek (Mazar-i-Sharif, is the Commander of 25,000 troops). He is in permanent conflict with his Tajik rivals and controls the poppy market.

5 For example, on the one hand, the salary of an Afghan Army colonel is around US \$ 550 per month. On the other hand, renting a family house located in the «safe» vicinity of Kabul costs US \$ 400 per month.

6 In October 2007, the execution of approximately 10 common law prisoners ended the moratorium on the death penalty, which had lasted since 2004.

DOCTRINE

