

Canadian
Forces
College

Collège
des
Forces
Canadiennes



TRAINING THE CANADIAN ARMY FOR SECURITY FORCE CAPACITY-BUILDING MISSIONS

Major Matt Tompkins

JCSP 46

Service Paper

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© 2020 Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada,
as represented by the Minister of National Defence.

PCEMI 46

Étude militaire

Avertissement

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© 2020 Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada,
représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale.

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 46 – PCEMI 46

2019 – 2020

SERVICE PAPER - ÉTUDE MILITAIRE

**TRAINING THE CANADIAN ARMY FOR
SECURITY FORCE CAPACITY-BUILDING MISSIONS**

Major Matt Tompkins

“This paper was written by a candidate attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfillment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”

Word Count: 2,638

« La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale. »

Nombre de mots : 2.635

TRAINING THE CANADIAN ARMY FOR SECURITY FORCE CAPACITY-BUILDING MISSIONS

AIM

1. The aim of this service paper is to highlight the critical factors affecting military advisors employed on Security Force Capacity Building (SFCB) missions. “Strong, Secured, Engaged” has codified the importance of capacity building as a means to support the security of other nations and it is vital that the Canadian Army (CA) evolve its training to meet this important task.¹ Through a brief examination of Allied SFCB organizations and an analysis of critical factors affecting military advisors, this paper will provide a series of recommendations for the CA to prepare soldiers to deploy on SFCB missions. This paper will focus on recommendations that could be incorporated into the existing Managed Readiness Plan (MRP) and organizational structures; however, comprehensive restructuring of Brigades or Units is outside the scope of this paper.

INTRODUCTION

2. The Current Operating Environment (COE) sees the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) engaged in the global competition of Hybrid Warfare, alternatively called the ‘Grey Zone’. In LGen Rouleau’s “How We Fight: Commander CJOC’s Thoughts”, he argues that, “[the CAF is] now confronted with a dual set of threat vectors (state and non-state) that operate both above and below the threshold of ‘visible conflict’.”² As the Force Generator, the CA equally faces the same dual threat challenge – namely, preparing soldiers to deter or engage in ‘the war’, while still ensuring operational relevance in the ‘Grey Zone’. It is vital that the CA revitalize its training to meet this threat and prioritize training for operations that will see the highest return on investment for the most efficient price point.³ The CA must maintain its ability to produce a deployable kinetic option (namely, the High Readiness Battle Group), but it is vital that the CA expand its deployable capabilities to provide the Government of Canada (GOC) options below the threshold of visible conflict.

3. SFCB exists as a politically viable and proven option for the GOC to contribute to international peace and security. Canadian Army Doctrine defines SFCB as, “a comprehensive approach to the generation, employment, and sustainment of local, host nation (HN), or international security forces in support of a legitimate authority”.⁴ It is an activity that can be conducted across the entirety of the spectrum of conflict. In the recent past, the CA has significant experience conducting capacity building with Host Nation Security Forces (HNSF). Throughout the conflict in Afghanistan, there were several instances of SFCB including: Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) conducting advise, assist, and accompany

¹ Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s Defence Policy* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2018), 17.

² LGen Mike Rouleau, “HOW WE FIGHT: Commander CJOC’s Thoughts” (Canadian Joint Operations Command, Ottawa, 2019), 4.

³ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴ Department of National Defence, B-GL-322-010/FP-001, *Stability Activities and Tasks* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2012), 9-4-1.

missions with Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF), and later transitioning to Op ATTENTION, where Canadian soldiers facilitated training to the ANSF at fixed centres of excellence.⁵ Currently, as part of Op UNIFER, the CA deployed soldiers as part of a multinational Task Force to Ukraine to conduct capacity building of Ukrainian forces.⁶ In the Middle East, CA advisors are presently conducting capacity building with the Jordanian, Lebanese, and Iraqi Security Forces as part of Op IMPACT.⁷ Similarly, as part of Op NABERIUS, the CA conducts training for the Nigerien military as part of Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP).⁸ Despite recent experience in SFCB, the CA has yet to revitalize its training to prepare soldiers to meet this dynamic and complex type of mission.

4. This paper will examine Allied SFCB organizations, namely the British Specialised Infantry Group (Spec Inf Gp) and the United States Army Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs), and then highlight common critical factors affecting military advisors employed on SFCB missions that should be incorporated into CA training. These recommendations will focus on adjustments that Lead Mounting Divisions (LMDs) could incorporate once assigned a SFCB operation force generation task.

DISCUSSION

Allied SFCB Organizations

5. Initially formed in October 2017, the British Army's Specialised Infantry Groups (Spec Inf Gp) are structured and trained to advise, assist, and train partner forces across the world.⁹ Formed from selected volunteers, the Spec Inf Gp are structured into four Specialised Infantry Battalions (SPIB). These SPIB are just under 300 personnel strong, which is a significant reduction compared to a regular Infantry Battalion of over 500 soldiers.¹⁰ The three stage selection process involves a file review of the volunteer for requisite skills and qualifications, an Assessment Cadre, and finally a Training Course.¹¹ In an interview, Brigadier James Roddis, Commander of the Spec Inf Gp, comments on the attributes required of his specialized soldiers,

⁵ Department of National Defence, "Operation ATTENTION," Last modified 18 November 2014, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed/operation-attention.html>

⁶ Department of National Defence, "Operation UNIFIER," Last modified 3 December 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-unifier.html>

⁷ Department of National Defence, "Operation IMPACT," Last modified 10 December 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-impact.html>

⁸ Department of National Defence, "Operation NABERIUS," Last modified 20 March 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-naberius.html>

⁹ The Army Leader, "Leadership in The Specialised Infantry: An Interview with Brigadier James Roddis," Last accessed 23 October 2019, <https://thearmyleader.co.uk/specialised-infantry-leadership>.

¹⁰ United Kingdom Army, "Specialised Infantry Group," Last accessed 23 October 2019, <https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/formations-divisions-brigades/6th-united-kingdom-division/specialised-infantry-group/>

¹¹ The Army Leader, "Leadership in The Specialised Infantry..."

“balancing risk to life with risk to mission; understanding and owning risk with a long-term view; thinking two-up and two-back... a mature ego... Humility, self-reliance and restlessness”.¹² Brig Roddis argues that mentoring a partner force is a task that regular infantry units can do, but due to the complexity of the mission, deliberate concentration on the skills of mentorship is required to do the job to a high standard.¹³ Spec Inf Battalions are assigned regional focuses (ex. Sub-Saharan Africa), which allows them to specialize in linguistic and cultural considerations, as well as foster positive relationships after subsequent deployments. Although the British Army has been advising and training indigenous militaries throughout their history, the creation of the Spec Inf Gp marks a notable transition to deliberate selection and formalized mentorship training for its military advisors.

6. Formed in February 2018, as specialized units of the United States Army, the Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFAB) have the core mission to “conduct training, advising, enabling and accompanying operations with allied and partner nations”.¹⁴ Similar to the British Spec Inf Gp, members in SFAB must be volunteers and pass an assessment period. In an interview, COL Scott Jackson, Commander of 1st SFAB CDR comments on the characteristics required of SFAB members, “It starts with warfighting competence... everyone needs to be experts in their field... what we rely on is that within that person is to have patience, to have flexibility, to be able to communicate complex ideas within a cultural environment”.¹⁵ SFABs train their soldiers in cross cultural communication, building rapport, working with interpreters and negotiations. Despite recruitment and retention challenges, the SFABs are in high demand with plans to stand up six brigades in total.¹⁶ Currently, the SFABs have only deployed to Afghanistan, but Acting Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy has named Africa and East Asia as two potential future destinations for employment.¹⁷ Ultimately, through a deliberate selection process and a base of combat proficient and experienced soldiers, the SFABs have developed a focused regime of mentorship training to create effective military advisors.

7. Through an examination of the British Army Spec Inf Gp and the United States Army SFABs, several critical factors affecting military advisors are identified. Firstly, both organizations recognize the importance of the deliberate selection of ‘volunteer’ personnel to ensure their commitment, technical competence, and demeanour. Secondly, both view tactical competence as a baseline upon which further focused mentorship training can be built. Lastly, both organizations train their leaders to think and thrive in complex, ethically ambiguous, and risk managed environments to ensure they can meet the demands required of them. The

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ United States Army, “Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB),” Last accessed 23 October 2019, <https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/current-and-prior-service/advance-your-career/security-force-assistance-brigade.html>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Business Insider, “The Army wants to send its newest units worldwide, but the top watchdog in Afghanistan says it's struggling to find enough troops to do the job, Last modified 5 September 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/army-considering-deploying-sfab-to-africa-asia-despite-troop-concerns-2019-9>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

summation of the common traits between both allied organizations demonstrates the value of focused and deliberate training aimed at preparing soldiers for SFCB operations.

Critical Factors Affecting Military Advisors on SFCB Missions

8. The proper selection of personnel to participate in SFCB operations is the first and one of the most vital steps in force generating these missions. Both of the examined allied SFCB organizations select experienced volunteers from their armies to become military advisors. Mentoring HNSF can be challenging, but as each member of the SFCB team is a volunteer, it ensures that there is a genuine desire to be there and excel. As well, by drawing mentors from the existing army, it can select members with the requisite skills and qualifications across all required trades and specialties. Further, by forming a team of motivated and experienced professionals, it ensures that leaders can assume a certain level of competence and train their team to the best of their ability vice the lowest common denominator. Lastly, the selection process allows for the identification of mentors who possess the required social and emotional intelligence to be successful in their mentorship role. In *Advising the Advisor*, Hudlin notes that “We need mature people as advisors, people who are soldier-diplomats”.¹⁸ Mentors need a high level of sociability, where they can effectively engage foreign senior military and civilian officials. Similarly, mentors need to be able to see the long-term approach and ensure sacrifices for short term gain are not made. Ultimately, by making the selection of personnel a deliberate effort, force generators ensure that the personnel selected are committed, technically competent, and possess the necessary attitude and social skills to be successful military advisors.

9. Once a team of advisors are selected, an expansion of training beyond a baseline of tactical excellence is vital to properly prepare for SFCB operations. After confirming tactical competence, SFCB teams need to focus training on skills related to mentorship and cultural / linguistic training. Mentors need to conduct training that forces them to advise and train an actual HNSF, which could either be imported or simulated during collective training. The training needs to explore a variety of subjects including: the development of training plans, training in austere or improvised environments, internal force protection, working with interpreters, and working through HN cultural and structural problems. In all instances, every effort should be made to import training priorities, challenges, and lessons learned from the theatre, either through early liaison or tactical reconnaissance visits. HNSF deficiencies likely expand beyond purely tactical skills, and in many instances personnel management and administration may be gaps that need to be addressed. All members of a mentorship team need to be comfortable delivering training to HNSF and deliberate effort should be made to develop junior members in their instructional techniques and planning ability. The mentorship of a HNSF requires dedicated training focusing on a wide variety of specific skills, separate from core tactical competencies, and training these skills is a vital part of in elevating a soldier to succeed on SFCB missions.

10. Mentors participating in SFCB operations need to be prepared to operate in complex, ethically ambiguous, and risk-managed environments. Mentoring a HNSF can present numerous complex and ethically ambiguous situations such as: corruption, theft, sexism, physical abuse, racism/discrimination and use of force conflicts. Mentors need to be able to manage these issues

¹⁸ Hudlin, I. C., “Advising the advisor,” *Military Review*, (Nov 1965): 94.

while maintaining a positive relationship with the HNSF. It is vital that during training scenarios, military advisors are exposed to this type of ambiguity and determine how to ensure they make ethical decisions leading to mission success. A clear understanding of what risk is the advisors to accept and what risk belongs to higher commanders or their HN counterparts is essential. Risk-based decision-making needs to be incorporated into training scenarios to force advisors to decide between the competing priorities of HNSF relationships, mission success, and their own ethics and values. Only by designing training scenarios that represent the complexity in ethical and risk-based decision-making can military advisors be properly armed to meet the challenges they are likely to face.

CONCLUSION

11. The CA must evolve its training methodology to prepare military advisors to participate in SFCB operations. Allied SFCB organizations have made the selection of military advisors and their training in mentorship a priority for their armies. By examining these organizations, it is evident that common attributes can be identified. These organizations place significant importance on the deliberate selection of ‘volunteer’ personnel to ensure their commitment, technical competence, and demeanour meet the requirement. As well, both viewed tactical competence as a baseline upon which further focused mentorship training can be built. Lastly, both organizations train their leaders to think and thrive in complex, ethically ambiguous, and risk managed environments to ensure they meet the demands required of them as military advisors.

12. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the requirement for the CA to revitalize training in SFCB. Firstly, this paper examined two Allied SFCB organization, the British Spec Inf Gp and the United States Army SFABs, which have formalized the selection and training of their military advisors. Secondly, an analysis of common factors affecting military advisors demonstrated that opportunities exist during force generation to improve the selection and training for SFCB missions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. This paper recommends that Lead Mounting Divisions (LMDs) tasked with SFCB missions conduct a deliberate selection of personnel. Lead Mounting Units (LMUs) should seek volunteers from across the division that meet the requisite disposition, experience, and qualifications to excel in the specific SFCB mission. Dependant on the type and nature of HNSF gaps, a variety of trades and rank levels may be required. Similarly, depending on the nature of the mission (ie. Training female HNSF) gender or cultural consideration may need to be considered. Successful candidates should display high degrees of tactical competence, emotional intelligence and sociability. Given their recent experience in the domain of SFCB, consultation with CANSOFCOM during this selection period is advised, particularly if the mission is an expansion or handover of an existing CANSOFCOM operation.

14. This paper recommends that LMDs facilitate pre-deployment training focused on mentorship skills. Early liaison or tactical reconnaissance visits to determine the critical gaps of the HNSF will be essential to focus pre-deployment training on the creation and execution of

training plans to address these gaps. Dependant on the SFCB mission, these gaps could be more oriented at the institutional level vice the tactical necessitating a different approach to training. Given deployment timelines, linguistic training would likely be ineffective; therefore, mentors should be trained on the effective employment of interpreters. Every effort should be made to import members of the HNSF to participate in collective training with the mentor team. In the event actual HNSF are unavailable, a simulated force will need to be employed.

15. This paper recommends that LMDs facilitate ethical and risk-based decision making in training. During collective training, mentors should be faced with realistic scenarios focusing on the potential competing priorities of maintaining HNSF relationships, ensuring mission success, and obeying their ethics and values. Scenarios should also confirm the mentors understanding of rules of engagement, decision space, and any dependency agreements with the HNSF. Due to the complex and isolated nature of today's operating environment, mentors need to ensure a clear understanding of what decision space and risk threshold is theirs to accept.

16. Lastly, this paper recommends that the Canadian Army Doctrine and Training Centre (CADTC) engage both the British Spec Inf Gp and the United States Army SFABs to seek valuable lessons learned regarding the optimal method to conduct collective training and validation exercises for military advisors. Specific target areas should include methods of confirming mentorship, internal force protection, and cross-cultural interpersonal skills. As well, liaison with allies may reveal valuable insight into how a training centre can simulate a realistic HNSF for the advisors.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Business Insider. “The Army wants to send its newest units worldwide, but the top watchdog in Afghanistan says it's struggling to find enough troops to do the job.” Last modified 5 September 2019. <https://www.businessinsider.com/army-considering-deploying-sfab-to-africa-asia-despite-troop-concerns-2019-9>
- Canada. Department of National Defence. B-GL-322-010/FP-001, *Stability Activities and Tasks*. Ottawa: DND Canada, 2012.
- Canada. Department of National Defence. “Operation ATTENTION.” Last modified 18 November 2014. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed/operation-attention.html>
- Canada. Department of National Defence. “Operation IMPACT.” Last modified 10 December 2018. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-impact.html>
- Canada. Department of National Defence. “Operation NABERIUS.” Last modified 3 December 2018. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-naberius.html>
- Canada. Department of National Defence. “Operation UNIFIER.” Last modified 3 December 2018. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-unifier.html>
- Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s Defence Policy*. Ottawa: DND Canada, 2018.
- Hudlin, I. C. “Advising the advisor.” *Military Review*, (Nov 1965): 94-96.
- Rouleau, LGen Mike. “How We Fight: Commander CJOC’s Thoughts,” Canadian Joint Operations Command, Ottawa, 2019.
- The Army Leader. “Leadership in The Specialised Infantry: An Interview with Brigadier James Roddis.” Last accessed 23 October 2019. <https://thearmyleader.co.uk/specialised-infantry-leadership/>
- United States Army. “Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB).” Last accessed 23 October 2019. <https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/current-and-prior-service/advance-your-career/security-force-assistance-brigade.html>

United Kingdom Army. “Specialised Infantry Group.” Last accessed 23 October 2019.
<https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/formations-divisions-brigades/6th-united-kingdom-division/specialised-infantry-group/>