

Good morning ... LtGen Flynn, MajGen Neller, Mr. Popal, Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow Marines, thanks for including me, it is a privilege to be given an opportunity to provide input. Congratulations to the MCU for the having the awareness and desire to discuss one of the most important and relevant security issue in Afg, the transition to Afghan military authority.

My remarks today are based on my experience during 2008 advising the Afghan National Army, 201<sup>st</sup> Corps Cdr and staff and my current role as Vice President for Operations for Glevum Associates. **Slide Glevum stats** At Glevum we conduct social-cultural research and analysis. Using indigenous on the ground facilitators, we conduct focus groups, surveys and utilize a broad network of indigenous, on the ground subject matter experts to gain insight face-to-face as to what Afghans think and how they feel about a variety of topics. I will discuss some of our recent findings shortly.

Last Sept, at the Marine COIN Symposium in DC I provided several recommendations to get more out of the ANA. Today, I will cover those recommendations relevant to transition of military authority. If you are interested in all those recommendations, the article is posted our website as well as the Foreign Policy Research Institute website. I strongly believe a plan for transitioning battlespace is one of the most important, but neglected topics in Afghanistan. **Afghan MAP**

Despite tremendous efforts, sacrifices, and some great successes by ISAF, CSTC-A, and some of our NATO allies, the meager role the ANA is playing across the board is unacceptable.

After billions of dollars expended on the ANA, There is not one entire province where the ANA is responsible for security.

We needed a clearly articulated process with quantifiable benchmarks during my tour in 2008 and we need one today. We need to put the Afghans on notice that we are making them responsible for their security.

I see ANA leadership, battlespace ownership, and advisors, as inextricably linked to our success...and exit from Afghanistan.

Without good leadership, the ANA will continue to rely on American forces that are all too willing to do the heavy lifting. Knowing our American military culture of can-do versus the Afghan military culture --we shouldn't be surprised that we are in our 8th year, and the ANA does not have a meaningful leadership role in the COIN fight.

The ANA's lack of sufficient progress is not solely their doing. It is one of shared responsibility; I believe ANA effectiveness is lacking for a couple reasons...

1. ISAF forces have done too much for them in the past and from my observation during a

trip back last month to RC-E, we're doing too much for them now.

### **SLIDE-ANA immediate issues**

2. Next, there are not enough good ANA leaders, resulting in a lack of accountability and initiative. Officer accountability is uneven, often due to cronyism and a fear of reprisal if a commander attempts to hold a "connected" officer accountable.

The inability to fairly reward or punish breeds a lack of trust between the leader and the led...it inhibits operational effectiveness...it stifles initiative.

- To fix this, the ANA must select and grow leaders from the ranks now by instituting a commissioning program for senior NCOs, especially sergeants major. Many are suitable to serve as Captains or Majors now without additional training. Many of these quality leaders are in their late 20s or early 30s and ready for increased responsibility. There is a fear that the NCOs will outshine the officers. Senior NCOs often exit the army fed up with mediocrity. --I also believe advisors should monitor command screening and G.O. selection. We're paying for it.

Also, we must insist the ANA fix the

stagnation of officers firmly entrenched in Kabul... this stagnation leads to cronyism and lowers morale among the ranks of less connected officers serving in hotspots across the country. Too many senior staff officers sit at HHQ and do little for fielded forces.

Officers, especially O-6's and above must be given more responsibility and required to sink or swim.

3. Next, is the fact that we never got the advisor mission right. We have extreme variations in advisor competence. Commanding 700 advisor and support personnel from 5 countries and all US Services was a real eye opener for me.

In some cases advisor teams were not properly manned and lead, contributing to distrust between the ANA and the coalition force often leading the coalition to vie for total control of the advisors, and by extension of the ANA. Had DOD/NATO put more of their best and bravest against the advisor mission, I think the ANA would have more competent leadership by now. I had very effective Marine advisors/ETTs with me, many of whom were combat vets who understood COIN, and who had the wherewithal to ensure the ANA was used properly when dealing with the coalition. However, I absorbed many teams in country that did not know if they were advising police or ANA until they arrived.

Advisor competence and preparation effects  
ANA competence and execution.

-Still, there are some tremendous Bde and kandak commanders out there, just not near enough.

### Slide -Tagab shura

4. One Bde I worked w/ stood out among the rest. In 2008-early 2009, this Bde informally owned battlespace. Advisors worked closely with them as they conducted a very effective, holistic COIN campaign in Tagab valley in southern Kapisa province, where, at the time, there were no coalition forces. The ANA had established relationships with the locals, and the valley, once full of enemy was starting to turn toward the government. The ANA even brought in female health care providers to treat local women. The population supported the govt/ and notified the ANA of IEDs. Afghan radio/TV covered the campaign, ANA leaders made public addresses. This Bde focused on the population before doing so was in vogue...and the enemy was directed to leave by its leadership and they did.

5. The 08-09 Tagab campaign provides us an example of what right looks like, of what the future could look like. ---However, disturbingly, during 2009, ISAF French forces

took over all of Kapisa province pushing the ANA to the back. Violence increased.

6. There has been a lot of talk about partnering over the last six months: During a recent trip to Pol-e-charki, Sarobi and southern Tagab to visit an ANA Corps and Bde I saw a lot of hard work and a strong desire to do the right thing, but I also noted over-partnering and a US tendency to "build them in our image." We've got ANA staff officers on ppt. We've got coalition forces trying to get the ANA to work in huge tents full of computers. We must stop trying to make them like us. Our processes are too complicated. Theirs is a verbal, not a written culture. This is not Iraq, many are illiterate. Keep processes simple and repeatable.

Of course, what really matters in the end is what difference the ANA is making to defeat the insurgency. For us to leave, and the Govt of Afghan to own and manage the problem, they have to be allowed ---or ---forced to step up.

We must develop and execute a clearly articulated plan to start transitioning battlespace to the ANA now. The current ISAF Transition Lead Security Responsibility (TLSR) process has little traction. I spoke with MG Hogg at ISAF Monday via VTC and he

stated that in all of Afghanistan, only Kabul City proper has been turned over to the Afghans.

## **Slide -Transition planning**

To energize the Transition of battlespace, I recommend we look to what Multi-National Force-West did in 2007 in Anbar province. In concert with the Iraqi Army, MNF-W developed a Memorandum of Understanding. This is a great document. It defined relationships between coalition and Iraqi units with an eye always toward handing over areas of responsibility to the Iraqi Army. Once capable, an IA unit was given responsibility for a specific area of operations (AO) while MNF-W units remained in tactical overwatch as required by the threat and the competence of the Iraqi unit. The purpose was always to take the “training wheels” off as early as possible while maintaining a watchful eye to prevent catastrophe. Embedded advisors provided the linkage to in-extremis US support. MNF-W and the Iraqi Army established Combined Operating Areas “when both 1<sup>st</sup> IA Division and MNF-W ground forces are conducting combined tactical operations within the same area of operations.” A MNF-W like model should be considered as a way ahead, with an eye toward Provincial Afghan control as soon as possible.

Regardless of the document, a list of pre-determined conditions must be met before effecting the transition. However, we can not make this too hard for them, they will never meet our standard. We have to live with Afghan good enough.

I recommend they be required to have a *simple* campaign plan that demonstrates to the MOD and ISAF that they have a plan for success to include tying into USAID, and relevant ministries, especially MRRD and MOI, and NGOs. Savvy, competent advisors or partnered units can assist in this process. This plan must be end-state driven and integrated with the Afghan Gov to include development and governance, it has to be more than a series of checkpoints or limited duration ops with no enduring effects. **SLIDE-Recent ANA research**

7. I think it is important to listen to what the Afghans say. Here are some the thoughts of several ANA G.Os and senior officers expressed to Glevum earlier this month:

Obvious themes: Afghan responsibility.  
They know their country and people.  
It is in their hands to lead this fight”

**SLIDE-Recent ANA 2**

More important is this quote...

“even if the security decreases, it is better to understand now while aid and support is still in Afghanistan than when it’s just them.”

To me, they are saying let’s take the training wheels now off while dad can keep us from getting hit by a bus, but if we get hurt trying, we’ll be ok.

### **SLIDE- Population findings.**

8. Now, from the Afghan people themselves, our recent research indicates 5 major issues seem to matter most in the eyes of the Afghan people: 1) corruption, 2) security 3) lack of basic services 4) lack of jobs, and 5) a desire for more democracy. Further, the people are proud of the ANA and feel they provide more security than ISAF. The people surveyed also believe in the National Solidarity Program. Last, from my experience the Afghan people prefer Afghan solutions...even if those solutions are less effective.

9. I’d now like to shift back to Afghan campaign design ---ANA campaigns should be weighted heavily with Afghan capacity to increase their palatability to the population. We should leverage the popularity and effectiveness of the National Solidarity Program and Community Development Councils.

For those not familiar...

10. The CDC are comprised of elected village representatives who apply for development projects to the Afghan govt via the National Solidarity program. Since CDC members are elected by local villages, many Afghans see the CDCs as a functioning form of local democracy and they like it. CDC's are viewed as delivering projects that meet the needs of the people. There is also a sense of community ownership that inhibits corruption and maintains accountability.

11. **ANA Campaign**

- A. I suggest we leverage the respect the population currently has for the Afghan National Army by putting them truly in the lead within capacity. The ANA can establish a secure environment in support of broadly expanded CDC activities.
- B. I've observed that locals will generally cooperate w/ the ANA as long as they believe the ANA are staying and their presence will benefit the community.
- C. Further, as part of this COIN campaign, CDC projects should focus on providing basic services since we know that is a core issue for many Afghans.
- D. **Campaign graphic** Here is a picture of what I'm suggesting.

12. To measure results we must tie Metrics to Transition. The current "Capability Milestone" or CM ratings are a US centric tool used to rate readiness levels of ANA units, they indicate personnel numbers, logistics, training, etc. The Capability Milestone system is inadequate by itself.

It is more akin to your college GPA rather than the type of job you hold in real life. The ANA are mildly interested in CM ratings. In fact, some do not want to be CM-1 because they think that means no more ETTs and no more money or enablers. CM ratings do NOT compel Afghan cdrs to take initiative or take risks.

A. **Slide Wardak**. To instill initiative and accountability, the graduate level metric should be based upon the ANA commander's ability to conduct a COIN campaign in his battlespace.

B. **Slide Helo** We must understand their culture and use it to our advantage. Measure the Cdr according to what he accomplishes and he will step up as he will not want to lose face.

13. Finally, At the Sept COIN symposium, I recommended that we drop the term

“battlespace owner.” To me it indicates a very US centric view of Afghanistan, it sends the message to the ANA that this is a coalition problem. I now have a different recommendation.

As ISAF transitions battlespace to the ANA, we should refer to ISAF unit commanders that still have battlespace as “foreign battlespace owners.” If nothing else, maybe this will strike a cord within the Afghans and prompt them to step up. Maybe they’ll even feel embarrassed.

So, overall, my message is this: We must strive to develop ANA leaders. We must implement an aggressive, measurable plan to begin transitioning battlespace to the ANA now with ISAF in overwatch.

In their battlespace, the ANA should have a holistic COIN campaign. We should put the brunt of the responsibility on them in areas that allow it--now.

Where it makes sense Afghan campaigns should include the enlargement of National Solidarity Program and Community Develop Councils as a means of development to allow the people grass roots ownership of the future of Afghanistan.

Last, we should must expand our current metrics for Afghan forces to include how well they do

in their own campaigns in their own battlespace or areas of responsibility.

**Afghan Black MAP** We can give them NATO wpns/HMMWVs, and digital cammies, without more responsibility delegated to the ANA, they will NEVER reach a level that will allow us to leave and our map will stay black.

The time to start a meaningful transition of military authority to the Afghans is now, today.

**Slide Glevum Red**

Thank you, Semper fi

