



The 2nd Security Force Assistance Brigade Command Sergeant Major and the brigade S-2 team with the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence Chief Warrant Officer and Command Sergeant Major during Joint Readiness Training Center rotation 19-03.

Establishing the Intelligence Readiness of a Security Force Assistance Brigade

by Major Aaron Bragg, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Nick Rife, and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jay Gaines

Introduction

Establishing readiness within the intelligence warfighting function of a Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) is as challenging as it is rewarding. Between April 2018 and January 2019, the newly established 2nd SFAB's intelligence warfighting function developed a manning, equipping, and training strategy in order to support the brigade's imminent deployment as an advisory element for the Combined Joint Operational Area-Afghanistan. With the assets, resources, and time available, few precedents exist for building an expeditionary advisor intelligence element. Indeed, channeling the advisor attributes of patience and keeping an open mind is the best approach when forging new paths. In that vein, the brigade S-2 leadership devised a three-pillar strategy to gain and maintain a heightened state of intelligence readiness:

- ◆ Build the team.
- ◆ Configure the architecture.
- ◆ Train the intelligence warfighting function.

Subsequent to the establishment of the strategy, intelligence advisors of the 2nd SFAB are postured to enable offensive operations where needed as a vital team member of a globally capable SFAB.

Build the Team

The intelligence advisor operates in an internal and external capacity. The internal mission of the intelligence advisor is to provide timely, relevant, accurate, and predictive intelligence to the team leader or company commander. Externally, the intelligence advisor provides doctrinally sound and operationally relevant intelligence coaching and mentorship to foreign security forces across the unified

land operations spectrum. Ultimately, the intelligence advisor's responsibility is twofold—build a foreign security force intelligence capacity and provide intelligence support to force protection/mission objectives.

Recruiting intelligence Soldiers with a potential for such depth in their craft is a critical component to the intelligence readiness paradigm. Optimally, a 35F (Intelligence Analyst) sergeant or staff sergeant fits the needs of the advisor teams and battalion S-2. A challenge to 2nd SFAB was a critical shortage in qualified 35F volunteers. To close the recruitment gap, 2nd SFAB widened the recruitment aperture to accept 35N (Signals Intelligence Analyst), 35M (Human Intelligence Collector), and 35P (Cryptologic Linguist) applicants. This adjustment to allow additional intelligence military occupational specialties was effective and ultimately contributed to a more holistic intelligence capability brigade-wide. The diversity in experience, the optimized military occupational specialties for team activity (35M and 35P), and the opportunity to cross-pollinate ideas between teams all served to strengthen intelligence warfighting function personnel competencies—building an advisor akin to an intelligence Swiss army knife.

Configure the Architecture

Diverse planning considerations and unique requirements within each combatant command footprint limit the speed at which the intelligence warfighting function can build and maintain situational understanding as conditions evolve. Although digital intelligence capabilities, such as the Distributed Common Ground System-Army (DCGS-A) Service Pack 1, are sufficient at the brigade level, they are less so for the common team level intelligence advisor. Implementing an innovative digital strategy, using software-as-a-service integration concepts, allows the 2nd SFAB to harness theater-unique data sets via unified data layers, accessible on organic communications transport. In other words, while the senior intelligence technician at brigade interacts with data through a DCGS-A multifunction workstation, intelligence advisors rely on a web browser to interact with the same data. This implementation provides user and access simplicity, limiting planning considerations in the mission planning process. Such an approach also provides options to the team as it potentially transitions between multiple combatant commands and as the variability



SSG David Smith records intelligence information at a key leader engagement during the 2nd Security Force Assistance Brigade Live Fire Exercise 2018. SSG Smith graduated the first iteration of the Intelligence Advisor Training Course.

Photo by U.S. Army SSG Josh Brown

and volume of information increases or decreases in accordance with environmental conditions. The core ethos of the advising team's intelligence advisor is "do the most with the least."

Train the Warfighting Function

Intelligence advisor experience levels within the 2nd SFAB vary greatly. Brigade S-2 leaders implemented a training pipeline to baseline every intelligence advisor in the brigade. Deemed an intelligence reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSOI), the training approach took shape by observing 1st SFAB's lessons learned while in the Combined Joint Operational Area-Afghanistan and maintaining consistent contact with enablers at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. These included the Asymmetric Warfare Group, XVIII Airborne Corps G-3 home-station training, Fort Bragg Mission Training Complex, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) Foundry, and U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) G-2. Intelligence advisor RSOI training events include, but are not limited to—

- ◆ Intelligence Advisor Training Course (FORSCOM G-2).
- ◆ Vulnerability Assessment Methodology (Asymmetric Warfare Group).
- ◆ Digital Intelligence Systems Master Gunner Course (INSCOM Foundry).
- ◆ Biometrics Operations Specialist Course (XVIII Airborne Corps G-3 Home Station Training).
- ◆ Integrated Tactical Network Workshop and Forum (Fort Bragg Mission Training Complex).

Most critically, not all intelligence advisors attended all training opportunities. Competing advisor-specific training events often require advisors to engage with brigade S-2 leadership to ascertain where opportunities exist based on that advisor's strengths and weaknesses.

Ultimately, brigade S-2 leadership could customize each intelligence advisor's RSOI training plan in accordance with training needs and additional non-intelligence training requirements. The resulting advisor competencies reveal a mix of technical and doctrinal intelligence understanding not common among their peers in more traditional career tracks.

Way Ahead

The intelligence advisor lacks organic information collection and processing capabilities at the advisor team level. Analysis of these capability gaps provides opportunities for commercial-off-the-shelf and government-off-the-shelf capability implementations, including the Engineering Link Analysis tool and eBee X small unmanned aircraft system integration.

The Engineering Link Analysis tool enables advisors with a ruggedized tablet for facilitating rapid mission planning, intelligence preparation of the battlefield, and situational awareness, all collaboratively available to foreign security force counterparts at the appropriate classification level. Rigorous and realistic collective training events accompanied by DevOps¹ counterparts allow the 2nd SFAB to evolve the Engineering Link Analysis capability in conjunction with tactics, techniques, and procedures and standard operating procedures.

Intelligence leaders within the 2nd SFAB also implemented use of the eBee X small unmanned aircraft system. Leveraging the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, the eBee X (platform name PROMETHEUS01) aids the advisor in collecting unclassified geospatial data to produce tactical decision aids. The eBee X payload renders three-dimensional visualizations of vertical environments in mere minutes. PROMETHEUS01 elevates the advising team's capacity and value proposition by leveraging what the intelligence advisor brings to the team, albeit through an ad hoc approach.

Classified processing capability remains a gap for advisors at the team level. The DCGS-A Capability Drop 1 is the ideal solution for intelligence advisors through its unique ability to trigger standard workflows and automate processes of the tactical user. The 2nd SFAB intelligence warfighting func-

tion has tested and proven DCGS-A Service Pack 1's ability to support brigade intelligence operations. Fielding of Capability Drop 1 will greatly enhance the organization's ability to conduct multi-echelon analysis, closing the information throughput gap that resides at the company advising team and below levels. Capability Drop 1 also builds in flexibility for the advising team leader, as it is a more versatile plug-and-play solution. Operational conditions of the near future could find a team operating independent of the brigade or battalion where the synchronicity of dataflow, the development of the common intelligence picture/common operational picture, and threat indications and warnings must be autonomous processes without a reliance on complex architectures. As currently configured, SFAB intelligence advisors do not have this luxury; however, continued operational testing, validation, and feedback with lessons learned cross-pollinated throughout the SFAB formations will get to such an end state.



2nd SFAB S-2 personnel following the first successful mission profile of PEACOCK01, the eBee X 3D imaging drone. It is the only collection platform organic to SFABs and has proven a critical enabler for tactical advise and assist efforts in Afghanistan.

Photo courtesy of SFC Bill Connolly

Conclusion

The 2nd SFAB's intelligence warfighting function three-pillar strategy (build the team, configure the architecture, and train the intelligence warfighting function) was not without flaw. It met with a truncated timeline for intelligence advisors



CW3 Nick Rife and CW2 Jay Gaines collaborate on the 2nd Security Force Assistance Brigade intelligence warfighting function digital strategy prior to the execution of the brigade live fire exercise and Joint Readiness Training Exercise 19-03.

to confront operational challenges of today. The intelligence warfighting function team consistently exercised advisor attributes of discipline and maturity as the ambiguity grew more acute leading up to the 2nd SFAB's latest arrival date.

The home station partnerships forged with the FORSCOM G-2, INSCOM Foundry, Fort Bragg Mission Training Complex,

National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and Asymmetric Warfare Group undoubtedly elevated the level of training the 2nd SFAB advisors received, and they far exceeded the 2nd SFAB S-2's technical leadership expectations. The home station-heavy approach also limits the costs incurred by the organization and, most importantly, the advisor families. As a framework, 2nd SFAB will continue to leverage the three-pillar approach with a keen eye on the future and where enabling offensive operations might be required in the next theater and beyond. **Everyone Fights!** 🌟

Endnote

1. "DevOps (a clipped compound of "development" and "operations") is a software engineering culture and practice that aims at unifying software development (Dev) and software operations (Ops). The main characteristic of the DevOps movement is to strongly advocate automation and monitoring at all steps of software construction, from integration, testing, releasing to deployment, and infrastructure management. DevOps aims at shorter development cycles, increased deployment frequency, and more dependable releases." D. Jeya Mala, *Integrating the Internet of Things Into Software Engineering Practices* (Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 2019), 16.

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CW3 Nick Rife is the brigade senior all-source intelligence fusion technician for 2nd SFAB. He has previously served in various duty positions within 82nd Airborne Division where he supported Global Response Force and Operations Enduring Freedom, Inherent Resolve, and Freedom's Sentinel, implementing transformational digital strategies in support of tactical operations. He has also served in U.S. Army Forces Command G-2 as the Digital Intelligence Systems Master Gunner Course officer in charge.

CW2 Jay Gaines is the brigade intelligence support element chief for 2nd SFAB. His previous assignments were with 10th Mountain Division and 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne). He has supported operations in Afghanistan and the African continent where he advanced his intelligence support to the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance portfolio. Most recently, CW2 Gaines has been involved in implementing 2nd SFAB's global intelligence readiness strategy, which provides the brigade with maximum flexibility in support of expeditionary advising operations.



In October 1962, imagery captured by U.S. Air Force U-2 high-altitude and U.S. Navy low-altitude photo reconnaissance aircraft were key to understanding that Soviet intentions in Cuba were more threatening than previously assessed.