

Marine Corps Advisor Companies

Introduction and historical context

by Col David V. Ready, USMCR

On 7 June 2019, the Marine Corps inaugurated two new units, Marine Corps Advisor Companies A and B (MCAC A and B), at Joint Base Anacostia Bolling in Washington DC. Although they are considered new, in reality, these units are just the formalization of something that Marines have been doing for a hundred years: training and advising our partners and allies so that we can jointly achieve our goals. Marines have embarked on these missions in Haiti, Nicaragua, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. This demand shows no sign of letting up today.

In truth, our military history as a Nation and culture is replete with examples in which we leveraged the capabilities of training, advising, and assisting. During the dawn of our Nation, in the darkest days of Valley Forge, GEN George Washington used the training, advising, and assistance of Baron Friedrich Wilhelm Von Steuben and others to whip his tired army into shape and to give it the heart and confidence to carry on its fight and win our independence as a Nation. Going back further, throughout the whole history of the Western military tradition, we see the criticality of the train, advise, and assist mission.

One morning in late spring of 414 BC, a small naval expedition force of Spartan advisors under Gen Gylippus arrived in Sicily outside the Greek City of Syracuse, then under siege by their mutual enemy, the then-naval superpower Athens. An Athenian army and navy had blockaded Syracuse and defeated both the Syracusan navy and army. Syracuse was in despair, and some members in its leadership were now in surrender talks with the enemy. In these

>Col Ready is the Commander, Marine Corps Advisor Company A. He has served in Iraq and Afghanistan, the latter in an advisory capacity while conducting campaign assessments in Helmand Province. He has commanded Marines in peace and war at the platoon, company, squadron, group, and company level. He holds three master's degrees in history, strategy, and national security strategy from Trinity College Dublin, Yale, and the Naval War College. He is also a Diplomat for the Department of State. His staff contributed to this article.

dark times, the Spartan advisors stole into the city from the sea and started to get to work.

The arrival of Spartan maritime expedition of advisors gave heart and confidence to the political leadership of Syracuse. They then retrained the garrison and army of Syracuse in optimal fighting techniques; they reinvigorated the city's fortifications, harbor, and navy

in a combined arms approach; they found allies in neighboring cities and throughout Sicily; and they rekindled the will of the Syracusan people to carry on the fight. Within a year, the tide had turned. The Syracusans triumphed and the Athenian navy was destroyed, with its army either dead or enslaved. All of this was because of the arrival of a few good men: advisors from the sea.



U.S. Marines, with Marine Corps Advisor Company Alpha and Bravo, Force Headquarters Group, present the colors to BGen Mark A. Hashimoto, (right), Commanding General, FHG, 7 June 2019, at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling in Washington D.C. (Photo by Cpl Serine Farahi.)

Marines do this today in Afghanistan, and we will do this again tomorrow, in the Pacific, Europe, and elsewhere, to work with our allies and partners to contain and, if necessary, defeat our enemies. It has been proven that a few key advisors from the sea will enhearten, harden, and enable our partners. As in the past, we Marines will win against all enemies. The new MCACs give us the perfect tool to do so via our allies and partners.

Problem Framing

As part of the Reserve Forces 2025 initiative and the *Marine Corps Operating Concept* (Washington, DC: September 2016), unchanged by the recent *Commandant's Planning Guidance* (Washington, DC: July 2019), the Marine Corps is creating formalized advisor units in the Reserve Component. Similar to the civil affairs group model, MCACs will reside solely in the Reserve Component; the Marine Corps does not presently intend to stand up any of these units in the Active Component.

MCACs have been established to address the enduring need for persistent engagement with our partners to gain decisive advantages over our adversaries.

As with any new capability, there may be an insufficient understanding within our institution of how the Marine Corps can best employ this new advisor capability to accomplish our mission. Marine Corps advisor units will not only supplement current tactical deployment cycles but also provide the fleet with operational and strategic tools to establish and maintain professional military relations with international partners in the furtherance of U.S. interests.

The Bottom Line Up Front

As the Marine Corps confronts a broad range of global challenges, ranging from counterinsurgency in Afghanistan to the reemergence of the

great power competition with China and Russia, MCACs are a powerful tool to develop partnerships that encourage and enable partner nations to act in support of aligned U.S. strategic objectives. MCACs deliver high impact by developing sustainable relationships, improving partner security force capabilities, and increasing interoperability with U.S. forces at low costs and with low political risk while preserving the integrity of other Marine Corps Operating Forces.

What We Are

MCACs have been established to address the enduring need for persistent engagement with our partners to gain decisive advantages over our adversaries. The United States remains the most powerful military and the richest economy in the world, but as our international commitments persist and the capabilities of regional competitors grow, we need to determine how to optimally support combatant commander requirements. Part of the solution is to deploy Marine Security Cooperation Teams (MSCTs, pronounced “Mus-

kets”) which, by design, contribute significantly to the improvement of our partners’ security, develop deeper relationships and mutual understanding, improve interoperability between United States and partner-nation forces, and enable access. The full utility of these MSCTs goes far beyond training and advising our partners. Additionally, this utility includes preparing them for integration into and coordination with U.S. command and control (C2) doctrine and procedures. Through this familiarization, we argue that the Marine Corps can provide our leaders with an exceptional tool to advance our relations with partner nations.

The new MCACs and their intrinsic MSCTs offer a capability which can

be employed across the range of military operations. MSCTs possess unique advantages that enable them to capitalize on select aspects of the human domain of warfare.¹ They can do so through iterative professional engagement and early phase maneuver with select partners, shaping the operational environment to achieve operational- or strategic-level results. It is in this last part, advancing our relations with our partner nations to achieve operational and strategic results, where the greatest utility of MSCTs lies.

Our Mission

The proposed mission statement for MCACA captures the unique capabilities and advantages of the MCAC and its MSCTs: *The MCAC conducts security force assistance across the spectrum of conflict to enable partner capability in support of Service and joint force requirements.*

Core Capabilities

Its core capabilities are to provide rotational forces and conduct security force assistance (SFA) as well as to advise, train, assist, and assess partner-nation forces (see Figure 1 on next page).

Our Establishment

In October 2018, the Commandant directed a formalized Marine Corps advisor establishment. In response, the Marine Corps is now in the process of standing up four MCACs in the Reserve. MCACA is the first to stand up, building on the cadre of the former 2d Civil Affairs Group in Washington, DC. MCAC B is in its early stages and will have its initial cadre and two MSCTs in Concord, CA, and later two additional teams in Camp Pendleton, CA. MCAC C and D will be standing up over the next several years in Fort Devens, MA; Kansas City, MO; and Chicago, IL. Each MCAC is, or will be, headed by a command-screened colonel and consist of four teams, each led by a colonel. (See Figure 2.)

The rank structure of the team’s table of organization reflects an emphasis on elite advisor professionalization. It should not be considered binding or rigidly prescriptive for any particular mission, but professionalism is the key

to successful advisors, and it takes precedence in many cases over the exact number, rank, or MOS of the Marines. Thus, these teams provide a scalable resource pool of experienced professionals who can handle most security cooperation missions without augmentation.

Moreover, because a MCAC is a formalized Selected Marine Corps Reserve unit, commanders will know their Marines and have the ability to prescreen them for mission suitability, removing any non-suitable Marines before any deployment cycle. This structure mitigates many of the personnel suitability issues that have been documented in previous, *ad hoc* advisor missions.

MSCT Capacity

Once the MCACs stand up fully, the Marine Corps will have sixteen full MCST, each with a scalable capability to advise primarily at the Corps, division, brigade, or regiment level. This advisor force provides the Marine Corps with a professional SFA capability.

Our mission analysis concludes that the sixteen teams could cover most of the potential Task Force Southwest (TFSW) advisor mission to the Afghan National Army's 215th Corps or 505th Police Zone. After achieving fully operationally capable status, each of the four MCACs could provide one MSCT rotation every other year for a yearlong boots-on-the-ground deployment to the four brigades of the 215th Corps and either supplement or assume much of the Corps-level advisor mission, particularly if augmented by a general officer Corps-level advisor. It should be noted that this analysis assumes each team could be split into two groups and would thereby be able to cover two brigades (or their equivalent) each. This enables the Reserve to sustainably deploy one team equivalent from each of the four MCACs to meet other advisor needs beyond the current mission in TFSW.

Limitations of Capacity

As we have seen in previous advisor missions, each MSCT deployed will require enabler support personnel and, if deployed in a non-permissive environment, an appropriately trained

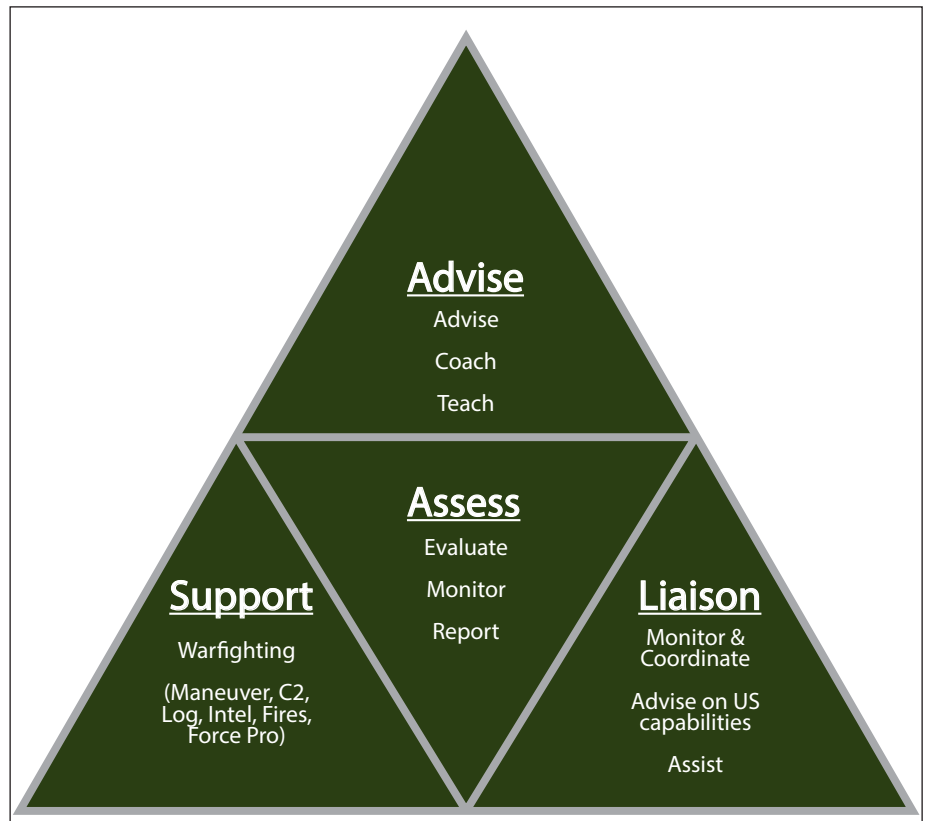


Figure 1. Advising foreign security forces. (Image from MCRP 3-03D.1.)

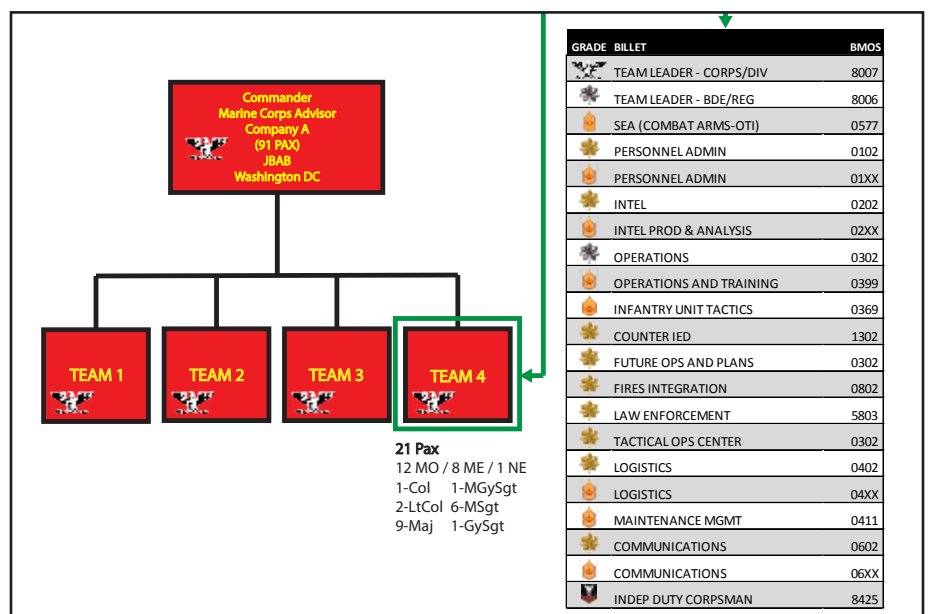


Figure 2. MCST table of organization. (Figure provided by author.)

and sized security force element. Thus, while the MSCTs assume most of the advisor burden of the SFA mission, significant augmentation may be required from more traditional units.

Positive Operational Impact

This MCAC MSCT contribution will provide SFA capability and capacity for much of the current and envisioned operational needs. The established SFA units will greatly reduce the need for Operating Force units to contribute critical commanders and staffs to fill advisor billets in an *ad hoc* fashion, mitigating personnel suitability risk and conserving valuable Operating Force capacity and capability. Fielding the MSCTs offers a “win-win”; it meets the our intent of a professionalized SFA capability while alleviating our traditional *ad hoc* approach to sourcing advisors.

MSCTs and the Economy of Force

MSCTs provide key capabilities to the total force that enhance the MAGTF and the joint force across the range of military operations. Moreover, MSCTs provide the Marine Corps with a profound economy of force conduit to achieve our mission objectives in resource-constrained environments.

First, they signal to our partners our political and military commitment to our common fight by having our personnel on the ground. Second, they provide manifest warfighting mentoring and coaching to our partners, fostering the human domain of warfare by forging bonds between partners. Third, our teams, when augmented by C2 personnel and assets, are capable of providing direct C2 tie-in to our partner nations and thereby bring combined arms, combat support, and combat service support to our partners—enabling them to decisively engage the enemy as part of a better integrated multinational or combined force.

The Full Value of the MSCTs Exceeds Tactical Employment

But does the TFSW employment scenario capture the full value of MSCTs? Our MCAC A mission analysis indicates that the value of the MSCT con-

cept far exceeds the current TFSW advisor or similar tactical missions. The value also extends beyond the irregular warfare, counterinsurgency, and SFA operations we have seen in U.S. Central Command. Indeed, the value of the MSCTs extends throughout the continuum of conflict in both time and scale with the potential for decisive political and institutional advantages over more traditional Marine Corps units when employed in specific manners throughout the geographic combatant command areas of responsibility.

Full Advantages

The best way to envision these advantages is to ask a few questions. First, which geographic combatant commanders face the most severe threats to our vital interests? Based on our National Defense Strategy, the *Commandant's Planning Guidance*, and other documents, the answer is U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) and U.S. European Command (USEUCOM). If this is so, we should ask: How valuable would it be to have a well-defined and developed recurring engagement with partners in likely theaters of operation?

“You cannot surge trust.”

—USSOCOM

2020 Vision Statement

In most cases, the value will be substantial if not decisive. By developing a presence in their countries and establishing relationships, we signal to our partners the Marine Corps’ commitment—we have our personnel on the ground and they see U.S. forces investing in their future. Further, our presence enables us to mentor and coach our partners, develop mutual trust and interoperability, and integrate them into our robust enablers and C2. We thereby empower them to more effectively address their security challenges, defend their interests, and—when necessary—

decisively engage the enemy alone or as part of a coalition.

Moreover, as detailed in the *Joint Operational Access Concept* (Washington, DC: Joint Staff, January 2012), we can no longer take access for granted. We must develop innovative methods to ensure access for U.S. force entry into our partners’ countries before the opening of hostilities. Through enduring partnering operations, we can mitigate the need to overcome certain aspects of our competitors’ strengths, such as the developing long-range anti-access threats in East Asia and the Baltic Sea region. This is increasingly important as the existing time-phased force deployment data calculations may no longer prove valid in a more contested environment. Our adversaries have written extensively on the perils of allowing U.S. forces sufficient operational access to create lodgments. Our adversaries intend to employ a full spectrum of capabilities to prevent U.S. entry. By establishing and maintaining robust SFA relationships with partners, we can significantly improve the preconditions needed for the mission.

Additionally, with sufficient forethought and an enduring commitment to partner nations, we can expect to develop a robust body of linguistic and cultural experience, along with an understanding of the partner nations’ organization that can greatly enhance our interoperability. These will help to deter conflict or, if conflict arises, help defeat our common foes.

Military Benefit Achieved with Minimal Political Risk

We then need to ask if our partners are willing to accept our presence there. What about our U.S. Country Team? How will regional threat actors respond? How concerned will the host nation be if a MEU or larger Marine Corps unit establishes a presence during non-combat operations? Will the presence of such unit potentially complicate the international security interests of the host nation and the United States?

Here is where an understanding of our geopolitical relations and the national interests of our partners meet. Although the specifics may remain

unknown, they are usually derived in a manner in concert with Figure 3.

Through its contributions and enhancement of host-nation confidence and interoperability with U.S. forces, this graphic demonstrates that a MSCT can provide a high degree of military benefit with minimal political risk to the partner nation, with a far greater chance for acceptance by our country team or regional rivals because of its small size and other potential mitigating factors (e.g., low profile, no uniforms, etc.).

Small Presence, Large Impact

A MSCT is a powerful, flexible deterrent option. To the casual observer, a MSCT with some key C2 enabler personnel is only about the size of a large squad or platoon.² It is therefore unlikely to draw much attention. Indeed, for the purposes of signature reduction, it may be desirable for the MSCT to deploy in civilian attire; this would enable the MSCT to operate within previously restricted host nations during the “Competition Space” or “Phase 0” segments of the continuous spectrum of warfare. Conversely, our presence can be a signal of support to both our partner’s domestic population and their rivals, potentially de-escalating situations and certainly preparing our partners and ourselves for victory should armed conflict arise (see Figure 4 on the next page).

Low Political Risk, High Military Benefit

The hypothetical deployment of a ten- to thirty-person MSCT is less likely to be perceived as provocative behavior and result in concomitant political risk. However, the MSCT’s ability to harness a large portion of the Marine Corps’ enablers still provides the partner nation with the ability to leverage military power far in excess of the mere number of Marines deployed. Through the economy of force employment of a MSCT, we have provided our partner with a significant warfighting enhancement.

Enhanced Motivation and the Will of Partners

If we are to fully capitalize on our

“In today’s information age, we must recognize that the essential ‘key terrain’ is the will of a host nation’s population ... [This] permits us to gain the trust of skeptical populations, thus frustrating the enemy’s efforts and suffocating their ideology.”

—Gen J.N. Mattis

Foreword to Operational Culture for the Warfighter: Principles and the Applications

	Low Military Benefit	High Military Benefit
High Potential Political Risk		MEF MEB MEU SPMAGTF
Low Potential Political Risk	Company Platoon	Marine Security Cooperation Team

Figure 3. Political risk and military benefit (scale is conceptual). (Figure by author.)

partners’ strength and leverage the economy of force benefits inherent in SFA, we need to be able to understand the motivations and will of our partners. In accordance with the *Joint Concept for Human Aspects of Military Operations* (Washington DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, October 2016), the future joint force must focus on a critical and enduring challenge in warfare: the need to understand relevant actors’ motivations and the underpinnings of their will.

MSCTs help us do this. Mutual understanding is best developed by establishing bonds of trust and respect over time in a preplanned, predictable, and iterative manner. Through enduring engagement with select partners, we will foster this understanding and trust.

Composed of Professionals

Further, a quick review of the MSCT’s table of organization indicates that the Marine Corps has made a con-

scious decision to assign experienced officers and SNCOs to the advisor units. We can thereby demonstrate to our partners, many of whom do not have a strong legacy of imbuing great responsibility upon NCOs and junior officers, that Marines at every level are trained to function as key members of the battle staff and make key decisions. This message is a fundamental lesson to militaries that wish to operate in a manner similar to the Marine Corps and is essential to their transformation efforts.

Thus, when such an elite team arrives, the partner nation will be assured that we have sent experienced, prescreened professionals capable of developing close, professional relations throughout the senior officer and enlisted ranks.

The Benefits of MSCT Employment

We previously noted that at relatively

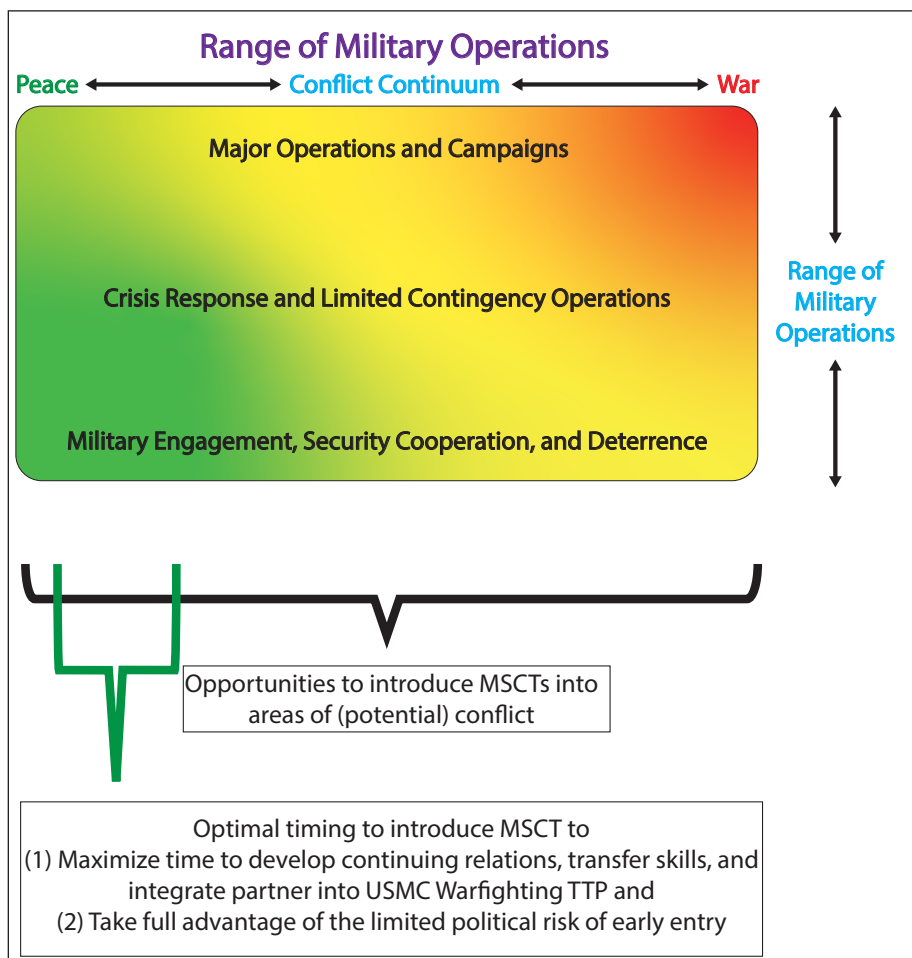


Figure 4. Introducing MSCTs into areas of conflict.
 (Source: The range of military operations as depicted in JP 3-0, Joint Operations.)

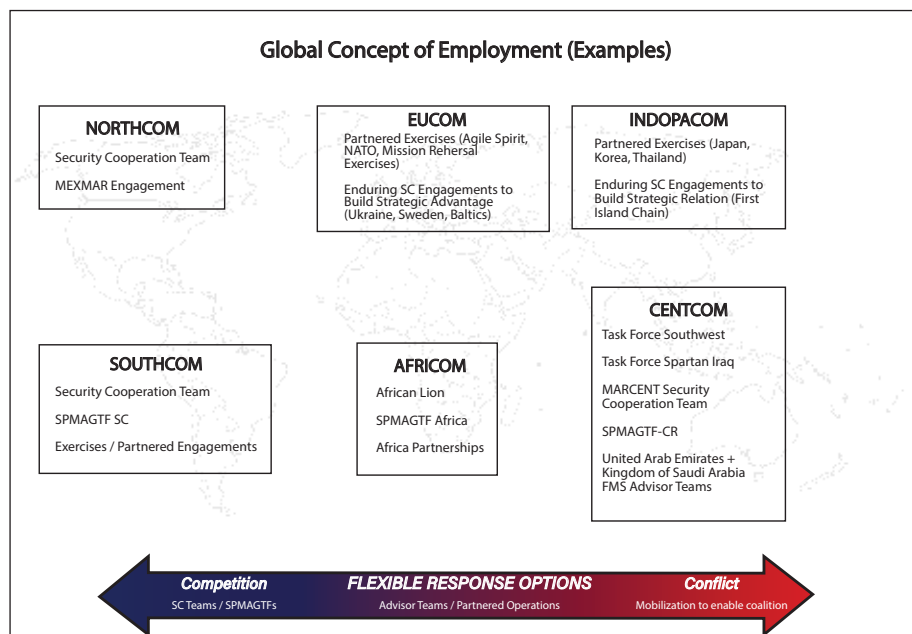


Figure 5. Response options. (Source: MCAC A Mission Analysis.)

low political risk, we can employ MSCTs to gain entry to a partner nation, signal our will to support our partners, defend against regional threats, establish professional relationships through enduring engagements, foster a relationship of trust and mutual interoperability and respect, and establish a liaison conduit to facilitate the optimal employment of operational enablers to gain decisive advantage in combat operations.

In USINDOPACOM, the Marine Corps should evaluate whether to establish a permanent MSCT presence with the Republic of Korea Marine Corps, the new Japanese Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade, or other countries in the area with their own marine corps or naval infantry capacity. Alternatively, in USEUCOM, the Swedish Amphibious Corps, the Ukrainian Naval Infantry, the Finnish Coastal Jaegers, and the Baltic states represent partners with whom we should endeavor to be more interoperable.

The geo-political strategic impact could be decisive and significantly undercut our adversaries' efforts to undermine our alliance and treaty relationships. By inspiring our partners to fight as we do, we signal our mutual commitment and our ability to establish and maintain our relations before the onset of hostilities. Ultimately, we seek to prevent armed conflict by signaling our will, commitment, and readiness to defeating our adversaries' aggression. Such a flexible deterrent option is a huge asset for our Nation. (See Figure 5.)

MSCT Employment Costs

Here, we must ask two more questions. First, could the Marine Corps afford the operational impact of having MSCT personnel deployed to a key partner? Second, what financial impact would this have?

Marine Corps Manpower Cost. The answer to the first question is found in the balance between MSCTs and requirements. It is likely that the Marine Corps has a continuous need to deploy MSCTs to TFSW for the foreseeable future. We anticipate that sixteen MSCTs could maintain this support at a one-per-four-year deployment cycle, with each MSCT covering two

brigades and taking into account the fact that 4th Brigade, 215th Corps Afghanistan National Army probably has a less sizeable need for advisors because of its smaller size as well as allowing for some key Corps-level augmentation from a Marine Corps general officer, his select staff, and the headquarters elements of the MCAC units.

This TFSW commitment, assuming it continues at steady state, leaves a surplus of eight MSCTs. If used for one-year “boots on the ground” deployments, these teams could deploy once every four years. This means that two (if a full-sized MSCT is deployed) to four (if half-sized MSCTs are deployed) other continuous engagements could be supported with the envisioned MSCT force structure.

Therefore, we could continuously have two to four select militaries engaged in preconflict phase or “competitive space” maneuver. Thus, for a cost of 80 deployed Marines per annum—admittedly highly experienced Marines—we can fulfill much or most of the TFSW advisor mission and potentially achieve decisive leverage with key partners in Eastern Europe or the Far East where they face our regional competitors.³

Financial Cost. As to the financial impact, our analysis at MCAC A indicates that we could mobilize a MSCT for eighteen months for a twelve-month boots-on-the-ground deployment for approximately four million dollars. Therefore, for an additional margin cost of approximately sixteen million dollars, the Marine Corps could continuously deploy four MSCTs per annum and thereby assume most or much of the TFSW advisor mission and simultaneously develop potentially decisive relationships with partners such as Japan, South Korea, and other countries in the same area that share security concerns in the face of a resurgent China—or similarly in Europe where they face Russia.

The Risk of Not Employing MSCTs

Thus far, we have focused on the advantages of employing MSCTs. We now turn to the risks of not employing MSCTs. We first must examine

the more traditional realm of TFSW before exploring the lost opportunity if we do not engage our partners in USINDOPACOM or USEUCOM, who face threats from major regional competitors.

First, regarding the TFSW mission, if we do not establish a cadre of SFA professionals, we will underperform in the advising mission and continue to degrade our overall Operating Force capability by creating *ad hoc* advisor teams at the expense of those Marines’ parent commands. Certainly, we will send excellent Marines to conduct the SFA mission, as we have done for the past decade or more. But we will fail to establish the consistency and perfor-

We now have an opportunity to establish access and develop the relationships ...

mance inherent in a professional cadre of Marine advisors; we will continue to underperform as we have with repeated *ad hoc* deployments.⁴ Such Marines will not have the dedicated time to focus on their mission, attend the proper schools, and learn local languages and customs, and they will not have the institutional investment and championship needed to reward their own professional investments in SFA. Additionally, it is inevitable that there will be a number of Marines who prove unsuitable for the mission because of insufficient pre-screening.

Further, by not having regionally dedicated MSCTs, we will not immerse ourselves in the highly advantageous (but time and resource consuming) study of local languages and culture. Lacking such exposure and education in our teams misses the opportunity to send a profound message of respect and appreciation to our partners. By not adopting the MSCT concept, we are forgoing not only the opportunity to have a dedicated cadre of professional advisors but also the opportunity to es-

tablish bonds of trust and dedication so critical for lasting success in the human domain of warfare.

Second, regarding our MSCT deployments to USEUCOM and USINDOPACOM, if we forgo the employment of MSCTs early in the conflict continuum, we forfeit our opportunity to engage in early competitive-space or phase-zero maneuver and later will have to confront anti-access/area denial systems to get our key forces ashore. We would surrender our opportunity to take advantage of scarce pre-conflict time to establish bonds of trust and professional rapport with our partners. Without such bonds, integrating their forces into our scheme of maneuver or our enablers in support of their efforts will be significantly more challenging. We now have an opportunity to establish access and develop the relationships key to deterring and, if necessary, winning regional conflicts. We need to capitalize on this time now.

Optimization of the MSCTs

Although the MSCT is a valuable tool, it can be improved. First, we can improve the educational and training packages of its personnel. Second, we can orient MSCTs toward specific geographic areas to prepare personnel for their anticipated areas of operation.

Regarding the former, there is a current requirement that all Marines in a MSCT have the 0570/0571 Advisor MOS. The current curriculum for the 0570 MOS at the Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group, Fort Story, VA, is designed for advising at the lower tactical (e.g., battalion) levels. While this is a helpful introduction and essential as a foundation, it does not sufficiently prepare Marines to advise at the corps, division, brigade, service, or ministerial level.

The Marine Corps needs to examine this potential gap in training and offer a solution that addresses the training requirements to effectively perform higher-level advising for tactical units at the regimental level and above. Moreover, because MSCT personnel are Reservists, MCACs require additional funding to ensure that these Reserve Marines can attend this additional req-

uisite training. This additional training funding allotment is critical.

Regarding the second area of improvement, in order to capitalize fully on the development and exploitation of the human domain of warfare, it is necessary to have geographic, political, and cultural orientations for our MSCTs. MSCTs should orient toward particular areas of operation. Marines in these units could then focus their predeployment training to immerse themselves in the area's cultures, languages, history, or geography. These areas of operation need to be specific because one cannot

and lasting. If we can further develop and capitalize on this human dimension by adopting a recurring pattern of deployment to this same partner by a geographically aligned MSCT, we will have a potent warfighting enabler and deterrent on the ground when a cold war shows the prospect of turning hot.

Key Points Reviewed

MSCTs provide the Marine Corps with a flexible deterrent tool to meet many of the current and anticipated SFA missions in an optimal fashion by providing a professional cadre of regionally

will require a willingness to invest in the necessary language, culture, and operational skills as well as a commitment to employing these Marines habitually in key partner nations before conflict arises. MSCTs, as a low risk and high impact asset, will be universally welcomed by our partners' militaries. By investing now in establishing relationships with key partners, building depth, trust, and interoperability and improving their capabilities, we will be much better positioned and prepared to operate with our allies and partners should a conflict arise.

"It is essential to operational success that nominated advisors meet the requirements of the job description and mission, including experience, background, qualifications, and language proficiency."

**—Security Force Assistance Guide
per SIGAR 19-03 Audit Report**

merely point at USINDOPACOM as an area of focus. Each MCAC should break down its MSCTs into country or perhaps two-country focuses in order to get a significant return on area studies and familiarization. Therefore, each MCAC commander needs to deduce his likely geographic areas of employment and make his best calculation of return on investment therefrom.

Such training, particularly language training, takes time but is an essential part of building understanding and trust with our partners. As noted above, additional funding will be required to send our Marines to this language and cultural training, but if we think how valuable marksmanship training is to the rifleman, we will understand how important cultural and language training is to an embedded advisor.

Our SFA professionals should arrive with both a cultural and language understanding of their partner nation to foster mutual understanding and respect.⁵ We must endeavor for the relationship between the Marine Corps and our partner nation to be extensive

focused and trained military professionals who excel in their area of operations through linguistic, geographic, and cultural expertise. These professionals employ their extensive skills to build relationships essential to the human do-

... MSCTs provide the Marine Corps with a potentially decisive strategic advantage ...

main of warfare. Moreover, they will be in place during the early parts of the competition space phases of maneuver and will therefore overcome our potential foes' anti-access/area denial efforts to prevent the ingress of U.S. forces into partners' countries.

Additionally, MSCTs provide the Marine Corps with a potentially decisive strategic advantage if we invest in and employ them properly. This

Notes

1. The human domain is often referred to as the human terrain. For the purposes of this article, human domain will be used.

2. This article considers the MSCT to be deployable in a scalable fashion from approximately ten to the full twenty depending on the depth and breadth of the advising need. Additionally, if deployed to a non-permissive environment such as TFSW, a security element would also be required.

3. Advisors only. This manpower calculation does not include the cost of security and enabler support.

4. William Rosenau, Melissa McAdam, Megan Katt, Gary Lee, Jerry Meyerle, Jonathan Schroden, Annemarie Randazzo-Matsel, Cathy Hiatt, and Margaux Hoar, *United States Marine Corps Advisors: Past, Present, and Future*, (Arlington, VA: Center for Strategic Studies, August 2013).

5. The references that mandate linguistic proficiency for SFA advisors are numerous. See Joint Chiefs of Staff, *JP 3-20, Security Cooperation*, (Washington, DC: May 2017). See also *United States Marine Corps Advisors: Past, Present, and Future*, and its critique for the Marine Corps:

Our analysis of nearly a century of Marine Corps advising highlights a set of recurring challenges. Inadequate screening or selection of advisors, inadequate pre-deployment training, and language and cultural barriers were particularly recurrent issues.

