

Southern European Task Force



Bringing the Army Team to Africa

## Keeping Intelligence Professionals Engaged

by Lieutenant Colonel Michael Norton

### Introduction

LTG Scott D. Berrier, the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, G-2, challenged U.S. Army intelligence organizations to find unique ways to keep intelligence professionals engaged in their craft. With deployment opportunities decreasing after more than 18 years of combat operations, it is up to leadership at all levels to accept this opportunity and share institutional knowledge and experience with the younger force. Failing to leverage lessons learned will have detrimental effects on our Army.

Collective experience has taught us that human intelligence (HUMINT) collection is one of those skillsets that can deteriorate if not exercised continuously. The U.S. Army Africa (USARAF)/Southern European Task Force (SETAF) G-2X<sup>1</sup> accepted LTG Berrier's challenge and developed a program to effectively employ HUMINT collectors from U.S. Forces Command (FORSCOM) units using U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) delegated Defense HUMINT Executor authorities. This employment allows HUMINT collectors the opportunity to execute their craft supporting real-world operations, eliminating the need to be forward deployed. Overall, this will increase readiness while allowing collectors to remain operationally engaged.

This article identifies the process used to effectively employ continental United States (CONUS) based HUMINT collectors to answer Army Service component command (ASCC), combatant command, and national-level intelligence requirements in order to help set the theater in the USAFRICOM area of responsibility (AOR).

### Mission and Lines of Effort

USARAF/SETAF provides mission command, protects the force, sets the theater, conducts security force assistance, and supports joint and international partners in order to achieve USAFRICOM and U.S. Army Campaign Plan objectives. The organization executes that mission by focusing on six lines of effort.<sup>2</sup>

1. Strengthen partner networks.
2. Strengthen partner capacity.

3. Enable operations.
4. Maintain readiness.
5. Protect U.S. persons and facilities.
6. Set the theater.

As the USARAF Commanding General's senior intelligence officer, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, focuses on ensuring intelligence drives operations for the commander. This vision includes setting the intelligence theater. Nested in the overall plan, the USARAF G-2X has focused on increasing collection and collection opportunities by opening doors across the African continent. Currently, there are 2,078 U.S. personnel across Africa supporting numerous theater security cooperation events.

As the ASCC responsible for Africa, USARAF plays a critical role in setting the theater on the African continent by actively building partner capacity and executing theater security cooperation events. These events focus on ensuring our African partners can contribute to regional security throughout the continent. Working by, with, and through our various partners, USARAF is prepared to respond throughout the African continent to execute contingency operations.<sup>3</sup> Intelligence support to those engagements and our partners focuses on setting the theater. Setting the theater "describes the broad range of actions conducted to establish the conditions in an operational area for the execution of strategic plans."<sup>4</sup> We accomplish this task by employing intelligence professionals in garrison and in a forward-deployed capacity under the authorities of Title 10 (Armed Forces) and Title 50 (War and National Defense) of the U.S. Code.

To ensure successful operations, USARAF maintains communication with country teams across the 53 countries inside the USAFRICOM AOR in order to answer commander's requirements. In addressing this vast AOR, USARAF identified gaps in collection and used those gaps to open collection opportunities. The intelligence theater in Africa is immature; in order to establish conditions to help set the theater, USARAF recognized unique ways to address the problem set. Detailed below are those opportunities that have led to the employment of CONUS-based collectors.

## Foundation

In 2014, FORSCOM established a memorandum of agreement with each ASCC. This agreement allowed the ASCC to request and fund FORSCOM HUMINT collectors in order to execute operational missions in their respective combatant command AOR.<sup>5</sup> With the reduction in overseas contingency operations and newly assigned regionally aligned forces, FORSCOM HUMINT collectors were identified as being in a unique position to support operations at home station and forward deployed. This allows HUMINT collectors an opportunity to stay engaged and use their perishable skillset. USARAF signed the memorandum of agreement in 2015, and the agreement continues to serve as the foundational document for the successful employment of CONUS-based collectors.

## Identifying and Addressing Gaps

USARAF's mission allows for year-round engagements throughout the USAFRICOM AOR. An assessment of the theater revealed intelligence gaps, including that U.S. Army personnel were supporting missions across the AOR without receiving comprehensive intelligence support. One such unit is the ordnance company (explosive ordnance disposal) based in Fort Hood, Texas. This unit provides counter-improvised explosive device training to select African partners. The unit deploys from CONUS directly to the USAFRICOM AOR, conducts the assigned mission, and redeploys to home station. USARAF would then deploy HUMINT collectors from Vicenza, Italy, to Fort Hood, Texas, to execute col-

lection under the Foreign Military Intelligence Collection Activities (FORMICA) program.

Understanding the strain on resources, USARAF worked closely with FORSCOM and assisted in drafting an operations order that would allow for elements of III Corps, located on Fort Hood, to conduct the FORMICA mission on behalf of USARAF. HUMINT collectors, as internally tasked by III Corps, provide FORMICA pre-briefings to the unit before deployment. Once the unit returns from its mission, the same collectors then debrief the unit and begin the report writing process. Reports from this collection are routed through the USARAF G-2X for pre-publication review and publication to the intelligence community. This plan conserved resources by preventing expensive travel from outside CONUS while employing FORSCOM collectors in their own backyard. Most importantly, it directly answered LTG Berrier's challenge to keep the intelligence force engaged.

## U.S. Military Observer Group

The U.S. Military Observer Group serves as the staff agent for Secretary of the Army's Executive Agent functions providing oversight, training, equipment, logistics, and administration support to U.S. military observers, individuals, and special teams serving in United Nations missions. The U.S. Military Observer Group provides support to Secretary of Defense approved positions within six United Nations missions, which the Office of the Secretary of Defense has directed as the number one allocation requirement. Currently, there are six locations across the USAFRICOM AOR:

- ◆ United Nations Support Mission in Libya located in Tunis, Tunisia.
- ◆ United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali located in Bamako, Mali.
- ◆ United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic located in Bangui, Central African Republic.
- ◆ United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan located in Juba, South Sudan.
- ◆ United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo located in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- ◆ United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara located in Laayoune, Western Sahara.



U.S. Navy Photo by MC2 (SW/AW) Evan Parker

A Zambian soldier talks through troop positioning with a United States Army Africa regionally aligned forces training advisor during an ambush response training scenario. The training is in preparation for the Zambian troop's upcoming deployment supporting the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

These unique missions, spread across a continent that does not support intracontinental travel, presented a significant challenge for USARAF. How do we leverage these U.S. Army entities to help set the theater and answer commander's requirements? In working with the Military Intelligence Readiness Command, USARAF began employing the 337<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion (MI BN) that is geographically aligned to the USAFRICOM AOR. 337<sup>th</sup> MI BN collectors would travel to the Military District of Washington and provide counterintelligence and HUMINT pre-briefings and then subsequent debriefings twice a year. Many of the intelligence information reports from this collection opportunity have been briefed at the most senior levels of the Department of Defense.

### **Lack of Serialized Reporting**

USARAF, in direct coordination with U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), identified a significant gap in serialized reporting and developed a plan to address the deficiency. Executing worldwide authorities, USSOCOM is at the tip of the spear helping to shape the environment and deter violent extremist organizations throughout Africa. USARAF collectors are working with select organizations within USSOCOM, via a memorandum of agreement, to convert these interrogation reports to serialized intelligence information reports for publication and intelligence community consumption.

### **Units Involved**

USARAF G-2X personnel traveled extensively to engage commanders and staffs at multiple levels, including FORSCOM; III Corps; 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division; 504<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary-Military Intelligence Brigade (E-MIB); and 337<sup>th</sup> MI BN (Reserve) in order to "sell" the concept of keeping intelligence professionals engaged. While commanders were eager to participate, they had to find the right balance between this opportunity and steady state operational requirements. USARAF worked exhaustively to demonstrate the value generated from these unique opportunities and highlight the national-level impact of these operations. USARAF was assigned a regionally aligned unit from Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Currently, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, is filling this role. This unit provided HUMINT collection from a forward-based location on the African continent, at their home station in CONUS, and they sent a liaison officer to serve in the USARAF G-2X. The primary focus for the liaison officer is managing their unit's collection efforts. However, the USARAF G-2X creates professional development opportunities, including travel to the combatant command and to the African continent, to provide senior-

level mentorship to their deployed collectors. This relationship helps build well-rounded intelligence professionals for our Army. USARAF worked, via a memorandum of agreement, to engage many other FORSCOM units, including III Corps, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, and 504<sup>th</sup> E-MIB. USARAF has also been successful employing the 337<sup>th</sup> MI BN (Reserve).

### **Challenges Faced**

While the hard work and dedication of professional individuals result in the achievement of success, throughout the process challenges arise that slow progress. In hindsight, these challenges were minor; however, as with anything new, they made our unit pause to find feasible solutions. Detailed planning, open communication, and continuous refinement will allow the unit to address any challenge without affecting mission support.

**Operationalizing Regionally Aligned Forces.** The first challenge was specific to regionally aligned BCT employment and was a result of a lack of specified tasking from FORSCOM through the division, brigade, and specific battalions. The BCT would step in and provide internal guidance that was incongruent with the collection efforts the USARAF G-2X was trying to accomplish. Orders would flow from USARAF to the BCT, routed through FORSCOM, and each level would interpret them differently. This led to a delay in addressing the collection mission.

Initially, regionally aligned BCTs are not dedicated to the ASCC until they receive orders. They have competing requirements that must be addressed. Educating leaders at all levels was crucial to overcoming this challenge. It was clear that while the regionally aligned BCT was under the operational control of the ASCC, what was unclear and not defined was the technical authority to employ HUMINT forces. The USARAF G-2X worked with FORSCOM and the subordinate corps and division to ensure guidance was clear so as not to affect the mission.

In order to fix this in the future, we recommend the following steps. Once the command identifies the regionally aligned unit, the ASCC assumes operational control and is granted direct liaison; then the regionally aligned unit, in coordination with the ASCC, should conduct an internal military decision-making process and receive guidance directly from the ASCC. This approach will prevent misinterpretation of the higher-level commander's intent.

**Serialized Reporting.** The second challenge involved serialized reporting. The USARAF G-2X wanted to increase serialized reporting throughout the intelligence community by employing any collectors willing to execute the mission. Because the memorandum of agreement between the ASCC

and FORSCOM is not a tasking document, USARAF relied on FORSCOM to task their subordinate units to execute the mission. The authorities for collection were clear upon publication of orders assigning the mission. There were some additional opportunities, discussed above in the “Lack of Serialized Reporting” paragraph, which made the USARAF G-2X have to “sell” the bigger picture to each participating unit. Socializing these opportunities, down to the battalion level, provided an increase to participation and production.

## Recommendations

From an ASCC perspective, reaching out to FORSCOM and leveraging the memorandum of agreement is a great start to get more intelligence professionals engaged. If your unit is below the ASCC level, we recommend reaching up and finding a way to participate in the continuing development of your unit’s capabilities. Using live environment training opportunities via Foundry will help the unit gain reps and sets that directly lead to overall enhanced abilities for our Army. The author will work to establish a synchronization meeting across the ASCCs to facilitate the sharing of ideas, best practices, and lessons learned as they pertain to this subject. This synchronization will allow a more in-depth discussion on the topic at the classified level.

Increasing situational understanding and setting conditions for mission success are the primary goals of intelligence

collection. This focus ultimately leads to a better-informed commander and increases overall unit effectiveness. While each theater has its own unique challenges, many of these challenges can be overcome by exploring opportunities to increase collection. Capturing and sharing lessons learned will create a solid foundation by which our Army, and its Soldiers, can build on in the future. Employing intelligence professionals both inside and outside your organic unit will serve to enhance the force, maintain mission readiness, and keep intelligence professionals engaged. LTG Berrier, USARAF accepted your challenge and will continue to lead the way for our intelligence professionals. 

## Endnotes

1. The G-2X is the U.S. Army counterintelligence and human intelligence staff element.
2. U.S. Army Portal, U.S. Army Africa Intelink, accessed 4 November 2019, <http://www.usaraf.army.mil/>.
3. Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], 21 April 2014), 2-1.
4. Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Publication 4-0, *Sustainment* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 31 July 2019), 2-4.
5. Department of the Army, *Memorandum of Agreement between U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Africa for Mutual Support for the Conduct of Human Intelligence Operations*, 15 February 2015.

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