

2011

Beyond Brunssum

ANP Development

Why small investment and unity of effort are necessary to preserve the significant progress achieved in ANP development.



Figure 1: SIADS JFC Brunssum Jan 26/27 – Photo Brunssum PAO.

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Introduction

On January 25th 2011, the Strategic International Afghan National Police Development Symposium (SIADS) took place in Brunssum, Netherlands. At the close of the conference, it was acknowledged that “significant progress had been made in the development of the Afghan National Police (ANP) in a difficult security situation, while significant challenges remain ahead we must accelerate our efforts and there is a recognized need to balance the immediate security imperatives with the enduring requirements for a responsive, accountable and capable policing institution that can support and sustain the rule of law in Afghanistan”¹. As the Senior Police Advisor to the Deputy Commander Police at the NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan (NTM-A), I believe that this symposium was a very positive step towards highlighting to the international community a new spirit of cooperation. In order for continued, irreversible progress to occur, it is essential to maintain momentum by improving unity of effort and a commitment of all stakeholders to collaborate and coordinate on an enduring policing agenda.

By way of background, I am a Canadian police officer, and a member of our National Police service the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). I am deployed to Afghanistan as part of my country’s voluntary contribution to the Afghan police institutional development program. Since arriving in Afghanistan in September, I have had the unique opportunity of working as part of the NTM-A command staff as Police Advisor to Major General Stuart Beare,

the Deputy Commander of the NTM-A for the Afghan National Police (DCOM-P). As such, I am able to observe and interact on a daily basis with all stakeholders in police development at the strategic level. As part of my duties, I have the freedom of movement to attend every region in Afghanistan and engage with any police-related elements in the country. I have regular interaction with both primary programs within the NTMA-Police agenda; the Combined Training Advisory Group, who are responsible for all ANP training aspects, and the Police Development team, who lead the Ministry of Interior’s (MOI) institutional development portfolio. Having this insight has allowed me to observe the significant change that has occurred within the MOI and ANP. Being the only police officer on the DCOM-P command staff, I am often the point of contact with many of the stakeholders and partners in the policing agenda. I deal frequently with two of our key partnerships, the European Union Police (EUPOL) mission and German Police Project Team (GPPT). I also work on ANP mission related matters with a variety of police contingent commands and the Senior Police Advisory Group who are the police subject matter experts for the International Police Coordination Board.

My professional experience and time working in Afghanistan has given me a unique perspective on the state of the ANP, and why our recent conference in Brunssum was such an important milestone. It was an opportunity to showcase the significant progress in the ANP over the past 15 months, highlight the challenges that remain, and underscore the ongoing requirement for international support in the form of a commitment of skilled resources to successfully deliver on the ANP development

¹ Statement of the Strategic International Afghan National Police (ANP) Development Symposium – JFC Brunssum 26-27 Jan 2011.

program. Before assessing the conference and its outcomes, I would like to begin by briefly explaining the improvement that has been made within the ANP since the inception of NTM-A.

The Path to Brunssum

Much has been written on the state of the ANP prior to November 2009, so I will not dwell on the matter other than to summarize some of the key issues. Prior to the activation of NTM-A, ANP pay was poor, which encouraged corrupt practices and did not provide much incentive to become part of the ANP. Those Afghans who joined the ANP were recruited and assigned without being trained. Extremely low literacy rates were not being addressed in a meaningful manner. The ANP suffered high casualties due to lack of training and poor equipment. They also suffered from poor or often nonexistent leadership. ANP training was the responsibility of a variety of different groups, each of whom had their own agenda and varying skills. The training initiatives, while well intentioned, were often conducted in an *ad hoc* manner with no standardization. There was little focus on creating a program for transition to Afghan control and leadership. In short, there was nothing sustainable about the ANP. This resulted in high attrition rates and large numbers of untrained police deployed to protect the population. During this time period, based upon the limited resources in the police training mission, collectively we in the international community made numbers the priority and were not able to focus on the quality of Afghanistan's police force.

Since November 2009, with the formation of NTM-A, the focus has expanded from solely ANP growth towards increasing the quality of

police being trained and establishing the foundation to professionalize the police. A significant change was made in the model utilized to build the force. It became a *recruit-train-assign* model; one which implemented a basic training program prior to assignment. Pay was increased to provide a wage that was commensurate with the living wage in Afghanistan and to reduce corrupt practices. Afghan leadership development became a major focus as it was recognized without strong leaders the ANP will not be able to develop and sustain professionalization efforts.

I have witnessed how these measures have shaped the progress made within the ANP this last year. In terms of growth, over the past 15 months the ANP has increased in total strength from 94,958 to 119,000 and by October 2011 should be at 134,000². To illustrate the magnitude of growth, the ANP has grown the size of the RCMP, which has the strength of approximately 29,292³ employees and polices a population of 33 million; the same size as Afghanistan. There are now 37 training centers throughout Afghanistan that allow for local recruitment, assignment and training, which is an important factor when consideration is given to ANP retention.

Addressing the leadership challenge is evident in the NTM-A focus on Officer and NCO growth. Also in EUPOL commencing with the Afghan National Police Staff College and increased Officer courses at the GPPT partnered Afghan National Police Academy.

² NTM-A – ANP growth briefings.

³ "Organization of the RCMP". Rcmp-grc.gc.ca. 2009-09-14. <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/about-ausujet/organi-eng.htm>.

There has been substantial effort within NTM-A with our partner organizations to reconcile the need to increase the number of police officers required to fill the battle space against the need to improve the quality of the ANP. The literacy requirement is perhaps the most significant step towards improving the average patrolman quality. At present, 86 % of recruits that join the ANP are illiterate and innumerate.⁴ Without this important basic skill there will be no hope of professionalizing the ANP. When a patrolman cannot tell you how many fingers he has, count his rounds, or conduct a basic monetary exchange it is unlikely that they will be able to break the cycle of predatory corruption, or build the skills necessary to become a police professional. NTM-A is the largest adult literacy educator in the country, not by design, but out of necessity. Currently, there are approximately 21,000 ANP in mandatory literacy training per month and they receive 64 hours of training to achieve a grade 1 level. The pass rate is an amazing 87%.⁵ Once in the field, these ANP will receive additional mandatory literacy training when they return to the training base for further developmental instruction.

Most important to future ANP development efforts, I have observed a significant change in relationships between NTM-A and other stakeholders, particularly between NTM-A, EUPOL and the GPPT. As a police officer, I recognize that it is important that EUPOL and the GPPT are working in collaborative efforts with NTM-A because they provide the police

centric professional skill sets that the primarily military members of NTM-A lack. By working in partnership the small community of police professionals can focus primarily on ensuring their knowledge and expertise will be employed to the maximum benefit.

During the Lisbon Conference, held November 20th, 2010, the Heads of State and Government of the 48 contributing nations to the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan agreed on a clear vision for sustainable transition to greater Afghan security responsibility; which was backed up by the signing of a long-term partnership between NATO and Afghanistan.

“We have increased the size of ISAF to more than 130,000 troops from 48 nations, including vastly increasing our training and capacity-building of the ANSF, notably through the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan. Further building up the strength, equipment and capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces, which are improving in quality and are on track to reach around 300,000 by the end of 2011, is at the core of our mission and is essential to a sustainable transition. In that regard we welcome contributions made by individual nations that have enabled us to successfully meet ISAF’s current priority requirements for trainers, but underline that further requirements exist for the near future. We are therefore committed to meeting the challenge of filling the requirements for trainers, mentors and critical enablers for 2011 and beyond.”⁶

⁴ NTM-A - LTG William B. Caldwell IV and Capt. Nathan K. Finney, “Security, Capacity, and Literacy,” *Military Review*, January/February 2011, pg. 23.

⁵ NTM-A – LTG William B. Caldwell IV – Brunssum 26-27 Jan 2011.

⁶ Declaration by the Heads of State and Government of the Nations contributing to the UN-mandated,

With this in mind, Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum hosted an opportunity for NTM-A and the Afghan MoI to harness this international commitment and focus on helping to build the systems and institutions that the ANP needs to continue its considerable progress. The aim of the symposium was to highlight ANP reform efforts and identify the challenges that remain on the path to sustainable transition. The symposium agenda was also dedicated to discussing the way ahead for the MoI and the ANP as well as the roles and capabilities the international community and Afghan's can bring to this effort. I believe Maj. Gen. Stuart A. Beare summarized the symposium intent best, "Our goal is to chart a course to enable the ANP to evolve into a police force that is enduring, self-sustaining, and capable of protecting and serving its people. The conference has two aims. The first is for stakeholders to formulate a unifying vision of the Afghan National Police that leads to unity of action in our work together. The second is to reorient ourselves to a renewed roadmap that charts the way into the mid and long-term future of ANP development, and that drives us to undertake those shaping actions that need to begin and or continue today in order to allow that roadmap to succeed."

Brunssum's Impact on Unity of Effort

To inform and educate attendees of the symposium with current efforts in Afghanistan, the symposium was opened by the Afghan Minister of Interior (MoI), his Excellency Bismillah Mohammadi. He focused participants by introducing the international audience to his six priorities; "The first priority

NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

is training and education the second is leadership development; the third is fighting corruption; the fourth is improving the quality of living and working conditions. The fifth is the review and reform of the structure of the interior ministry and the organizational structure; sixth, a system for the rewarding of and disciplining the Afghan police."⁷

Over the course of two days, several keynote speakers, panel discussions and plenary presentations took place. These involved a combination of international experts and senior Afghan leaders speaking on a range of topics all relevant to developing institutions and police forces. Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, Commander of NTM-A, drove home his own priorities for the next year. He focused on his main priorities of professionalization, leadership development, the Afghan "*train the trainer*" program and literacy training. Lt. Gen. Caldwell used the example of an Afghan policeman who has served in Helmand Province for 10 years to illustrate the dramatic transformation of the ANP in last 15 months. To express his appreciation for the efforts of those involved in the ANP story, Lt. Gen. Caldwell stated, "The story of this policeman and countless other stories of the Afghan National Policemen and women could not have been told had it not been for the contributions of many nations and organizations represented in this very room...your contributions in trainers and in

⁷ Strategic International Afghan National Police (ANP) Development Symposium – JFC Brunssum 26-27 Jan 2011.

resources served as a catalyst for this remarkable progress.”⁸

Brig. Gen. Jukka Savolainen, EUPOL Head of Mission, spoke about the close relationship between NTM-A and EUPOL that has developed over the past several months. He spoke about EUPOL’s plan to deliver on the Women’s Police school in Bamyán, Staff College, Ministerial Development, CID Faculty and their strategic re-positioning to address complementary efforts in areas of professionalization and the shift towards civilian policing with a rule of law focus.

EU Civilian Operations Commander, Mr. Kees Klompenhouwer acknowledged the complex work of NTM-A, and confirmed the common vision for the ANP, its nexus with the rule of law and support for a continued EU role in this effort.

What I observed at the close of the conference was a pledge to “improve unity of effort and a commitment to coordinate, collaborate and cooperate across all stakeholders.”⁹ There was agreement that significant progress has been made in development of the Mol and ANP and that it will be important to maintain this momentum. The participants recognized that in order to reinforce success there is a requirement for sufficient qualified resources to sustain the progress. I also observed a commitment to supporting the ANP transition towards a credible and accountable law enforcement entity capable of providing

policing services within a wider Afghan rule of law framework for the Afghan people. To enable irreversible transition within the Mol and ANP to full Afghan responsibility and leadership by 2014 as was stated in Lisbon.

Beyond Brunssum - What does this mean for the future?

Leveraging the good will and understanding that came from Brunssum, the next year will see NTM-A focus efforts in close cooperation with all of our partners in the following areas; “Afghan ‘Train the Trainer’ program; accelerated leader development; building literacy and “vocational skills” within the ANP; inculcate an ethos of stewardship and develop enduring institutions, systems and enablers.”¹⁰

I have already observed indications of this renewed unity of effort. In ANP development, the Police Professional Development (PD) Board is an example of this collaboration and involves representation from the Mol Training Command, NTM-A, EUPOL and GPPT. This interim structure was commenced to support the Afghan Training Command to professionalize the ANP. Eventually the PD Board will be fully Afghan and will provide internal guidance from within to the Mol. The PD Board approved two very significant steps towards ANP development. The first is endorsement and approval of a standard Basic Police Training Program. This curriculum is unique in that it is a departure from the old lecture style courses that were brought over from the Kosovo mission experience and involves practical, hands on lessons. Working with all of these partners, the curriculum has

⁸ Strategic International Afghan National Police (ANP) Development Symposium – JFC Brunssum 26-27 Jan 2011.

⁹ Statement of the Strategic International Afghans National Police (ANP) Development Symposium – JFC Brunssum 26-27 Jan 2011.

¹⁰ CTAG-P - Navy Captain A. Topshee Canadian Forces – NTM-A Deep Dive February 11, 2011.

also been tailored specifically to the Afghan context with a strong effort to incorporate more policing skills. While, I and many other police officers in this mission would like to see the policing core skills increased even more, we must remember that there is only so much that can be done with low literacy rates. It will take time to build the base literacy to levels where solid police report writing and investigative abilities are realistic. The program is also prepared to expand and curriculum has been developed with an expanded course in mind to be implemented when the growth has reached a steady state. Of course, literacy is a heavy component as this is what underpins any professionalization efforts. The PD Board is a program that has come about as a result of Minister Mohammadi's priorities on training, education and leadership development.

Another significant milestone in the PD endorsed training agenda was the new "train the trainer" program developed by Mol in partnership with GPPT. This will become the standard for training a cadre of Afghan trainers and setting them on a course for developing long term, sustainable training capacity. These trainers will undergo a phased program that will allow them to develop their trade towards a master trainer or academy trainer level which will likely include some form of incentive pay. NTM-A has set in motion a course that will, if successful, add 900 more trainers to the training base by the end of 2011. This would place Afghans predominantly in the lead for ANP tactical training. This is a strong move towards a self-reliant ANP.

Today, CSTC-A/NTM-A provides the bulk of resources and heavy lifting for the recruiting and training command, but over the next year

the Afghan National Police Training General Command (ANPTGC) will be staffed by Afghans and partnered with coalition resources to provide the skill sets required to transition this vital piece of ANP institution over to Afghan control. As Lt. Gen. Caldwell has articulated, "In 2010 there was no training or recruiting command. Things happened because there were discussions, decrees and policies. In just a few short months we have made an enormous stride towards the formation of the ANPTGC which is a key to transition efforts."¹¹

In line with Minister Mohammedi's priority of Leader Development, EUPOL in partnership with NTM-A is building the Afghan Police Staff College and has commenced Provincial Commander's Seminars and District Commander's Courses. Collectively there has been an increase in Officer, NCO courses and specialty courses such as logistics, supply and transportation. All of these steps are working towards a shared vision of developing the ANP leadership towards self reliance and sustainability. As the Afghans take on more responsibility within the ANP training base, it will be important to re-mission our internal assets to address other areas of deficiencies in order to develop their overall capacities.

Conclusion

While these are just a few examples of the significant progress being made in the ANP, there are still many challenges. Developing enablers for the ANP requires skilled partnering in stewardship, accountability and areas such as logistics and supply. A significant amount of work must be directed towards the area of police policy development at both the

¹¹ NTM-A Deep Dive – Feb 11, 2011.

institutional and operational levels. Leadership development must continue. Corruption remains a problem that must be addressed to increase public opinion of the ANP.

With the anticipated ANP growth, it becomes even more critical that the right skill sets are applied to the police development mission. These skills are not only the province of police professionals. With the increase in ANP end strength it is imperative that the enabling functions are grown to allow the MOI and ANP to become self sustaining in the long run. A variety of skills ranging from human resource management to communications, supply and logistics are needed to keep this momentum on an irreversible path of progress.

Efforts must continue to reform the MOI and build upon the work that the Police Development team in conjunction with the MOI and international partners, are performing daily. Direct partnering to Afghan with principles is key. Many efforts within the ANP development program are enabled by mentors from the international community. This function requires a variety of skill sets and is something that will continue to require international commitment.

The Minister's six priorities are all focused inwardly with the purpose of reforming the Afghan Police Institution. As Minister Mohammadi continues to press these priorities, they will begin to change the police perception both from an internal and external perspective. They will also contribute to a more professional institution. These priorities are part of the revised Afghan National Police Strategy document and will influence the National Police Plan. I believe these are positive steps towards building broader institutional policies. It will be

important for the Minister to continue to operationalize his priorities and then set in motion the right implementation processes.

To continue building an enduring institution, we need to collectively focus international efforts on improving the criminal justice system. Police cannot function effectively in the absence of courts and prisons. With the police stakeholders pledging cooperation, coordination and communication in ANP development, the next step is to attain the same vision and collaboration with rule of law efforts in Afghanistan through a comprehensive approach of reforming the criminal justice system.

While Brunssum recognized unity of effort amongst all partners in ANP development, to accelerate progress towards a sustainable transition to the Afghans requires continued investment in subject matter experts and specialized trainers from the international community. Investment comes with a cost and can be dangerous, but the end result is a safe and secure Afghanistan with a sustainable police force on the road to professionalism.

About the author:

Superintendent K.L. Shourie is a serving member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Prior to joining the RCMP in 1990, he spent two years in the Canadian Armed Forces Infantry Reserves. He moved through the non-commissioned police ranks and received a Queen's commission in 2007. He has worked in a variety of policing functions including: Counter Narcotics, Anti-Smuggling, Organized Crime and Anti-Terrorism. He has served on one previous international mission in Kosovo with UNMIK. He volunteered to work on assignment in Afghanistan.

His awards include the Medal of Bravery, the Canadian Peace Keeping Medal, and the UNMIK. He also has a UN Commendation for Bravery.