



From the COMMANDANT'S desk

It is great to be a Red Leg Soldier! Our Field Artillery force has performed magnificently over the past decade of combat in proving once again your versatility and professional competence in supporting our maneuver commanders. Today's Field Artilleryman truly is the premier Joint and Combined Arms Soldier. You have earned the trust and respect of our maneuver commanders as an indispensable member of the combined arms team. Thus, it is with tremendous pride and humility that I assume the responsibility as your 50th Commandant of the Field Artillery School and Chief of the Field Artillery. I look forward to serving you as we continue to lead the best branch in the Army! The King is not dead!

I have published my initial priorities and strategy which can be read by logging into FKN at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/40842670>

In short, we are the Nation's premier Fires Force; organized, equipped and trained to employ and deliver Joint and Combined Arms Fires. Our priorities are growing leaders, global responsiveness, Joint interoperability, and to transform and sustain the force. Our strategy includes four lines of effort, which are organizing the force, training and developing the force, employing the force, and sustaining the force.

We are dedicated, both as a branch and school, that all commanders, leaders, and our Soldiers receive the best training, equipment and support possible.

However, during this time of fiscal uncertainty, we must work together in making critical decisions about our future force and future training and leader development initiatives. We simply will not be able to afford all we'd like. Our path forward must be charted with this reality in mind.

Some of our programs and initiatives are being affected by the furlough of our civilian workforce, such as the frequency of publication of this newsletter and frequency of our quarterly Warfighter Forums. However, these forums, although at reduced frequency, will continue to provide current and concise information on lessons learned, technical, doctrinal and operational changes and to gather your feedback on moving the Field Artillery Branch forward.

Open and frank communications between you and the training institution will remain a key ingredient to successfully facing the challenges of the future.

I will continue to seek new ways and technologies to promote both effectiveness and efficiency throughout the school and branch, while remaining fiscally responsible.

I'm confident we are on the right azimuth in developing the leaders of the future and the right materiel and organizations to support the maneuver commander in all unified land operations.

In this edition, there are two great articles I want to highlight. The first is about how critical Joint Fire Observers (JFOs) are to the fight {Page 2}. JFO's

are so important that within 12 months every Field Artillery lieutenant will graduate from the Basic Officer Leader's Course with a JFO certification. As leaders, I urge you to provide the appropriate emphasis and resources to sustain your JFOs' qualifications. The article outlines all the requirements and resources needed in order to accomplish this objective, and I know through proper preparation and planning the quality of all our unit-level JFO programs will continue to be effective and ready to go.

On {Page 4}, there is a great article by 5-82 Field Artillery on the importance of adapting the mission to meet current circumstances while downrange. Sometimes as leaders with multiple deployments under our belts, we get caught up in conducting "business as usual." 5-82's leadership did an excellent job of ascertaining what the current mission requirements were and adjusting the mission focus to reflect the need for change.

On a final note, our Field Artillery Soldiers and leaders continue to do great work. During my tenure, I look forward to hearing from each of you and working with each of you as together we build the Field Artillery force that remains, "The King of Battle."

*King of Battle!
Fires Strong!*

COL Chris Bentley

The Joint Fires Observer

Joint lethality at the lowest tactical level

Purpose: Founded in 2011, the *Redleg Update* provides past and present Field Artillery leaders with a monthly update of informational highlights to assist in their individual, collective and professional training efforts, as well as report on activities occurring throughout the Field Artillery community.

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<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/34549741>

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RFIs, Notes, and Notices: To submit a Request for Information (RFI), please email the POC listed below. The FA Commandant's Office will acknowledge receipt of RFIs within 24 hours and will attempt to provide an answer within 72 hours.

Points of Contact: We appreciate those who have provided announcements, notices, articles and lessons learned.

Additionally, if you have a story of interest or wish to initiate a discussion on any topic or issue facing the Field Artillery community, contact Mr. John Folland, (580) 558-0831, or the editor of the *Redleg Update*, Ms. Sharon McBride, Field Artillery STRATCOM officer, (580) 558-0836.

Hot Link Legend:

Green = Open Source on WWW

Red = CAC Card enabled
on AKO/FKN

“JFOs are critical to the distributed fight here in RC(E),” were the recent words of a Division Fires Chief ten months into his deployment to Afghanistan, and highlights the importance of the JFO to the maneuver commander. The JFO is a key member of the Fire Support team at the maneuver platoon level and within the Brigade Combat Team (BCT), and by definition can:

- a. Request, control, and adjust, Surface-to-Surface fires.
- b. Provide timely and accurate Close Air Support (CAS) targeting information to a Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC)/Forward Air Controller – Airborne (FAC (A)), or directly to aircraft when authorized by the controlling JTAC/FAC(A).
- c. Perform autonomous Terminal Guidance Operations (TGO).

The JFO works closely with the Terminal Attack Control Party (TACP) and JTACs, and are often the conduit to Joint Fires for his maneuver unit, whether performing as the “eyes and ears” for the JTAC during Type 2 CAS requests, or in many instances providing targeting information directly to the aircraft. It is imperative, and required, that JFOs sustain these important skills to remain qualified, and Fires leaders should provide the appropriate level of emphasis and resources to facilitate their JFO's sustainment of qualification.

JFO training sustainment consists of semi-annual currencies, annual academics, and an 18-month evaluation. Both semi-annual currencies and evaluations can be conducted either live or by simulation, and JTACs are not required to be involved (although recommended). Unit-level JFO programs, to include their respective sustainment training programs, are coordinated and supervised by a JFO-Program Manager and JFO-Evaluator, who are typically senior 13F JFOs designated by the unit commander to perform those duties {see *JFO Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)*}, dated 19 July 2010). The quality of the unit-level JFO program rides on the shoulders of these critical leaders, along with effective command emphasis/involvement throughout the organization. In accordance with the JFO MOA, semi-annual currencies consist of:

- Perform two Terminal Guidance Operations events.
- Perform as a JFO in support of two CAS events. This event begins with the JFO acquiring the target and providing targeting data to a JTAC/FAC(A) for a Type 2 or Type 3 CAS terminal attack control.
- Perform as a non-JTAC qualified individual in support of one CAS.



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- Perform one laser event in which the laser is used for target designation or terminal guidance of a laser-guided weapon.
- Perform one night target marking event using electronic marking devices (i.e., LASER, IR pointer)
 - Perform one abort.
 - Perform six surface-to-surface or naval surface call for fire events (at least one event must use the surface-based fire support format and at least one event must use the naval surface fire support format)
 - Perform one AC-130 call for fire event.

NOTES: If deployed, JFO currencies are good until redeployment. JFO sustainment tasks should be tracked via Digital Training Management System (DTMS).

An All Army Action (ALARACT 046/2013) message was published in March 2013 to increase leader visibility and emphasize the importance of maintaining JFO qualification and tracking. In addition to basic JFO information such as definitions, certification requirements, and sustainment training details, the ALARACT prescribes the following:

- Commanders are required to document the accomplishment of semi-annual training requirements in DTMS.
- Commanders must track JFO qualification status in the same manner as squad/crew/team/system

manning and qualification status when assessing the unit’s training level reported in the monthly Commander’s Unit Status Report (CUSR).

If an “operationally available” unit falls below the Army’s goal of 85 percent (T1) qualification of JFOs (L7 ASI), Commanders will report their JFO qualification deficiencies and forecast when the 85 percent standard can be met in the CUSR’s Training Remarks.

The ALARACT is simply a tool to amplify the topic across the Army. In order to continue sharpening the lethal Joint Fires skillset required maneuver leadership must be vigilant in (a) preparing Soldiers to attend the JFO course by conducting effective FIST certification, focused JFO pre-training for the “right” Soldier, and ensuring Soldiers complete the online JFO familiarization course prior to attending, and (b) being involved with, and enforcing effective JFO sustainment training. Leadership emphasis is needed across the Army not only to improve the JFO skills, but to increase readiness and enhance the Joint Fires team.

*** Documents such as the JFO MOA, ALARACT 046/2013, and the JFO Sustainment SOP can be accessed via the following link:
<https://cac.tkeportal.army.mil/sites/fcoe/JCID/JFO/default.aspx>

Doctrine & Tactics Training Division: 90-Day Schedule

SYSTEM	DATES	LOCATION	DIVISION / STATE	UNIT	TYPE of TRAINING	DTT Brief
PGK	17-19 Aug	Ft. Carson, CO	4 ID	2-77 FA	NET & DTT	17-Aug
M777	17-28 Sep	Ft. Campbell, KY	101 ABN	3-320 FA	Pre-MOB & DTT	TBD
CFFT	29 July - 2 Aug	Lake Charles, LA	LA ARNG	3-156 IN	NET	n/a
APMI	12-16 Aug	Ft. Bliss, TX	1 AD	3 BCT	NET	n/a
APMI	8-12 July	Ft. Indiantown Gap, PA	PA ARNG	56th SBCT	NET	n/a
APMI	30 Sep - 8 Oct	Ft. Campbell, KY	101 ABN	2 BCT	NET	n/a
APMI	15 - 25 Oct	Ft. Bragg, NC	82 ABN	4 BCT	NET	n/a
IPADS-G	5-9 Aug	Ft. Steward, GA	GA ARNG	1-118 FA	NET	n/a
PADS-G	15-19 Aug	Ft. McCoy, WI	WI ARNG	1-120 FA	NET	n/a
IPADS-G	26-30 Aug	Ft. Irwin, CA	CA ARNG	1-144 FA	NET	n/a
IPADS-G	26-30 Aug	Ft. Campbell, KY	101 ABN	3-320 FA	NET	n/a
IPADS-G	5-9 Sep	Camp Shelby, MS	MS ARNG	2-114 FA	NET	n/a
IPADS-G	10-14 Sep	Ft. Dodge, IA	IA ARNG	1-194 FA	NET	n/a
IPADS-G	17-19 Sep	Winchester, TN	TN ARNG	278 ACR	NET	n/a
IPADS-G	23-27 Sep	Houston, TX	TX ARNG	1-133 FA	NET	n/a

Enduring Artillery Fires in Afghanistan

By LTC William T. Johnson

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The 2011 announcement by the United States and other NATO members of a scheduled drawdown by the end of 2014 in Afghanistan led to a change in how we saw our mission. Increasingly, our role has transitioned from unilateral operations, to partnered operations, to ANSF-led operations with ISAF oversight. As we moved along that paradigm it became essential for the Afghans to have the confidence to rely on their own enablers, like Intel, Route Clearance, Aviation, Fires, as well as others, rather than those provided by ISAF. However, we quickly realized that to allow the Afghans to gain the confidence they needed in these enablers, we (ISAF) needed to conduct an intensive training effort to improve their competence on these systems.

The 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division was designated to deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as one of the first SFAAB (Security Force Advise Assistant Brigades), with the Brigade's mission being to Advise and Assist the Afghan Security Forces and focus on training specialty skill sets like Route Clearance and Fires. As 5-82 FA prepared for our mission, we made a conscious effort to align the right individuals with the right tasks, knowing that we would provide cannon fires in support of the brigade and also with the mission of training Afghans on their FIRES systems (Fire Direction, Gun Line, and Fire Support). This led to M777 new equipment training at Fort Drum, Centaur Training at Fort Hood, D30 Howitzer Training at Picatinny Arsenal, and intensive self-study on the state of Afghan Artillery.

FIRES academy at FOB Gamberi

Upon our arrival in theater in Regional Command East, we assumed oversight and execution of a fourteen-week FIRES academy at FOB Gamberi, Laghman Province. This academy was all encompassing, taking an Artillery Battery (Toli) that may or may

not have received formal training at the School of the Artillery (SoArty) in Kabul, breaking them down according to skill set (Fire Direction, Forward Observer, and Gun Line) and, starting with the very basics, to proceed roughly to a Table VI level of performance. While this level of training was necessary at that time to get to a standard base line across the 201st Corps, we did not want to stay in the heavy training cycle. Having received feedback from several Fires Brigade Commanders on how they had deployed training teams throughout the theater, and how these teams trained and in some cases certified Afghan Firing units, only to see the training and certification process start anew when the next Coalition unit transitioned to the battle space. It appeared we were in a never-ending cycle of Coalition-led training that never progressed to Afghan-led or sustainment training.

As we were wrestling with the problem set presented in transition from Coalition-led training to what would be at least sustainable and enduring partnered training, fortune provided us a tremendous opportunity. The Afghan School of the Artillery, at the coaching of its mentors, hosted a three-day, theater-wide Fires Conference at the SoArty in Kabul, to which it invited all Corps and BDE FSOs. All Corps participated with representatives and most brigades within those Corps sent representatives as well. I was also invited to attend, along with CPT Steve Chesser, 201st Corps FSO Mentor, and other mentors across all Regional Commands and Capital Division. The sharing of information among the Afghans and the CF Mentors made the conference a tremendous success, and it also proved to be very educational as I personally learned that over 2,000 Afghan Artillery Soldiers and 403 Officers had been formally trained at SoArty and that the Afghans



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had at least five published Field Artillery manuals: ANA 6-50 and the 3.9 series from 3.91 – 3.94.

New Training Plans

The awareness of these manuals led us to reexamine how we conducted our training plans. Because of the manuals' quality, we decided to go back to the drawing board and modify/rewrite all of our training plans across all three FIRES disciplines to mirror those of Afghan Doctrine. The rewrite was more of a modification than a redesign, as Afghan Artillery doctrine is a conglomeration of US, GBR, AUS, and other NATO countries. The one exception was the addition of the Afghan Gunnery Computer (AGC) to the training and certification process. This system which cuts mission processing time down from nine minutes to two was fielded after the development of their doctrine. FDC certification tasks developed utilizing this piece of equipment was drawn from the TM. Just as important, if not more so, this "new" training plan was, in name and content, an Afghan Training plan instead of a TF BLACK DRAGONS, TF WARRIOR, TF PATRIOT, or any other Coalition Forces plan. This proved helpful on several fronts and served a purpose for our Afghan partners and us.

Often, when units transition out of theater, the follow-on unit initially adopts their plans or training techniques but, over time, modifies them to the new unit's personality. While there is strength in continued refinement as we strive to make products better, this can cause confusion for our partners as training objectives and/or standards change. Having a set standard for CF to train from provides consistency to our training audience. Secondly, as this is a program based on Afghan doctrine, it gives us the advantage to gain buy-in from our Afghan Partners. Sustainment training and certification processes are sometimes tough to transition to our Afghan partners due to a cultural perspective on how they view (or don't view) the need for this kind of process. However, when you present them with a training and certification process that is rooted in their own doctrine, it becomes easier to get not only their acceptance but their endorsement.

A full scale IO campaign

As we drew towards the completion of the development of the adjusted training and certification plan, we launched a full scale IO campaign on SoArty, the 201st Corps ANA leadership, and brought in our higher HQs - Regional Command East and IJC. Leveraging the strengths of the hierarchical nature of the Afghan culture, we believed it was essential for the success of this program that it receive an endorsement from the SoArty. As the Afghans currently lack a branch specific proponent or formalized TRADOC entity, we viewed the SoArty's endorsement as the approval we needed to qualify this as an Afghan training and certification process. With the support of the Australian mentorship team headed by LTCOL Nick Wilson, who hosted us on numerous occasions and set up countless key leader engagements, we were able to get this endorsement from the Commandant of the School of the Artillery. We were then able to take this to the 201st ANA Corps leadership, namely the Corps FSO, and get his support in implementing this training and certification plan – and, more importantly, the commitment to provide the Afghan Instructors to conduct partnered training and certification. This allowed us to transition from the primary trainers, to the assistant trainers, to eventually an over-watch position where we just ensured standardization.

The requirement to keep higher headquarters informed has also provided us additional leverage, opportunities, and resources to help propel this program forward. Keeping the Brigade Commander and the 201st Corps Commanding General Mentor involved in the process resulted in their helping to carry the message of the program's necessity forward in their own individual engagements within the 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, the 201st Corps, and the Regional Command has led to invitations to brief multiple General Officers from the two Division Headquarters that have served as the RC-E headquarters during our tenure, the IJC CG and DCG, and participating as a guest presenter at an ANSF development VTC hosted by IJC. Present at that VTC was RC-N, who was look-



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ing for an standardized training and certification plan to train the Afghan 209th Corps. At their invitation we flew Mazar-i-Sharif in RC-N for several days participating in planning groups and office calls with two of their Deputy Commanders. The 209th ANA Corps was perhaps not ready for the certification aspect of the plan; the standardized training aspect was something they deemed of value. Several weeks later we sent a training team back to RC-N to train German Artillerymen on how to train the Afghans on their FIRES systems utilizing the plan we develop and tested in RC-E. After two weeks of training with us, the German contingent began training the 209th Corps.

Our Certification Plan

Perhaps more important than the acceptance of the plan by the Afghan and our own leadership, was the structural soundness of the training and certification plan. While we recognize the difference between training and certification, the program we have developed encompasses both, much like our doctrinal approach where you train through a certain series of gates and, when ready, you certify on a standardized set of objectives. We found in developing our plan that if we did not take into account the sliding scale of technical competence found within a Corps, let alone between Corps, we would have a plan that would only be right-sized for one Regional Command or worse yet only one Corps, thus defeating the purpose of developing this plan in the first place. We placed our certification and training plan into action to search for weakness and shortcomings as we conducted over ten training and certification events with our Afghan partners in all brigades of the 201st Corps during a four month period. These ten events proved to be invaluable as they helped us find weakness/shortcomings in the training and certification process and also let us determine that the overall structural integrity of the plan(s) was sound. If a Soldier, Gun/FDC section, FO Team, or unit could pass the certification, they could effectively employ their weapon system, the D30, in support of combat operations. This is not to say that certification in our lexicon is the same as it is in theirs. Although it does get individuals and units to a base

line standard, its end state is more focused on competence and confidence on the weapons system.

Scaling Back Our Presence

I titled this article “Enduring Artillery Fires in Afghanistan” because it is the theme I have used with the Soldiers of the battalion, the Afghans we train, and the senior leaders (both CF and Afghan) we brief. As the ANSF become more and more independent, and the Coalition continues to scale back its presence, our 155mm, 105mm, Rockets, Air Weapons Teams, and Close Air support will also reduce – the enduring fires in Afghanistan are not ours, but their indirect fire systems and the 122mm D30 howitzer is the bedrock of their systems. As the 201st Corps Commander, Major General Wazari, is often fond of saying “the D30s are my Air Weapons Teams.” They give him the overmatch he needs and the confidence his soldiers need to fight and win against the insurgents. To ensure that their systems endure they need to have a training and certification plan that is both acceptable to them and feasible for them to execute independently. While there are still refinements that need to be made, the plan that we packaged out of their doctrine can provide that standardize training and certification approach to ensure that Afghan Artillerymen are there when they are needed most – when we are no longer here.

The above article is just a broad overview of a more detailed program and process. Please feel free to contact me for a more detailed overview of the entire program. We also have digitally captured all of the training support plans and look forward to sharing them, thereby allowing for the refinement of our rudimentary program into one that continues to get better.

There are three groups that I would like to thank, for they were instrumental in allowing us to develop and execute these training and certification programs. First, 2-77 FA, 4th BDE, 4th Infantry Division - their hard work in setting up the Artillery Training Center, understanding of the D30 Howitzer, and the first class Relief in Place they conducted with us allowed us to advance this program. Second, LTCOL Nick Wilson (AUS) and his team at the Afghan School of the Artillery in Kabul - their invitations to the school house, access to and support for key leader engagements at the school, belief in this program, and tireless technical translation support made this a viable Afghan supported program. Finally, the Soldiers and Leaders of 5-82 Field Artillery - your dedication and belief in the process we developed and executed has already demonstrated an increased confidence and competence in combat operations and will have enduring impacts because you have prepared the next generation of Afghan Artillerymen to teach/train themselves. I am humbled to be counted in your number.

Warfighting Forums

The Field Artillery Warfighting Forums offer an opportunity for communication, collaboration, and coordination of the Army's Fires Brigades, SBCT, ABCT and IBCT Fires Battalions, Div/Corps Chiefs of Fires and the CTCs.

ABCT WfF – 30JUL13 13:30-15:00 (SIPR)

<https://connect.dco.dod.mil/hbctfabnwff>

SBCT WfF – 13AUG13 11:00-12:30 (SIPR)

<https://connect.dco.dod.mil/ssxviiigrp3>

SBCT WfF - (FA Breakout session) - 14AUG13
11:00 – 13:00 (NIPR)

<https://connect.dco.dod.mil/ssxviiigrp3>

IBCT WfF – 16SEP13 09:00-10:30 (SIPR)

<https://connect.dco.dod.mil/ibctfabnwff>

SBCT WfF - 13AUG2013 11:00 – 12:30

<https://connect.dco.dod.mil/ssxviiigrp3>

SBCT WfF - (FA Breakout session) - 14AUG2013
11:00 – 13:00

<https://connect.dco.dod.mil/ssxviiigrp3>

Knox, Hamilton & Gruber



Recognizing the Best Within Our Branch

2013 KHG AWARD MOI NOW AVAILABLE!



THE 2013 MOI DESCRIBING NOMINATION PROCEDURES IS NOW ON THE FAPO TAB OF THE FIRES KNOWLEDGE NETWORK @ [HTTFS://WWW.US.ARMY.MIL/SUITE/DOC/33296541](https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/33296541). NOMINATION PACKETS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE FAPO OFFICE BY 1 NOVEMBER 2013.