



Inside SWCS

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“Competent SOF cannot be created after emergencies occur”

Part 4 in a 5-part series about the SOF Truths: how they're applied in daily life at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School and in the nation's special-operations community



A U.S. Army cultural support Soldier, with Special Operations Task Force — South, speaks with young Afghan girls in Darvishan Village, Khakrez District, Afghanistan, June 10. The CST members serve as enablers, supporting U.S. Army special operations forces by engaging the female population. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Kaimana-Ipulani Kalauli-Mendoza, CJSOTF-A Media Operations Center)

By Maj. David Butler
SWCS Public Affairs Office

Special-operations forces are deployed to more than 50 countries. Prior to the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, SOF was deployed to more than 90 countries. Global, persistent engagement prevents large-scale conflicts and regional destabilization.

Special-operations forces have historically been our nation's low-cost, low-signature arm of diplomacy.

According to Maj. Gen. Bennet Sacolick, the commanding general of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, “Army special operations forces provide a population-centric, intelligence-enabled, people-focused capability that works with our allies and partner nations to develop regional influence, enhance global security and facilitate future operations.”

By keeping our force well-trained and educated, special-operations forces will be capable of preventing emergencies rather than responding to them.

“The knowledge and skills required of a SOF Soldier entail the same kind of effort and commitment as a professional athlete. Time invested in training and education is essential if SOF Soldiers are to be successful in meeting future challenges,” said Master Sgt. Larry DeBusk, an operations sergeant in the SWCS Director-

ate of Regional Studies and Education.

Because it takes investment to build a force that is capable of working indirectly, using a model of persistent engagement, we must prepare for and prevent contingencies well before they happen. One cannot build a capable, indirect engagement force after the need has arisen.

“Emergencies by definition require an immediate response by forces with the proper skill-sets to deal with the situation, because SOF is the force of choice for such a wide spectrum of missions and equally wide base of foundational knowledge and experience must exist within the force to be effective at dealing with the varied situations,” said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Daniel Wilke, the commandant of the Special Forces Warrant Officer Institute. “Knowledge and experience can only be gained over time; the broader the spectrum of response, the longer it takes to create an effective force.”

Each special-operations Soldier, regardless of career field, is assessed and selected based on the ARSOF core attributes. Once selected, all Soldiers undergo training in their military occupational specialty and extensive regional and language training. “Keeping the SOF community supplied with educated and regionally focused Soldiers is accomplished at the Directorate of Regional Studies and Education by providing quality training and education in the shortest amount of time possible,” DeBusk said.

As Soldiers progress in knowledge and experience, opportunities come available to further ARSOF Soldiers' reach and responsibility.

Coupled with the qualification courses and professional military education are numerous civilian education programs that with some personal investment can yield civilian degrees for ARSOF Soldiers. A Special Forces Soldier may also be appointed as a Special Forces Warrant Officer.

“Even the youngest warrant officer candidates have been through numerous levels of schooling and three years of operational detachment time to acquire the minimum knowledge and experience necessary to qualify for the program, with the average being an E-7 with 12 years in service,” Wilke said. “Following a 20-week tactical and technical certification course they are appointed with the expectation that they will continue to serve on an operational detachment for another five years, minimum, as well as attain or maintain their specialty, civilian education and professional development goals.”

Emergencies will occur and when they do, chances are that ARSOF has already done their part to mitigate the impact on our country. SOF Soldiers are expected to be prepared well ahead of our nation's needs. To be prepared they must be trained, educated and experienced.

“Most special operations require non-SOF support”

Part 5 in a 5-part series about the SOF Truths: how they're applied in daily life at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School and in the nation's special-operations community



U.S. Air Force Airman Kemp Tristian, with the 19th Special Operations Squadron, controls an AC-130 gunship aircraft operator sensor during Emerald Warrior 2011 at Hurlburt Field, Fla., March 9. The simulator is used to practice for real-world intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions. Emerald Warrior is an annual two-week joint tactical exercise sponsored by the U.S. Special Operations Command designed to leverage lessons learned from operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom to provide trained and ready forces to combatant commanders. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Erik Cardenas)

By Dave Chace
SWCS Public Affairs Office

Wrapping up the special-operations truths is the relatively recently added fifth truth: “Most special operations require non-special-operations forces' support.”

According to the U.S. Special Operations Command, the operational effectiveness of deployed forces cannot be, and never has been, achieved without being enabled by joint service partners.

“The support of Air Force, Army Marine and Navy engineers, technicians, intelligence analysts, and the numerous other professions that contribute to SOF, have substantially increased our capabilities and effectiveness throughout the world,” reads the SOCOM website.

For Col. Fitz Fitzpatrick, director of the Army Special Operations Capabilities Integration Center, this non-SOF support includes transportation, lodging, sustainment and some security when preparing for operations.

It also comes down to funding: the government allows a certain amount of money for uniquely SOF-flavored activities, training and equipment. The key is to invest these resources wisely, and use the Army's funding for common activities, training and equipment when appropriate.

At the ARSOCIC, Fitzpatrick's team continually

engages with the Army's Training and Doctrine Command and Combined Arms Center to ensure that SOF concepts are synchronized with Army concepts.

In SWCS courses, students are taught to understand and rely on those resources available throughout the Army, joint and interagency communities.

“The fifth SOF truth is specifically emphasized in intelligence training through the various courses we execute,” said Lt. Col. John Holevas, the commander of 6th Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne), which conducts intelligence training for SWCS.

“For examples, the Special Forces Intelligence Course must be fused with out joint and interagency partners to ensure that the 18F student is receiving the most current and relevant intelligence training available,” he said.

Intelligence students receive on-site training from the national intelligence community, which not only gives them the tools to operate the intelligence systems, but also develop personal relationships that they can reach back to for support whenever they are deployed throughout the world, Holevas said.

The 1st SWTG(A) Support Battalion manages the administrative personnel, riggers, mechanics, transportation specialists, chefs, armors, and electronic repair-

men who support all SWCS courses year-round so students and cadre can focus on the quality of their education and training.

“The addition of the fifth declaration to the SOF truths recognized the importance of the enablers and their contributions to mission success,” said Lt. Col. John T. Corley when he left command of the Support Battalion earlier this month.

“Not to mischaracterize [Adm. Eric Olson's] comments, he was speaking specifically about the joint services, engineers, intelligence analysts and the numerous other professions that contribute to special operations,” he said. “Nonetheless, I sense that it's appropriate to extend the precept to the officers, NCOs, Soldiers and civilians in the service of the Support Battalion.”

The fifth SOF Truth, is not, of course, meant to imply that this support relationship is a one-way street.

“General-purpose forces provide significant numbers of well-trained forces, fire support and mass that SOF does not have,” Fitzpatrick said. “And SOF provides regional expertise, language, cultural awareness and persistent engagement.”

In other words, non-special operations can benefit from special-operations forces' support, as well.



U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
14	15	SWCS Off-site Camp Mackall (Through Thursday)	17	CA & MISO Advanced Individual Training Graduation Ceremony 10 a.m. JFK Auditorium	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	Robin Sage begins