

**OPERATION WĀTEA 3**  
Senior National Officer  
**MINUTE**

SNO WĀTEA

03 May 2011

CDF (Through DSO)  
COMJFNZ

POST OPERATION REPORT: **PSR(IC)3** SNO OP WĀTEA

**References:**

- A. SNO WĀTEA Post Operation Report dated 20 Feb 10
- B. SNO WĀTEA Post Operation Report dated 14 Sep 10
- C. SNO WĀTEA Post Operation Report dated 29 Jan 11
- D. HQJFNZ OPDIR 221/10: Senior National Officer TF 81 Operation WĀTEA – **PSR(IC)3**
- E. CDF Operational Directive 21/2009 Commitment of NZSAS to Afghanistan – Operation WĀTEA dated Aug 2009
- F. Technical Agreement between ~~SECRET~~ ISAFSOF on Partnering with the Crisis Response Unit

**BACKGROUND**

1. This post operational report (POR) for Operation WĀTEA covers the period 12 Jan 11 to 17 April 11. It should be read in conjunction with References A - C to get a full picture of the 18 months of campaigning so far. This report will seek to build on the previous reports and will focus on key strategic, operational and tactical points affecting TF954. This in turn will paint a clear picture of the direction of the ANSF in the mid term.

2. In accordance with Reference D, **PSR(IC)3** arrived in Afghanistan on 05 Jan 11 and assumed SNO responsibilities on 12 Jan 11; he transferred SNO duties to <sup>PSR(IC)3</sup> on 17 Apr 11. Operation WĀTEA<sup>1</sup> is the unclassified name for New Zealand's Special Operations commitment to Afghanistan. Task Force 954 (TF954) is the Task Force's classified designator. **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3** the original designator of TF81 was changed on 24 Mar 11. This report will primarily use the term TF954.

3. The TF954 Mission is to enable the Crisis Response Unit's (CRU) operational capability and to disrupt insurgent threat groups in order to provide a sustainable security environment (adapted from Reference E). TF954 is mounted by and drawn

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<sup>1</sup> WĀTEA has several meanings including freedom and to make way.

primarily from 1 NZSAS Gp; it was an 82 person Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) until 17 April, when it reduced to a manning of 35 personnel. PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3

This base capability is enhanced with additional combat, combat support and logistic enablers. The key enablers for the reporting period were:

- a. an integrated PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3 NZDF all source cell (ASC);
  - b. a combat task element (troop minus) of Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) from 1 RNZIR. The vehicles were transferred to Op CRIBB on 13 Apr 11;
  - c. a combat support task element comprising PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3 a specialist search and explosive disposal team, and a doctor; and
  - d. a logistic task element (Troop) commanded by a Capt S4.
4. TF954 is responsible for partnering the Afghan Ministry of Interior's CRU. The basis for this is a technical agreement between ISAF Special Operations Forces and MOI (Reference F). CRU is widely recognised as one of three National Level special policing units in the MOI.<sup>2</sup>

## STRATEGIC THEMES

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### Key Strategic Themes

5. The following observations are based on having spent 11 of the last 14 months in theatre with Operation WATEA. They are design to give a current feel to the war as the summer fighting season of 2011 approaches and address some of the key issues with Afghanistan as a whole and TF954's area of influence.

6. **Summer of Fire** The key operational question within Afghanistan as summer approaches is whether the significant gains made by ISAF and ANSF over the last winter can be retained. There has been significant degradation of insurgent (INS) strongholds, bunkers and caches particularly in the south of the country. Areas such as Sangin which used to have major freedom of movement restrictions due to IEDs now experience regular vehicle patrols. Around Kabul and the six surrounding provinces TF954, along with other coalition SOF have continued to pressure the INS networks. Kabul's 'security bubble' is increasing, and over the last four months TF954 has conducted operations in areas that last year would have been considered INS safe havens and therefore untenable. INS leadership has recognised that during the last twelve months they have lost the initiative, and are working hard to regain it. Intelligence shows INS leadership recognises the importance of Kabul and has allocated money and resources in order to degrade the populace's opinion of Kabul security. This strategy has manifested itself in the recent upsurge in suicide bombings in the area. It is yet undecided if the INS have the human resources to maintain this

other ISAFSOF

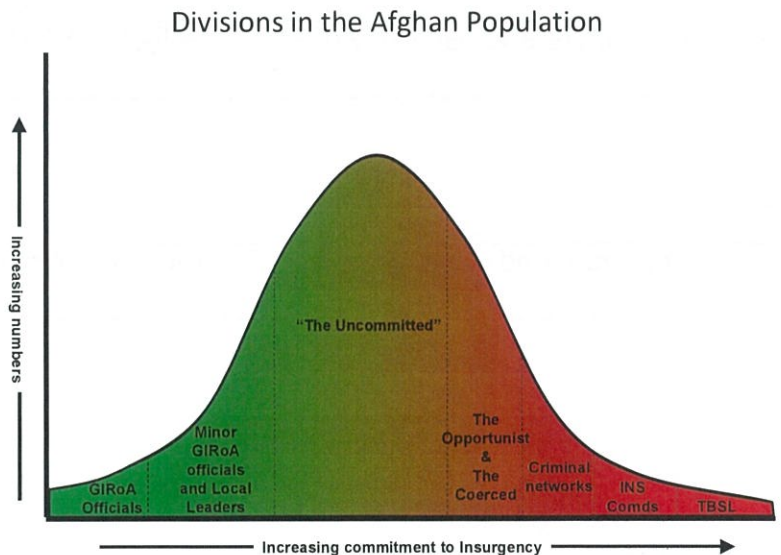
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<sup>2</sup> The other two units are Commando Force 333 and Task Force 444. Both units have been mentored by PSR(S)1  
PSR(S)1

tempo of suicide attacks. The next eight months will be an important period of the war and possibly its crux. If ISAF and the ANSF can retain the majority of its security gains over the coming summer before consolidating again in the winter of 11 /12, it will make it even harder to the INS to come back, and may produce a tipping point in the campaign for reintegration.

7. **Reconciliation and Reintegration.** Reconciliation and reintegration are gaining increasing importance as means of defeating the INS, and have been defined as COMISAF's priorities. On July 2010 President Karzai committed to supporting the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) at the Kabul Conference, this in turn gave ISAF the impetus to develop a number of organisations, including the Force Reintegration Cell (F-RIC), to formalise the process. Reconciliation is the process in which an Insurgent movement as a whole reaches a political accommodation with GIRoA. Reintegration is the term given to taking a fighter out of the fight, with them opting out of the insurgency and peacefully rejoining their communities.<sup>3</sup> The reintegration process is aimed at the uncommitted insurgent, and aims to employ ANA and ANP forces who have cultural, familial or tribal links with members of the Insurgency. It is assessed that approximately 85% of the INS are not ideologically driven and fight reasonably close to populated areas. The process is considered an offensive tool in achieving an accelerated peace process, because it removes INS from the fight. It is also promoted as effective because it cuts the traditional Afghan cycle of violence that occurs when INS are killed or detained. The Afghan code of *Pashtunwali* requires ~~SECRET~~ from the INS family to take up arms in order to revenge the death or incarceration.

8. The emphasis of reintegration is not on surrender but a message of reintegration centered on grievance resolution, honor and dignity.



<sup>3</sup> Terms defined from FRIC presentation 29 March 2011.

9. TF954 has a role to play in reintegration despite the fact it does not hold ground, or have established links with any one community. TF954's kinetic operations are an important tool in placing pressure on the INS causing fatigue of war. Successful SOF kinetic operations combined with a developing ANSF footprint have encouraged many non-ideologically driven INS to reassess their options and initiate the reintegration process. This is a significant area for exploitation given that it is assessed that a medium level HIG leader in the Wardak province initiated talks partly in response to TF954 operations in the area. As at Feb 2011 there were 641 INS in the program. More importantly there are estimated to be between 2000 and 4000 in discussions about reintegration.<sup>4</sup> On average it takes six months of talks before an INS commits to reintegration and many of the INS in dialogue are waiting to see how current reintergrees fare before committing to the program. APRP is not a panacea for the Afghan conflict but it has the potential to be a significant influence in forcing the INS to the negotiating table.

#### Key Operational Themes

10. PSR(S)1

Discussion on structure and capability of ANSF, including NZ mentoring role

11. PSR(S)1

Discussion on structure and capability of ANSF, including NZ mentoring role

12. PSR(S)1

Discussion on structure and capability of ANSF, including NZ mentoring role

PSR(S)1

13. Discussion on structure and capability of ANSF, including NZ mentoring role

#### Mentoring: Summation of CRU Capability

14. **Personnel.** The Crisis Response Unit manning currently remains relatively constant at 95-98% of its MOI Establishment (Tashkil) of <sup>PSR(S)1</sup> personnel. The operational squadrons continue to grow slowly towards full manning. In May 11 the next round of Tashkil amendments are expected to be announced. CRU has submitted a proposal for the Islamic Solar year 1391 with an increase in manning to personnel. This sees an increase in logistics capability and a dedicated guard force to protect PSR(S)1, plus a number of smaller initiatives. The recent development by TF954 of an PSR(S)1 should allow CRU to manage its personnel more effectively. Annex A shows the ethnic and geographical breakdown of CRU personnel, data which has been rendered accessible PSR(S)1

15. **Trained State.** CRU is now capable of conducting unilateral operations of low complexity. Recent acquisitions of <sup>PSR(S)1</sup>, Russian AK47s and PSR(S)1 have enabled a recent capability leap. Since then CRU has demonstrated a consistent ability to move PSR(S)1 to the target, <sup>PSR(S)1</sup> independent tactical move cordon, clear the target and conduct exploitation. While there is still room for refinement, this demonstrates a pleasing progress towards the full spectrum of unit functions. The focus will now reorientate to developing CRU capability on complex unilateral operations. Annex B notes further details of future CRU initiatives.

16. **Sustainability.** CRU sustainability continues to advance. The PSR(S)1 PSR(S)1 equipment for CRU approved by the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) continues to arrive with the majority expected by Jul 11. As a result mentoring for CRU Headquarters has switched to a focus on logistics and management processes to ensure correct maintenance and employment of the equipment.

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PSR(S)1

17. **PSR(S)1** Construction on CRU's new camp in the Kabul district of <sup>PSR(S)1</sup> continues. There have been some delays with roofing steel stuck on the AFG/Pakistan border for a period of time. Tempo on the site has increased with the consistent warmer weather, and the construction company is working hard to make up lost time. It is estimated that the completion of Phase 1 will occur sometime in Aug 11. Construction is unlikely to go beyond mid Sep 2011, which is the contracted date for completion. It is estimated that the construction company will definitely attempt to meet this date in order to avoid financial penalty. Once Phase 1 is complete, CRU and an increased TF954 Embedded Mentoring Team will occupy the camp. Phase 2 will then begin and includes ten more buildings being constructed within the camp environs in order to provide the infrastructure required for a unit of CRU's size. Currently Phase 2 is in the process of final CSTC-A approval before going to tender. Phase 3 involves the construction of a **PSR(S)1** Training Facility beside the camp. The construction of these elements is by no means confirmed with a shura required to be held with local leaders for community approval. The responsibility for this has been placed with the Ministry of the Interior and it is anticipated that this will occur over the next three months.

18. Under the current construction of **PSR(S)1** camp no provision has been made for any aspect of ETT infrastructure. This is the standard ISAF protocol with mentor nations expected to provide for this under their mission mandate. A piece of ground within **PSR(S)1** Camp has been set aside and temporary accommodation, living and work spaces will be constructed close to ~~SECRET~~ completion date. Plans for the **PSR(S)1** ETT area have been forwarded to HQ JFNZ for approval.

#### OTHER KEY OBSERVATIONS

##### Command and Control.

19. The command and control system designed for Op WATEA continues to work well. Priority reporting going straight to the Director Special Operations has remained critical. During the reporting period TF954 on numerous occasions has required a number of rapid approvals from CDF to conduct operations or complete tasks.

20. **Detention** The deployment saw the first detainee captured independently by NZ Forces for a number of years. The detainee is currently being held in the Detention Facility in Parwan (DFIP). The DFIP is jointly run between the US and GIRoA with plans in the future to transfer all authority to GIRoA. The procedure for CDF authorisation to conduct the transfer between TF954 and US forces worked smoothly, with approval received within two hours of request. This was despite the request being processed at approximately 0100 NZ time. The handover of the detainee to the interim Battlefield Detention Facility proceeded without incident, however the subsequent transfer to the DFIP was impeded by the absence of an MOU with the US. The point was rectified in respect of the detainee, however no overarching MOU is in place in respect to future detainees. Furthermore the responsibility for ongoing monitoring of the detainee has not been definitively allocated. The Ambassador and TF954 have to date shared responsibility for the detainee. Formalisation of monitoring responsibilities would be beneficial, noting that MFAT originally was lead agency in respect to all

matters pertaining to detainees within theatre, with material support provided from TF954.

21. **Manning** Recently the posting of a NZDF officer to position of GDPSU J7/8 mentor was formally approved by CDF. This is a progressive step and ISAF SOF command was very supportive of this decision, which allows New Zealand to remain engaged in the direction of an important ANSF operational headquarters.

### Intelligence

22. **Burnham Fusion Cell** Over the last eighteen months the All Source Cell (ASC) has proven to be an effective model for developing real time intelligence targets. The challenge ahead for future deployments is to maintain the maximum level of capability with reduced manning as part of TF954 downsizing. The creation of a Burnham Fusion Cell to provide supporting capability from New Zealand will be a vital aspect in ensuring operational tempo in theatre. The use of a remote site is also a significant milestone in <sup>PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3</sup> capability, and has considerable relevance in future NZDF operational deployments. The creation of the Burnham Fusion Cell is a positive move but will provide challenges. **PSR(S)1**

such as the tyranny of distance, responsiveness and precision of information. In order to assist this capability development TF954 has developed a first draft of SOP's for the operation of an ASC and effective target processing.

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23. **PSR(S)1**

Discussion of development of a particular intelligence capability to analyse collected tactical information.

The development of an <sup>PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3</sup> inside Burnham Fusion Cell to expand and develop networks would be a major benefit in identifying and defeating INS networks.

### Medical

24. During the conduct of operations TF954 suffered one serious casualty who required repatriation back to New Zealand. The strategic Air Medical Emergency (AME) infrastructure within theatre proved to be efficient and technically competent. There is no anticipated requirement to change the processes and emergency treatment and evacuation can be employed with some confidence if required in the future.

### Operations

25. **Warrant Based Operations** Over the last eighteen months TF954 has started a number of theatre wide initiatives. The most far reaching of these has been the use of Warrant Based operations with the CRU to promote the Rule of Law within security operations. Employing an Afghan Security Force lead promotes transparent

application of law to improve security, which in turn develops GIRoA legitimacy in the eyes of the populace. Over the last six months this approach has been embraced within ISAF SOF, and is now the established form of conducting operations. What was once considered a unique approach is now expected, and has begun to permeate out into the operating procedures of conventional battle space owners. For example, Deliberate Detention Operations (DDOs) with the ANSF have been replaced by High Risk Arrests (HRAs). These positive steps towards emphasising Afghan Rule of Law are a tangible demonstration that the emphasis on ANSF providing organic security through a legal framework is starting to take hold.

26. **Drawdown.** TF954 has now reduced in size to a contingent of approx <sup>PSR(S)</sup> personnel. Such a reduction presents a number of challenges and opportunities. The emphasis of the CRU relationship will now move away from partnering/mentoring toward a true mentoring/observing relationship. This will force the CRU to take more responsibility for its day to day function and the conduct of its operations. Such an approach will have its challenges and not be without setbacks. In reducing its footprint in order to promote its partner unit, TF954 is leading ISAF SOF and the wider theatre. Success in this area will further raise the profile of TF954 and the wider NZDF while reinforcing its reputation for proficiency in mentoring and COIN. Confirmation of the new challenges facing TF954's drawdown is not expected to occur until after three to four weeks of operations. It is recommended that consideration be given to reinforcing TF954 with one or two key staff on request to meet any unforeseen challenges or take advantage of a mentoring opportunity. ~~SECRET~~

27. **Op Tempo** Over the last six months TF954 has been able to maintain a high operational tempo despite the traditional slow winter period. This has occurred due to a variety of reasons. The mild winter allowed the INS greater freedom of movement which as a result ensured targeting opportunities for TF954. After eighteen months in theatre TF954 has achieved a high level of efficiency and corporate knowledge within the theatre enabling the Task Force to maintain its tempo. Finally and most importantly, relationships developed previously within the MOI investigative branches are paying dividends, providing intelligence and approvals to conduct operations. As summer approaches it is assessed that the combination of these factors will ensure TF954 and CRU's operational tempo remains high.

28. **LAV** During the deployment HQJFNZ directed that TF954 transfer their 3 LAV to Bamyán, which subsequently occurred on 13 Apr 11. Theatre wide decisions are made with a view to achieving strategic outcomes which a individual task force is not privy to. That said, the LAV provided a major capability to TF954 and was used in over <sup>PSR(S)2, PSF</sup> of all operations. A prudent suggestion is that after a period of time SNO CRIB reassesses his requirement for eight LAV. If there is an opportunity for a reallocation of two/ three LAV TF954 would immediately incorporate them back into their operational configuration where they would provide a welcome operational capability.

## Logistics and Finance



29. The effectiveness of Op TROY as a node to access goods into theatre took a dramatic drop with the departure of the **PSR(S)1** in 2010. Delays in receiving freight due to the inability to move it from **PSR(S)1** had a significant negative effect on the tempo and performance of the contingent. **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3** Depending on the NZDF strategic plan for deployment to AFG it is recommended that a possible alternative node with greater access to coalition aircraft is sourced.

## CONCLUSION

30. This report has provided strategic and functional observations. It has noted that the gains made by ANSF and ISAF over last winter will be overtly challenged by the insurgency in the coming months. It also notes the importance of reconciliation and reintegration and the part TF954 can play in its uptake. The operational changes mooted for CRU's higher headquarters the GDPSU were discussed as was the effect it will have on CRU. This included the development of Provincial Response Companies and the GDPSU Training Centre at **PSR(S)1** camp, the most important of which are noted in the recommendations below.

## Recommendations

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31. It is requested that addresses:
- a. **Note** the likelihood that TF954 will lose its CRU **PSR(S)1** training base in early 2012 as GDPSU appropriates it for its training centre. CRU will look to continue training at **PSR(S)1** and with CF 333 at **PSR(S)1** in Logar;
  - b. **Note** the requirement for TF954 to fund an enlarged Embedded Training Team facility as part of the move to **PSR(S)1** Camp with CRU;
  - c. **Note** the benefit in developing an overarching MOU between NZ and US in respect to future detainees;
  - d. **Direct** definitively allocated responsibilities between MFAT and NZDF for monitoring detainees in Afghanistan;
  - e. **Note** **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3** ;
  - f. **Consider** reinforcing TF954 with one or two key staff on request in order to meet an unforeseen capability deficiency, or seize a mentoring opportunity as part of the drawdown;

- g. **Review** after a period of operations the requirement for Op CRIB to employ eight LAV, and if there is a surplus consider reallocating some to TF954; and
- i. **Note** the reduced effectiveness of Op TROY as an access node to Afghanistan **PSR(S)1**

32. OP WATEA 3 has continued to build on the successes established by its predecessors. The period covered by this report has seen clear capability leaps by CRU towards an ability to conduct complex unilateral operations and respond effectively to the insurgent threats within Afghanistan. TF954 has continued to work hard to assist the CRU within the ISAF SOF construct. In the coming months TF954 will look to maintain operational momentum while promoting CRU's self determination.

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Annex:

- A. CRU Ethic Data
- B. TF954 Key Initiatives for CRU March 11 – March 12

CRU ETHNIC DATA

PSR(S)1

CRU pers distribution by ethnicity

PSR(S)1

### TF954 KEY INITIATIVES FOR CRU MAR 11- MAR 12

**Literacy.** After 18 months of mentoring the CRU unit capability construct is now at a level it requires literate soldiers to comprehend and apply the more complex processes. Areas such as written orders, property books, and vehicle running sheets all require universal literacy to be truly effective. TF954 has instigated permanent literacy training within the CRU with a view to having every man at minimum High School entry level within two years. This ambitious program would place CRU in the top tier of literate units within the ANSF.

**Command and Control.** As more and more responsibility is placed on CRU to conduct complex unilateral operations there is a requirement for procedures to ensure a minimum standard of operation. In order to ensure this development TF954 is instigating a number of command and control initiatives. Junior leaders will receive formal leadership training, orders formats will be taught along with basic mission analysis. From a control perspective a functioning operations room will be developed. CONOPs will be drafted by the CRU and transferred electronically to the higher Headquarters for approval. ~~SECRET~~

**Unilateral Operations.** The CRU can conduct unilateral operations at the lower end of the complexity spectrum. Vehicle and foot navigation including map reading is the last major capability hindering CRU's move into more complex operations. This has been identified as a priority training skill set.

**Pay.** Currently the CRU personnel are paid the same amount as a traffic policeman or a regular member of the ANP. This situation does not realise the amount of intense training required to qualify as a CRU, nor the continual deployment on dangerous operational missions. Currently there is a formal proposal in front of NTM-A to have CRU remunerated equal to the ANA SF. The process has progressed and it is hoped that a decision will be made by June 11.

**Selection.** One of the key aspects of developing capability and sustainability within the CRU is to increase the quality of its human capital. In order to achieve this, a basic selection process will be introduced from Jun 2011. It will be designed to objectively ensure only committed individuals begin the training to become CRU operators. It is assessed that among other aspects, assessments will include literacy, fitness, health, security clearance and an opiate test.