

# AN I EXPERIMENT



**ODA 7224**  
Village Stability Operations

by Michael E. Krivdo

## Village Stability Operations (VSO)

In Afghanistan, the original concept was known as the Community Defense Initiative (CDI). CDI was also later referred to as the Local Defense Initiative (LDI), but by the time the concept matured was called Village Stability Operations (VSO). Therefore, for the sake of clarity VSO is used throughout this article.

When he first saw the child in the long line of patients, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Dan A. Marvin\* (pseudonym), junior Special Forces (SF) Medical Sergeant, knew that this was the most serious case he would see today and that the boy might not survive. Malik, about two years old, had fallen off the roof of his house a few days earlier and his condition had gradually declined. Now he was listless and unresponsive, with a massive bulge protruding from his skull. SFC Marvin\* diagnosed hematoma and brain trauma. He “didn’t appear to see anything, he wouldn’t track with his eyes, couldn’t get much of a response from his pupils” said Marvin\*.<sup>1</sup> The child had paralysis on the left side of his body, a symptom that was consistent with the damage to the right side of the skull. Malik’s desperate father, hearing that Americans were providing medical treatment in Nili village, carried his lethargic child about 50 kilometers hoping they could help. As the soldiers of Operational Detachment - Alpha (ODA) 7224 realized the seriousness of Malik’s injuries, they moved into action to save his life.<sup>2</sup>

SFC Marvin\* and the senior SF Medical Sergeant, SFC Josiah Monza\*, stabilized the child, cleaned his injuries, and made him comfortable. Other team members explored options to evacuate Malik for major trauma surgery. Without surgery the boy would die. The Afghans had no hospital with the capability to perform delicate surgery outside Kabul, and the closest military facility with the means to treat Malik’s injuries was in Kandahar, 400 kilometers to the south. And neither the district nor province officials had the means to medically evacuate (MEDEVAC) a patient that distance. Coalition forces were initially reluctant to evacuate an Afghan not injured in combat. When SFC Marvin\* notified the ODA Team Leader, Captain (CPT) Mike L. Bourne\* Jr., of the situation, Malik’s care became a priority. Their actions (or inaction) were being judged by the people of the region. Since the ODA was to forge good relationships with the villagers, Malik’s critical condition was an ideal platform.<sup>3</sup>

Working through the higher headquarters, the senior Weapons Sergeant, SFC Brad D. Rendition\*, a qualified Joint Tactical Aircraft Controller (JTAC), arranged for a passing helicopter to fly Malik and his father to Kandahar. On arrival, Malik was rushed to a U.S. military surgical unit where a neurosurgeon operated to relieve the pressure on his brain and repair the damage. The operation took place just in time; the swelling subsided and he became more alert and aware of his surroundings. Within days the paralysis began to dissipate, and feeling and mobility returned to his left side.

Malik’s case attracted the attention of Cable News Network (CNN) commentator and neurosurgeon Dr. Sanjay Gupta, who had been reporting on the war and visiting medical facilities. Dr. Gupta saw the child, heard the story, and publicized Malik’s splendid recovery. He also accompanied the boy and his father back to Nili. International television covered the event, highlighting the life-saving efforts of the SF ODA. The boy’s father, Khodadad, was ecstatic: “God answered our prayers, God sent someone to save my son.” The act of kindness bolstered trust and earned the esteem of the local villagers. These Special Forces soldiers could be counted on in time of need.<sup>4</sup>

This article examines Army SOF’s first deliberate experiment with Village Stability Operations (VSO) in Afghanistan, an event that marked a dramatic change in the SOF role. It explains how the concept came about, its goals, and what SOF planners were hoping to achieve. In particular, it focuses on ODA 7224’s actions in that situation and how their experiences shaped the future expansion of the program. How ODA 7224 prepared and adapted were key. The SF soldiers thrived on the challenges of the new mission. Despite limited information about their area they soon became experts on the region. They anticipated requirements, understanding the need for integrating Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations into their efforts. The ODA exercised good initiative and anticipated needs for assistance. They also provided detailed feedback on progress to their higher command staff, thereby sharing ‘lessons learned’ so others could benefit. The success achieved by ODA 7224 caused a rapid growth of SF teams doing VSO missions throughout Afghanistan. ODA 7224 set the standards for individuals and teams. Here’s what they did to shape and influence village stability operations as it happened.

### Four Phases of VSO<sup>6</sup>

- 1 - **Shape:** address local concerns and improve security.
- 2 - **Hold:** enhance security within the area.
- 3 - **Build:** relationships with better local coordination.
- 4 - **Transition:** leave effective local government in charge.

*\*\* Similar to the Strategic Hamlet Strategy in Vietnam*

IAW USSOCOM Sanitization Protocol for Historical Articles on Classified Current Operations, pseudonyms are used for majors and below who are still on active duty, unless names have been publicly released for awards/decorations or DoD news release. Pseudonyms are identified with an asterisk. The eyes of personnel in photos are blocked out when not covered with dark visors or sunglasses, except when the photos were publicly released by a service or DoD. Source references (end notes) utilize the assigned pseudonym.



(Left) Malik, a two-year old Afghan child who suffered a severe head injury from a fall, received life-saving care from American Special Forces medics (Right) Special Forces Medical Sergeant SFC Dan L. Marvin\* removes staples from Malik during the child's recovery after emergency brain surgery. (AP Photo)

In 2009, General Stanley A. McChrystal (Commander, International Security Assistance Force [ISAF]) shifted to a Counter-Insurgency (COIN)-based strategy in Afghanistan. The two Special Operations Forces (SOF) command elements, the Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command - Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) and the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A), were responsible for developing and implementing enhanced security at the village level in order to bolster the legitimacy of the Afghan government among its citizenry. The Special Operations mission became VSO. Influenced by early Special Forces Unconventional Warfare (UW) efforts in Vietnam (such as the raising and training of Civilian Irregular Defense Group [CIDG] units and implementing the Strategic Hamlet Program), Special Forces ODAs lived within select villages. There, they helped residents establish 'white space,' or a 'security bubble' around their community. It was a 'bottom-up' approach beginning at the local level. Once accomplished, the VSO villages would be linked with other secure areas and connected to higher (district, province, or national) levels of governance to form larger, more stable regions.<sup>5</sup> Security could be improved in increments, region by region throughout the country.

As explained by a later commander of CJSOTF-A, Colonel (COL) Donald C. Bolduc, the VSO concept envisioned SF ODAs "building relationships and assisting the populace to stand up against insurgents."<sup>7</sup> Regular, determined engagement of village leaders would enable the ODA to improve security. The local *shura* would discuss or 'sell' suggestions to improve economic stability. Concurrently, SOF leaders would coordinate with ISAF and various non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) like Oxfam or other groups such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for village projects. Resources had to come from regional and national leaders. In turn, the ODA would form and train an Afghan Local Police (ALP) element to perform local guard services and conduct patrols. This armed, organized presence was meant to deter insurgent activity.

In April 2009, Brigadier General (BG) Edward M. Reeder Jr. (Commander, CFSOCC-A and former commander of 7<sup>th</sup> SFG and CJSOTF-A) and COL James E. Kraft Jr. (Commander, 7<sup>th</sup> SFG and future commander of CJSOTF-A)



MG Edward M. Reeder Jr., a former commander of 7th SFG, was twice commander of CJSOTF-Afghanistan and later commander of CFSOCC-A and SOJTF-A.



MG James E. Kraft, former commander of 7th SFG and CJSOTF-Afghanistan.

selected Special Forces ODA 7224 to lead the village stability operation effort. Chosen for their leadership, maturity, proficiency, long-term personnel stability, and UW experience, the SF team focused on the new mission. In the absence of detailed mission briefings, the ODA worked to understand the village stability mission and to gather intel on their newly formed province, Daykundi. Before 2004 it was part of Oruzgan Province north of Kandahar (see map). To SFC Brad J. Rendition\*, the team's senior Weapons Sergeant, the VSO mission "sounded like a hybrid of COIN, FID, and UW; it would be based ultimately on whatever . . . conditions we encountered." Depending on the situation, "we would flex to COIN, UW, FID, or whatever met the mission, intent, and end state" to succeed.<sup>8</sup>

The ODA got the VSO mission just prior to deploying to Afghanistan. "We originally were training to go to Fire Base Tycz and essentially search for and destroy the enemy. We didn't focus on much else" during pre-mission training, explained Team Leader CPT Mike L. Bourne\* Jr. The team had already completed all preparations for their 'kill or capture' direct action (DA) mission. Instead, Bourne\* continued, "I was called off of block leave prior to

deployment" and given a new mission – village stability operations. CPT Bourne\* called in his Team Sergeant, Master Sergeant (MSG) Thomas E. 'Tom' Douglas, and the two collected all available information to support new planning. As MSG Douglas put it, "This was a whole new concept for us."<sup>10</sup> The two began analyzing available data to determine the political, economic, religious, and historical dynamics in Daykundi Province. "Together we conducted the military decision making process (MDMP) . . . cranked out the plan and briefed the guys," recalled CPT Bourne\*.<sup>11</sup> They also briefed the commander of 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> SFG, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) James Miller, on their concept despite not knowing their precise location for VSO. That said, the clock was counting down on their time to deploy. MSG Tom Douglas summarized the situation best when he said "a lot of planning remained to be made in-country."<sup>12</sup>

The ODA deployed as scheduled in early June 2009, spending "a full month at Kandahar to plan, prep, and get people on board" for their new mission, stated SFC Rendition\*.<sup>13</sup> By the time they arrived, the specific site for the VSO experiment had been confirmed by BG Reeder.<sup>14</sup> The team would infiltrate and set up operations in the village of Nili, the

*"We are enthusiastic about this initiative and believe that it will go a long way to increasing security and enabling villagers to defend themselves."<sup>9</sup>*

— Then-COL James E. Kraft,  
Commander 7<sup>th</sup> SFG/CJSOTF-A, 2009





Members of ODA 7224, the U.S. State Department, and officers of the 82nd Airborne Division meet with the Governor of Daykundi Province, Sultan Ali Uruzgani, at his residence.

district and provincial capital of Daykundi, located about 400 kilometers north of Kandahar. The province was populated mostly by Hazara, a pro-Western tribal group considered to be ‘neutral’ in the fight against the Taliban and anti-coalition militia (‘warlords’). “Teams had driven through there in 2002, 2003, but had never left a sustained presence,” SFC Rendition\* explained. The province was new; before 2003 it had been a part of the Pashtun-dominated Oruzgan Province. The ethnic minority Hazaras had long been discriminated against by the Pashtun majority; freeing the Hazara districts from direct Oruzgan/Pashtun provincial control helped rebalance that situation. The political leadership of the province was progressive by Afghan standards, and Nili boasted the first female mayor in the country. For their part, local Hazara leaders supported efforts to increase village and district security. They had long requested assistance from the Afghan central government in Kabul to help reduce Taliban influence in Daykundi. The central government had promised the Provincial Governor and Chief of Police that coalition forces were coming. American leadership believed that introducing Special Forces to bolster security in the district would fulfill that pledge from the national government.<sup>15</sup>

During mission planning in Kandahar the team determined that attachments were needed. Having two soldiers qualified as Joint Tactical Air Controllers (JTACs), airmen with those skills were not included. He did request an additional Weapons Sergeant to help share the security duties with the two ODA weapons sergeants, and that request was approved. CPT Bourne\* also determined in his mission analysis that Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological

Operations (PSYOP) personnel would be beneficial, so he requested them as well. The CJSOTF-A commander initially provided three persons: CA Major (MAJ) Jon D. Borman, CA SFC Mack Reyes-Solis\*, and PSYOP SSG Prasert ‘Pot’ Pradtana\*. SFC Reyes-Solis\* and SSG Pradtana\* joined the ODA at Kandahar and helped the team plan for its mission. MAJ Borman joined the team after infiltration, and in September a second PSYOP soldier, Specialist Four (SP4) Rick Hartung\*, arrived to assist SSG Pradtana\*.<sup>16</sup>

Because the team would be operating in isolated rural areas with no electricity or running water, the detachment got to hire a local generator mechanic/small engine repairman to keep lights, electricity, and water pumps working. In addition, the CJSOTF provided three contract civilian interpreters to communicate with the locals in their own languages and dialects. This mix of SF, SOF support, and contract enablers eventually became the basic model for successive VSOs.<sup>17</sup>

## GEN Stanley A. McChrystal's Four Criteria for Prioritizing VSO Locations

- “established in communities with a grass roots history of resisting the Taliban”
- “located in strategically significant” areas for ISAF and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA)
- “areas important to insurgent operations”
- “capable of sustaining a SOF presence”

### Endnote

Quotes from Madden, “Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency,” 3.

With its organization fixed, ODA 7224 completed mission planning and coordinated for their night infiltration into Nili. Lacking good road connections, the team opted to take two Toyota HiLux pickup trucks modified to mount weapons. These could be transported internally via heavy lift helicopters. Two four-wheeled all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) were added as well. In the interim a pre-deployment site survey (PDSS) visited Nili to confirm information, select a camp location, and meet with local leaders.<sup>18</sup>

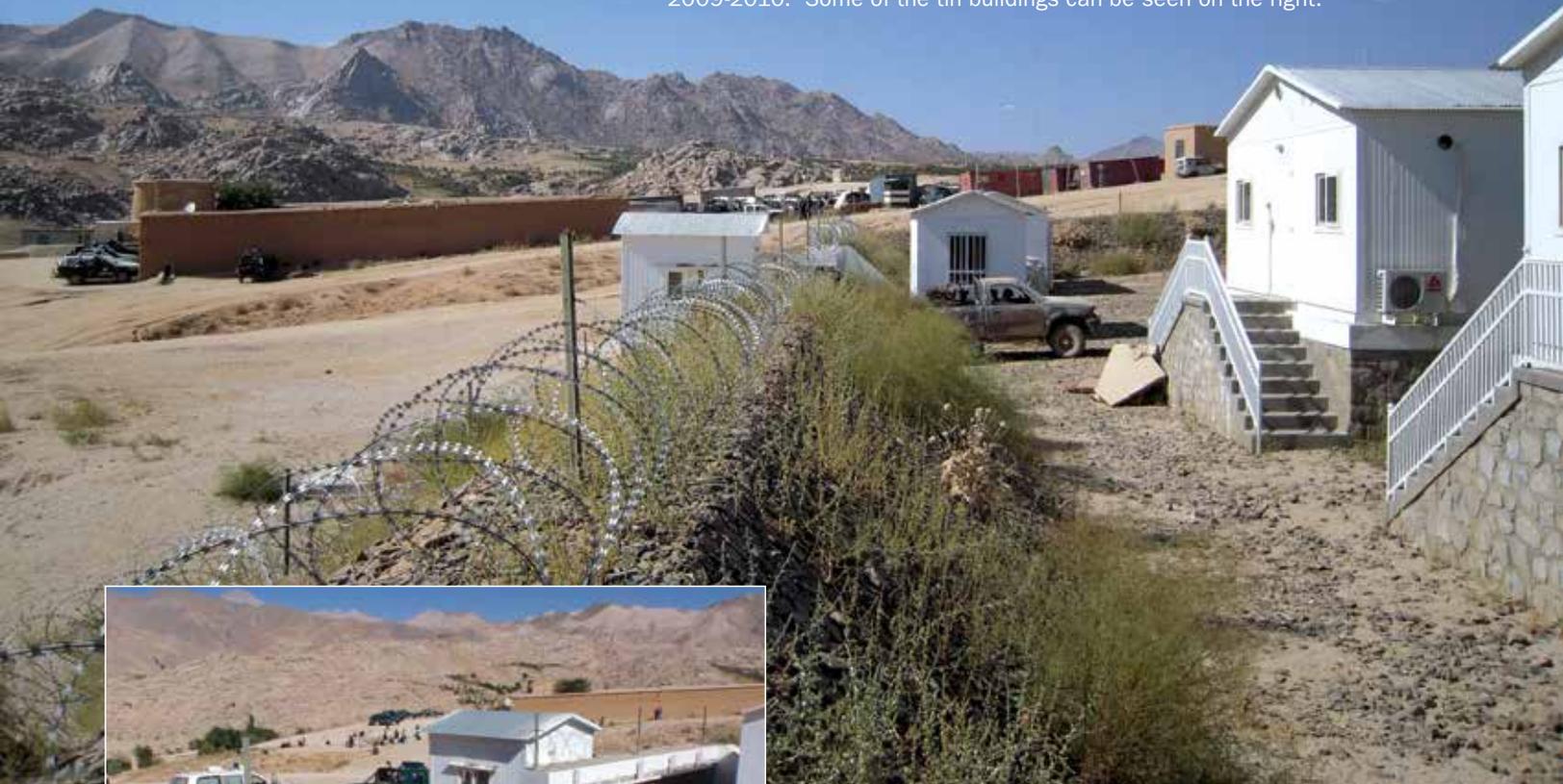


At night in late July 2009, three CH-47 'Chinook' heavy lift helicopters delivered ODA 7224. They landed next to a United Nations (UN) World Health Organization (WHO) compound near a small Afghan National Police (ANP) contingent. Carrying five days' worth of equipment and supplies, the vehicle-mounted team quickly occupied a nearby 70 by 70 meter site confirmed earlier. The team's new home had been constructed in 2007 by USAID to house a promised Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) that had instead been diverted to another province. "It was almost like *Field of Dreams*," SFC Rendition\* joked, "If you build it, they will come . . . but two years later." The compound had its own well, was surrounded by small earthen and rock berms that added some degree of protection, and contained eight tin/metal buildings/sheds (see sketch). The site was located across the rocky 'street' from the provincial police headquarters and near one of the town's two rudimentary hospitals. The village mayor had kept the compound buildings in good condition, guarding against 'homesteaders' in the hope that a friendly military force would come. By daybreak the team had settled into their new home and were busy making improvements.<sup>19</sup>

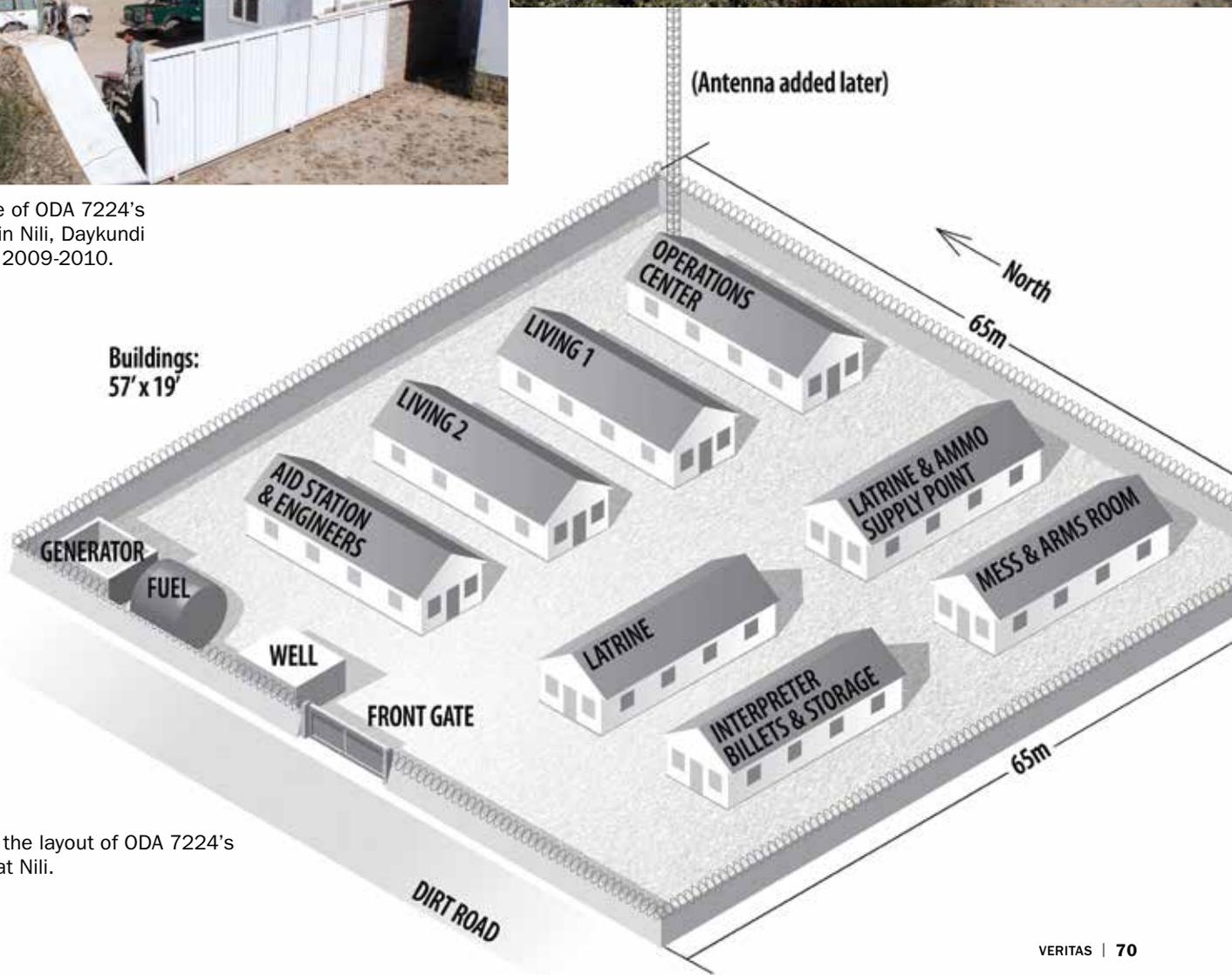
ODA 7224 loaded vehicles, supplies, and equipment onto CH-47 Chinook helicopters for the VSO mission.



View of the front gate area of ODA 7224's VSO site in Nili, Daykundi Province, 2009-2010. Some of the tin buildings can be seen on the right.



Front gate of ODA 7224's VSO site in Nili, Daykundi Province, 2009-2010.



Sketch of the layout of ODA 7224's VSO site at Nili.

The SF ODA leaders had a key decision to make. Still uncertain as to threat, CPT Bourne\* improved camp defenses. However, a camp too fortified might hinder interaction with the villagers critical to the VSO mission. The SF team emplaced some wire and obstacles that provided the right degree of security without completely insulating themselves from the villagers. After submitting their defensive plan, CJSOTF-A approved it and funded the desired improvements.<sup>20</sup> As Team Sergeant MSG Douglas described it, “We were trying to protect ourselves, but not overdoing it.”<sup>21</sup> “Our security also depended on people talking with us and giving us information,” CW2 ‘Chaka’ Santos\* confirmed.<sup>22</sup> MAJ Jon Borman best described it: “The locals were our early warning device.”<sup>23</sup> If conditions worsened, more security measures could be taken quickly.

In keeping with the goal of the first phase of VSO—to shape (the environment) to obtain local consent for the SF element – ODA 7224 became thoroughly familiar with the province. “We’d pick a village in the outlying districts, and we’d go out and visit it,” MSG Douglas related, “and we’d get to know the local elders.” Typically the ODA would leave some soldiers back at camp to continue work while the remainder went on long-range vehicular patrols. “Those first couple of months we did a lot of driving,” Douglas said, to conduct “a lot of engagements and meetings.” They usually brought Afghan National Police with them on the trips to serve as guides, to help with introductions, and to

push them into stretching authority outside the districts.<sup>24</sup> The ODA members quickly learned the social, economic, and cultural dynamics of the region, and got to know who the real local leaders were.

When not patrolling outlying districts the team met with the provincial leaders and the ANP in Nili. Three days a week detachment specialists trained the police to increase their proficiency. Team members rotated giving classes on weapons training, patrolling, small unit tactics, Human Rights instruction, communications, law enforcement procedures, and first aid. As MSG Douglas explained: “It was a constant ... either driving to meetings, or training . . . We certainly stayed busy and kept them engaged to everyone’s benefit.”<sup>25</sup>

The ODA Civil Affairs personnel also worked hard. MAJ Jon D. Borman, the CA element leader, brought a wealth of experience and maturity to the job. A former enlisted Infantryman who was an Infantry Officer for nine years before transitioning to CA, Borman had deployed a number of times and served several months as the Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC) Chief before joining the VSO experiment. MAJ Borman had plenty of connections in CA circles to help the ODA. As he described it, “One of the biggest things about Civil Affairs is establishing and building relationships and networks and knowing ‘who is who’ in the neighborhood.” Those skills fit right in with the VSO mission. “I had a direct line to the CMOC in Bagram,” Borman stated, “which helped get projects approved.”<sup>26</sup>

ODA 7224 regularly patrolled Daykundi Province in their vehicles.





ODA 7224 SF Weapons Sergeants conduct ANP marksmanship training on a flat range outside Nili, Afghanistan, October 2009. Flat space for ranges was difficult to find in the mountainous area. "Everything was on a slope," SFC Brad Rendition\* noted. "If it was flat, it had buildings, people, or animals on it," added MSG Tom Douglas.



Ceremony marking the commencement of repairs on the mosque in Nili, Afghanistan, on 2 October 2009. ODA 7224 and the CA element leader (MAJ Jon Borman) made arrangements to expand the mosque and make repairs to better accommodate the people of the town. In the center (with microphone), Mullah Faazili addresses the villagers. To his left (in business suit) is the Deputy Governor of Daykundi Province, LTC M. Amar Gharji. To Gharji's left is CPT Mike L. Bourne\* Jr., Team Leader of ODA 7224. Note that the sign refers to the ODA as a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), since the concept of ODAs performing VSO was unknown at that time.

"The very first project we did was in Nili, the provincial capital," MAJ Borman recalled. CPT Bourne\* "and I met with the Imam (Islamic worship leader of a mosque) and talked to him" about his needs. Essentially, Borman continued, "the mosque in downtown Nili wasn't big enough. The townspeople had to pray in shifts." CPT Bourne\* "wanted to do a project to expand and fix up the mosque. I helped get the project funded and completed," Borman said. The building was expanded, rest rooms added so that they could wash before praying, and repairs made. According to the CA major, "That project paid huge dividends" on several levels. First, "the Imam was extremely pleased; he said great things about the Americans and what we

would be doing." Second, "The mosque was a very visible thing, being in the center of it; everyone saw it." Third, "It didn't just affect Nili. Word spread about the project throughout the province." Lastly, "It was tangible and real. It was something they could see with their own eyes, and experience."<sup>27</sup> With CA assistance, the ODA knocked their first ball 'out of the park.'

Other projects were completed that further cemented the good relations between the ODA and the people of Daykundi. These included several school expansions or renovations. School projects especially resonated with the Hazara. "As an ethnic minority...they put a high value on education," MAJ Borman explained. "That was one way



1

# Operation **BEANIE BABY**

As SFC Brad D. Rendition\*, senior Weapons Sergeant for ODA 7224, eloquently put it: “Hearts and minds don’t make easy targets.”<sup>1</sup> The Special Forces non-commissioned officers of ODA 7224 also came up with their own creative ways to gain the trust of the people of Daykundi. The junior SF medic, SFC Dan A. Marvin\*, believed that “the best and fastest way to get the parents and adults to trust us, was to win the trust of the kids.” A common ‘trick of the trade’ was to give out soccer balls to children when visiting villages, but Dan Marvin\* could go beyond that. The Catholic Diocese in his home town of Green Bay, Wisconsin, wanted to help an Afghan province and picked Daykundi.<sup>2</sup>

The response was greater than the ODA ever expected. In November, the detachment received more than 80 boxes filled with over “1000 pounds of stuffed animals, toys, and kid’s blankets.” The Diocese had collected up the materials from all over Green Bay. In addition, an anonymous donor provided \$2,000.00 to ship the items to the ODA in Daykundi.<sup>3</sup>

The soldiers of 7224 now had plenty of ‘ammunition’ to give to the kids of the province. However, to get even more impact from the gifts, the soldiers arranged for the Afghan National Police (ANP), who generally accompanied them on patrol, to actually hand out the items to the crowds of kids and parents that gathered. Doing so put ‘an Afghan face’ on the distribution by making it appear the gifts came from the ANP or a concerned Afghan government.<sup>4</sup>

Other benefits came with that approach. First, it helped the ANP establish themselves as a benefactor in the eyes of the villagers rather than someone to be feared. Second, it provided the people with the opportunity to see the Americans in a non-combat setting. And with the ANP and Americans working side-by-side, it reinforced the ‘trust-factor’ where both were concerned. Third, as SFC Marvin\* noted, “With the kids happy and cheering, more adults were happy to meet with us.”<sup>5</sup> And as can be seen in the photos, adults often snuck into the beanie baby handout line as well.



2



3



4

*“Hearts  
and  
minds  
don’t  
make  
easy  
targets.”*

— SFC Brad D. Rendition\*

1 Over 1,000 lbs. of stuffed animals, toys and kid’s blankets were donated by the Green Bay Catholic Diocese.

2 Americans, pulling security, and ANP worked side by side reinforcing the ‘trust-factor’ with the community.

3 In the remote villages, crowds of kids and parents gathered to receive the ‘goodies’ from the Afghan National Police.

4 ANP handed out toys to the children during village engagements. This helped the people see the ANP as a force to be trusted, and not one to be feared.



MAJ Jon Borman, CA Officer (right) discusses a school extension project with school officials in Nili, Afghanistan, December, 2009.



MAJ Jon Borman (forefront) and CPT Mike Bourne\* (left rear of Borman) discuss a project to construct a school building to replace the temporary tent school in the background. September 2009, Nili, Afghanistan. Note the steep slope gradient present throughout Daykundi that complicated all construction efforts.

they had of dealing with discrimination. As we went out and talked with leaders, [education and schooling] were common points brought up.” Essentially, “they had enough teachers . . . they just didn’t have the physical schools. Some of the schools were under a tree or in a tent. Some were in a mosque.” As Borman described it, “some families had to send kids to schools in shifts, either in the morning or afternoon” because of shortages of space. Providing or improving schools was key to connecting with the communities. “We started eight or ten different projects with schools . . . in different districts and locations.”<sup>28</sup>

Other humanitarian aid projects further cemented their relationships. The SF Detachment JTACs arranged for blind drops of humanitarian aid to more remote locations. MAJ Borman also “empowered the local leaders as much as we could” by delivering boxes of humanitarian aid donations to the leaders who then “put packages together with food, blankets, clothing” for needy families. “I could also get the funding for little projects through quickly,” such as one

that provided firewood to heat the Women’s Prison. Unlike western prisons, the children of imprisoned women were also incarcerated with their mothers, making it a humanitarian issue forgotten by many people. Several medical/dental civic action projects (MEDCAP/DENTCAPs) were also held throughout the district to treat patients who otherwise might have gone without proper care. In addition to the SF medics assisting the local hospitals/clinics with their daily ‘sick calls,’ sometimes medical personnel were brought in from outside units to provide specialized care and treatment.<sup>29</sup>

The PSYOP element was similarly engaged. SSG Prasert ‘Pot’ Pradtana\*, the PSYOP element leader, joined ODA 7224 at Camp Brown, Kandahar, ready to work. On checking in with the Team Leader, CPT Bourne\*, he declared: “I come with print and audio capability, and ‘Radio in a Box’ [RIAB], and I’m outgoing and enthusiastic. I’m here to help you persuade, change, and influence the locals, whether they are Hazara or Pashtun.” CPT Bourne\* put ‘Pot’ to work and provided him with guidance.<sup>30</sup>



ODA 7224 SF medic SFC Dan A. Marvin\* checking the vitals of a local Hazara woman. A contract interpreter is at her left, providing language assistance.



ODA 7224 SF medic SFC Dan A. Marvin\* (background, with flashlight) assisting a 20th SFG Dentist (right side) while the Surgeon from 2nd Battalion, 7th SFG observes.



Members of ODA 7224 and PSYOP SSG Pradtana\* examine the radio antenna set up in the camp to extend the range of the detachment's Tactical Radio Station (TRS). The blur in the picture is falling snow.

On arriving at Nili, 'Pot' set up his Tactical Radio Station (TRS) and collected material for broadcasts. SSG Pradtana\* accompanied the ODA during their many engagements throughout the province. "MSG Douglas was all about getting out there, extending the 'white space,'" he related. Before each trip 'Pot' would "match up the pre-approved PSYOP objectives with those of CPT Bourne\*." For example, one objective was to "Increase the legitimacy of GIRoA [Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan], ... and so I used the local personalities to disseminate information." Essentially he enabled the local leaders to "put out public information coupled with subtle lines of persuasion." SSG Pradtana\* would get Afghan leaders like the Chief of Police to record messages that informed villagers "what to report, who to report it to, how to report," transforming the people into the eyes and ears of the ANP. When 'Pot' returned to the camp, he included those recordings in the radio station's programming, thereby helping the local officials broadcast targeted messages that reinforced their legitimacy to a larger, dispersed audience and enlisted them in the fight for law and order, sort of a 'Neighborhood Watch.'<sup>31</sup>

To extend the range of his FM radio amid the mountainous terrain in the province, SSG Pradtana\* erected about 100 feet of antenna sections he had discovered earlier in a scrap pile at Camp Brown. He took the initiative to clean the sections, paint them, and even packed the lot for delivery to Nili on one of the scheduled resupply runs. Once installed, the extra height of the antenna extended the range of his set and allowed him to reach more people. SSG Pradtana\* also tied the radio programming in with a feedback mechanism; a set of 'suggestion boxes' that he made out of wood and placed at key locations in the province. For force protection purposes, and to further put an Afghan face on that initiative, he arranged for the ANP to periodically check the boxes, translate any messages found, and relay the content to the SF Detachment. The boxes proved to be a good means of gaining feedback on the station's content, and the occasional source of information on Taliban movements, activity, and placement of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).<sup>32</sup>

SSG Pradtana\* also provided a wide variety of other products to "persuade, change, and influence." "I wanted a balance where we could manage the [TRS] 24/7, but still

## EXPLOSIVE AWARENESS

TPT 1C12B  
PSA  
19 OCT 09

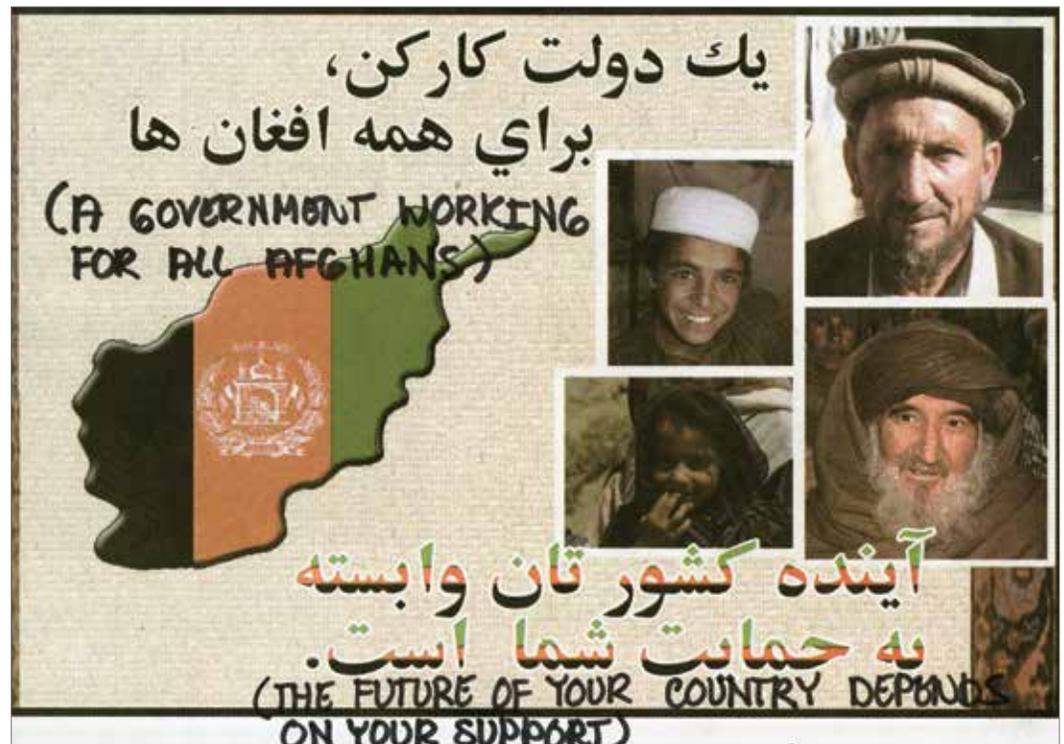
A Public Service Announcement (PSA) warning villagers of the dangers of grenades and explosives. The radio broadcast also provides information on how to report the discovery of any explosive materials, again making the ANP the 'entry point.'

"A couple days ago a kid from Kesaw village in the Keyti district, found a hand grenade on a mountain behind his village. He was playing with a hand grenade thinking it was a toy; the hand grenade exploded and destroyed his hand. The kid was lucky the hand grenade did not kill him.

Explosives are dangerous and can kill anyone around it. If you see any explosives, including land mines, hand grenades, mortar rounds, artillery rounds, or bombs; do not touch the explosive, make note of the location, and contact the ANP immediately. Teach your children not to play with explosives; their lives are at risk if they play with explosives.

Again if you see any explosives, do not touch it, take note of the location, and contact ANP immediately. This is for your safety and the safety of your family."

An informational leaflet produced by SSG Pradtana\*, the Tactical Psychological Operations Team leader (TPT 1C12) for ODA 7224. These and similar products were distributed during the many engagements and events the team conducted throughout the province. This graphic depicts a master copy that has an English translation of the content.



conduct combat patrols" and provide other services. In addition to "pulling guard, filling sandbags, etc.," the PSYOP element created and distributed various pamphlets, handouts, leaflets, that educated and informed the populace while reinforcing the legitimacy of the government, police, and leaders. 'Pot' also informed his Afghan listeners on public health issues, IED avoidance, ANA recruiting, and humanitarian assistance. SSG Pradtana\* noted that "we could have focused on things like women's equality, since we had a woman mayor, or on education, or the ANP or ALP. We could have focused

on so many areas, and I think we delicately touched on so many of them."<sup>33</sup>

The SF Medical Sergeants (SFC Marvin\* and SFC Monza\*), supplemented by SOTF/CJSOTF doctors, conducted MEDCAPs and DENTCAPs that augmented the efforts of the local clinic and regional hospital in treating the people of the community. Those events were widely attended since the province's organic medical capabilities were rudimentary. During these events, the team's Operations and Intelligence Sergeant (18F) (SFC Jorge Cortez\*) and other SF soldiers canvassed the people to gain their ideas on how to improve

living conditions and security in the region. In the process, the ODA members got to know the area's demographics, key personalities, and issues well. When not needed for force protection, the three SF Weapons Sergeants (SFC Rendition\*, SSG Jameson H. Govoni, and SFC John Hertz\*) trained the provincial and district Afghan National Police (ANP) to increase their capabilities and weapons proficiency. Meanwhile the SF Engineers constructed facilities, ranges, checkpoints, and billeting spaces, as well as continually improving the VSO site.<sup>34</sup>

The team faced several logistical challenges in resupplying their camp. Because of the remoteness of its location and the

rugged topography of the area, resupply and provisioning was problematic. Ground transport was considered too dangerous. The combination of rough terrain, lack of serviceable roads, and infinite number of prospective ambush sites along the route made convoys dangerously impracticable. The team brought only five days of food, water, ammunition, and supplies with them when they arrived. Everything thereafter had to be air delivered by helicopter or parachute.<sup>35</sup> A better solution was needed.

The closest utility helicopters to supply the detachment were located at Tarin Kowt, about 100 kilometers distant. And considering the higher altitudes and rugged terrain,



Special Forces Weapons Sergeants and other members of ODA 7224 conduct weapons training for provincial and district Afghan National Police (ANP) near the village of Nili, Day Kundi Province, Afghanistan, 2009.

Personnel from ODA 7224 have a 'working lunch' in Nili, 12 August 2009. On the left (with traditional head wear) is Karim Khalili, Vice President of Afghanistan. Seated to Mr. Khalili's left is CPT Mike Bourne\*, Team Leader of ODA 7224.





Soldiers from ODA 7224 conduct parachute resupply. Because of the remote mountainous terrain in Daykundi Province, the ODA depended mainly on airdrops for food, water, ammunition, parts, and supplies.

helicopters could carry few supplies and were operating at the limits of their range without refueling. In order to ‘stretch the legs’ of the helos and bring more supplies per flight a local refueling capability was needed. The funding for that effort was not granted until December, but eventually local workers under the supervision of the ODA created an HLZ capable of ‘spotting’ four CH-47s. Essentially, the workers had to flatten the top of a small hill and grade the site by hand. The laborers also built up earthen berms to hold fuel bladders to refuel helicopters. But when finished, the project significantly improved living conditions and morale in the detachment; the ability to supply by helo freed them from their steady diet of Meals, Ready to Eat (MREs) and increased the frequency of mail deliveries.<sup>36</sup> CJSOTF learned and included plans to either ensure future VSOs had some HLZ capability, or

to provide sufficient parachute riggers and equipment to drop supplies.

As part of the VSO concept, each ODA would create a small Afghan Local Police (ALP) element formed out of local volunteers who would help improve the security in the village. ODA 7224 was specifically tasked to “create such a fighting force ...and to make it legitimate” in the minds of the locals.<sup>37</sup> Fortunately, the team’s prior experiences in Afghanistan reaped great dividends. In October, after first disseminating flyers advertising the ALP idea and its intended role, a “Hazara elder, who was part of a strike force in 2002, showed up at the camp gate.” The ODA Assistant Team Leader, Chief Warrant Officer 2 (CW2) Juan A. ‘Chaka’ Santos\*, was called out to meet with him. “As soon as they opened that gate, it was like a reunion ... I brought him in and we talked about past operations.” “It was like a gold

mine,” ‘Chaka’ recalled. Niazi, the elder, turned out to be a local official and he said he had “about twenty or twenty-five villagers” interested in joining. Many had worked with American forces during the first year of the war. Fortuitously, CW2 Santos\* had some digital photos from his earlier operations in that same area. “I’m a big believer in identity and identity operations,” ‘Chaka’ explained. He found pictures of some of the same prospects working with coalition forces in 2002, thereby substantiating their claims. Another prospect showed up for an interview with a dog-eared folder containing training certificates issued by coalition SOF units that showed he had indeed fought against the Taliban earlier. Although their claims were also checked by CJSOTF personnel and Afghan officials, the photos and documents helped establish their identities, motivation, and past associations.<sup>38</sup> Altogether, ODA 7224 compiled a list of about twenty candidates that made it to the next stage -- screening.

Armed with the roster of volunteers, the detachment began processing them individually to see who would ‘make the cut’ to be trained as ALP. The SF Medical Sergeants screened the candidates for diseases or infirmities that would keep them from performing security duties. Basic physical fitness tests were administered to determine those in good physical shape. Other ODA members performed biometric screening and background checks to ensure the individuals were who they claimed to be and were trustworthy. Soon, the twenty prospects were ‘whittled down’ to about eleven who advanced to the next phase — training.<sup>39</sup>

SFC Rendition\*, the senior SF Weapons Sergeant, taught the recruits basic weapons training and combat marksmanship skills with their personal AK-47 rifles. He and the other SF Weapons Sergeants took them to a nearby detachment range and evaluated their live fire techniques. The SF Medics gave classes on basic lifesaving and combat

casualty care. Other members of the ODA provided the group with rudimentary training in small unit tactics and other field skills. Under the tutelage of ODA 7224, the first class of ALP reached the point where it could handle some basic defensive tasks, such as manning a checkpoint, but the team did not have enough time to get them to the level where they could conduct independent offensive operations. That task would fall on their replacement ODA. After the training was completed, the team conducted a public ‘graduation ceremony’ and issued certificates of completion to the new ALP members.<sup>40</sup> The act bolstered the morale of the new ALP and legitimized their status in the minds of the villagers.

By the end of 2009, ODA 7224 was firmly embedded in the fabric of the villages and districts through much of the



A graduate from the first class of Afghan Local Police (ALP) shakes the hands of ODA 7224 members who trained him. He is holding his graduation certificate.

SF Weapons Sergeant provides instruction to ANP on pistol marksmanship.





ODA 7224 conducting combined vehicle patrol with several members of the provincial ANP.

province. The team members were especially trusted by the residents of Nili, and in turn helped the villagers improve their own living conditions and safety. Reports of encounters with improvised explosive devices (IEDs), although never a lot, dropped to almost none, providing further metrics on the improving conditions. Surveys indicated that the citizens felt safe to walk the streets in seven of the nine districts in the province, another measure of success. The safer conditions promoted trade with neighboring districts that substantially increased the economic well-being of the area.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the people felt comfortable dealing with members of the team in a wide variety of circumstances and provided a wealth of information.

The ODA's success was easy to measure. Professional relationships had matured to the point where the Provincial Governor and district leaders hosted a Christmas dinner for the team, and even participated in a gift exchange. Toward the end of their tour, CPT Bourne\* reported that "the populace worked with the detachment to expel enemy forces," and that "the province shifted from a non-permissive to semi-permissive environment."<sup>42</sup>

Several metrics provided evidence to that fact. Reports of probable threats dropped almost to zero within the province. The ODA was able to travel throughout most of its region in non-armored vehicles, remain lightly armed, and conduct meaningful engagements with locals at will. Working with local leaders they made improvements in eight schools, several mosques, and delivered humanitarian supplies to areas previously untouched by government influence. By the time ODA 7224 conducted its relief in place, it "was essentially able to exert control over a province comprising over 18,000 square kilometers."

Furthermore, the improved security environment in five of the province's seven districts prompted a surge in the economic well-being of the region, thereby improving the standard of living for all the residents. Trucks and trade could move freely in most of the province, unhindered by banditry or Taliban interference. All of these achievements were accomplished with only eighteen U.S. soldiers, 100 ANP, about 20 ALP, and some scattered elements of the Afghan National Army.<sup>43</sup>

As expected, CFSOCC and CJSOTF planners learned a lot from ODA 7224's VSO experience in Daykundi that shaped the conduct of similar efforts throughout Afghanistan. The team's detailed reports and daily communication passed on hard lessons learned and allowed future VSO elements to benefit from their experiences and observations. ODA 7224 Team Leader CPT Bourne\* conducted outbriefs with BG Reeder, COL Kraft and COL Gus Benton II (commanders of CJSOTF-A), and several other military leaders. Perhaps most importantly, during a visit of Afghan Vice President Karim Khalili, CPT Bourne\* showed him what they were accomplishing in the province. Khalili was so impressed that he convinced the American Ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl W. Eikenberry (a former Lieutenant General in the U.S. Army), and Afghan President Hamid Karzai to endorse the VSO program. Khalili's enthusiastic support ensured adoption of a VSO strategy in Afghanistan.<sup>44</sup>

The ODA's efforts imparted other useful information for future VSO practitioners. Perhaps the most important lesson learned was that team members supporting VSO missions must conduct a thorough study of the prospective site's demographics, political makeup, ethnic background

and local history to adequately meet the challenges they would face after infiltration. Although the conditions an ODA faced in one area were not automatically applicable to another ODA in a different area, success required a solid understanding of the many factors affecting each village/district in the region. In summary, VSO planners were repeatedly cautioned there was “no cookie-cutter solution” to conducting VSO.<sup>45</sup>

Despite that, ODA 7224’s experiences proved valuable in planning other VSO missions. The problems they encountered served as a model for what other ODAs could expect when tasked to conduct VSO. In particular, the higher headquarters learned a lot through their efforts to support the ODA in the field. For example, CJSOTF operations personnel were keenly interested in the physical security arrangements that ODA 7224 made to their site to make it safer and more habitable. Also, CJSOTF-A contracting and comptroller personnel learned early the difficulties and complexities of establishing the funding authorities that would enable the ODA to pay for all of the things it required to perform its mission in a timely and efficient fashion. CJSOTF-A logisticians and support personnel had to work through a myriad of problems to sustain 7224’s effort. Operations personnel needed to expand their systems to deal with a greater number of sites scattered further out in areas that had little or no coalition military support. Working through these situations and issues helped the CJSOTF staff to better understand the challenges of supporting VSO in isolated rural areas. It prompted changes in procedures to allow CJSOTF to more efficiently establish and maintain future VSO sites.

Other units and staff sections also benefitted from the VSO experiment. The practicality and utility of embedding CA and PSYOP personnel in ODAs became the model for later VSO missions. Similarly, medical planners within the CJSOTF were tested to their limits in ensuring adequate medical evacuation coverage was made and intermediate facilities identified so that the soldiers could be treated in the event of emergencies. Legal personnel were challenged by having to answer complex questions involving military support for civilians, creation of authorities for operations, and providing expert legal opinions on questions involving multiple parties, nationalities, and situations.<sup>46</sup> The many ‘lessons learned’ from ODA 7224 and other pioneers of VSO were later incorporated into Operation Order MUSAQUILANA, the CJSOTF-A Operations Plan (OPLAN) for conducting VSO in Afghanistan.<sup>47</sup> For all these reasons and more, the Nili experiment proved valuable in validating the VSO concept and paving the way for scores of similar sites throughout Afghanistan.

Looking back, several factors contributed to the success of the experiment. First, ODA 7224 took the time to examine past historical examples of VSO-like efforts by Special Forces. By better understanding the strengths and weaknesses of past programs like the Vietnam-era CIDG, the ODA members could learn from past experiences and avoid making similar mistakes.<sup>48</sup>



Members of ODA 7224 celebrate Christmas dinner and a gift exchange with district and provincial governor staff in the ODA camp dining facility, 25 December 2009.

## Results of the ‘Nili Experiment’

- 1 Validated the VSO concept
- 2 Improved the security of Nili and surrounding districts
- 3 Established the practicality of combining CA and PSYOP elements with SF ODA
- 4 Established good rapport between the coalition and Hazara people
- 5 Improved people’s view on GIROA legitimacy
- 6 Highly visible success with tangible public results
- 7 Provided a wealth of information on how to establish and support VSO in the field
- 8 Established a baseline of information on establishing the Afghan Local Police
- 9 The experiences of ODA 7224 helped shape the VSO program

## Factors Contributing to ODA 7224 Success

- 1 Critical Examination of Historical Precedents
- 2 Fully Understood Historical, Cultural, Economic, Ethnic, Religious Background of People
- 3 Mature, Experienced, Stable Team
- 4 Honest Self-Assessment and Ability to Communicate with Higher Commands

*“Commander and VSO team driven innovations have been critical to VSO/ALP’s success.”* <sup>49</sup> — Dan Madden, RAND Corporation, 2011

Second, the team went to great lengths to fully understand the cultural, religious, economic, and historical dynamics of the region’s people. This informed their detailed mission analysis and plan of action. Third, the level of maturity and experience that the team brought to the VSO mission gave them the flexibility, interpersonal skills, and diplomatic expertise to deal effectively with the villagers of the region. The SF, CA, and PSYOP soldiers were able to make adjustments to their approaches to improve rapport with the people, gauge their needs, and help them develop solutions to their problems.

Finally, the soldiers of ODA 7224 and their teammates possessed the ability to critically examine their own actions. They provided an honest assessment of performance that helped inform others seeking to duplicate their success. Furthermore, by providing a combination of clear communication with higher levels of command and honest feedback, the ODA showed what would be needed to effectively expand and support the VSO program for CFSOCC and CJSOTF leaders and planners. ▲

Members of ODA 7224 provided Afghan National Police (ANP) with a shipment of soccer balls in the national colors to distribute to village children in September 2009. The team excelled at ‘putting an Afghan face’ on the distribution of morale-boosting and humanitarian items to the people of the province. These efforts reinforced that the government cared for their welfare.



## MICHAEL E. KRIVDO, PhD

Michael Krivdo earned his PhD in Military and Diplomatic History from Texas A&M University. He is a former Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance Officer with varied special operations research interests.

## Endnotes

- 1 Sergeant First Class (SFC) Brad D. Rendition\* and SFC Dan L. Marvin\*, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 7 December 2015, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, quote from SFC Marvin\*.
- 2 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; Kevin Maurer, "Fracture Healed by US Forces, Afghan Boy Goes Home," *Associated Press*, 19 September 2009, Daykundi Province, Afghanistan.
- 3 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; Major Mike L. Bourne\* Jr., interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 7 December 2015, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 *Cable News Network* (CNN), "House Call with Dr. Sanjay Gupta," Aired 12 September 2009, 7:30 ET, CNN.Com - Transcripts, on Internet at: <http://www.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/090912/hcsg.01.html>, accessed on 12 January 2016; Maurer, "Fracture Healed by US Forces, Afghan Boy Goes Home," quote from text.
- 5 Dan Madden, "The Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency: A History of Village Stability Operations & the Afghan Local Police," Rand Corporation, CFSOCC-A Commander's Initiative Group, 30 April 2011, 2-3; Donald C. Bolduc, "Forecasting the Future of Afghanistan," *Special Warfare* 24, Issue 4 (Oct-Dec 2011), 24-25. For more information on Special Forces Unconventional Warfare in Vietnam, see Eugene G. Piasecki, "Civilian Irregular Defense Group: The First Years, 1961-1967," *Veritas* 5:4, 1-10. In Afghanistan, the original concept was known as the Community Defense Initiative (CDI). CDI was also referred to as the Local Defense Initiative (LDI), but by the time it matured was widely expressed in the term Village Stability Operations (VSO).
- 6 Condensed from: Robert Hulslander and Jake Spivey, "Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police," *Prism* Vol. 3, Number 3, National Defense University, 130-35.
- 7 Bolduc, "Forecasting the Future of Afghanistan," 25.
- 8 Madden, "Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency," 3; Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 2011, on Internet at: [http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/1230\\_1231Report.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/1230_1231Report.pdf), accessed on 22 October 2015, 67; SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015, quotes from interview; Mark L. Brown Jr., "Village Stability Operations: An Historical Perspective from Vietnam to Afghanistan," *Small Wars Journal* 28 March 2013, available on Internet at: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/printpdf/13939>, 1-5, Chief Warrant Two (CW2) Juan A. Santos\*, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 22 December 2015, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. ODA 7224 had a wealth of experience and maturity in its ranks, making it well-suited for the task of being the first to implement the concept of VSO in the field. The detachment commander, Captain (CPT) Mike L. Bourne\* Jr., was formerly an enlisted SF soldier with several combat deployments before gaining his commission. The Team Sergeant, MSG Thomas E. 'Tom' Douglas, had been in the ODA for several years. The Detachment Technician (assistant team leader), CW2 Juan A. Santos\* had deployed previously to that same region and even knew some of the local individuals they would deal with on a daily basis. Similarly, each of the other team members had two to three combat deployments 'under their belt,' as well as several training missions into Central and South America. They would draw heavily from all those experiences during their VSO trial.
- 9 Kevin Maurer, "U.S. Forces Move into Central Afghan City," *Associated Press*, Nili, Afghanistan, 26 September 2009, on Internet at: <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/2009/sep/26/afghan-special-forces-neighbors-092609/>, accessed on 28 March 2016, quote from text.
- 10 MSG (Ret.) Thomas E. Douglas, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 22 March 2016, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 11 Correspondence from MAJ Mike L. Bourne\* Jr., to Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 18 March 2016, quotes from text.
- 12 MSG (Ret.) Douglas interview, 22 March 2016.
- 13 Quote from SFC Rendition\* from SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015.
- 14 Madden, "Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency," 3.
- 15 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015, quote by SFC Rendition\*; CW3 Santos\* interview, 22 December 2015. For more information on Azra Jafari, Nili's female mayor, see: Golnar Motevalli, "Afghanistan's First Female Mayor Proves Critics Wrong," *The Guardian* (UK), Kabul, Afghanistan, 24 February, 2013, on Internet at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/feb/24/afghanistan-first-female-mayor>, accessed on 28 March 2016.
- 16 Email correspondence from MAJ Bourne\*, 18 March 2016; SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; MAJ (Ret.) Jon D. Borman, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 22 March 2016, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, North Carolina.
- 17 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015.
- 18 Douglas interview, 22 March 2016, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, North Carolina; SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; Madden, "Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency," 3.
- 19 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015, quote from interview; CW3 Santos\*, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 22 December 2015, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; MSG (Ret.) Thomas E. Douglas, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 22 March 2016, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 20 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; CW3 Santos\* interview, 22 December 2015; MSG (Ret.) Douglas interview, 22 March 2016.
- 21 MSG (Ret.) Douglas interview, 22 March 2016.
- 22 CW3 Santos\* interview, 22 December 2015.
- 23 MAJ (Ret.) Borman interview, 22 March 2016.
- 24 MSG (Ret.) Douglas interview, 22 March 2016, quotes from interview.
- 25 MSG (Ret.) Douglas interview, 22 March 2016.
- 26 MAJ (Ret.) Borman interview, 22 March 2016.
- 27 MAJ (Ret.) Borman interview, 22 March 2016.
- 28 MAJ (Ret.) Borman interview, 22 March 2016.
- 29 MAJ (Ret.) Borman interview, 22 March 2016.
- 30 SFC Prasert Pradtana\*, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 23 March 2016, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 31 SFC Pradtana\* interview, 23 March 2016. For more details on the Tactical Radio Set (TRS), see the article on that subject in this issue.
- 32 SFC Pradtana\* interview, 23 March 2016, quotes from text.
- 33 SFC Pradtana\* interview, 23 March 2016.
- 34 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; CW3 Santos\* interview, 22 December 2015; Maurer, "Special Forces Become Part of Village Life.
- 35 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015.
- 36 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015.
- 37 Quote from SFC Rendition\* from SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015.
- 38 CW3 Santos\* interview, 22 December 2015, quotes from interview.
- 39 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; CW3 Santos\* interview, 22 December 2015.
- 40 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015.
- 41 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; Brown Jr., "Village Stability Operations," 6.
- 42 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; Brown Jr., "Village Stability Operations," quotes from 6.
- 43 Brown Jr., "Village Stability Operations," 6, quote from text; Bolduc, "Forecasting the Future of Afghanistan," 26.
- 44 MAJ Bourne\* interview, 7 December 2015; Email correspondence, MAJ Mike L. Bourne\* Jr. to Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 18 March 2016; Madden, "Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency," 3-4.
- 45 MAJ Bourne\* interview, 7 December 2015; CW3 Santos\* interview, 22 December 2015; SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015, quote by SFC Rendition\*.
- 46 Madden, "Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency," 3; DoD, *Report on Progress, October 2011*, 67; SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015; Brown Jr., "Village Stability Operations," *passim*.
- 47 CJSOTF-A, "OPLAN MUSTAQUILANA," copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, *passim*; Bolduc, "Forecasting the Future of Afghanistan," 26
- 48 Brown Jr., "Village Stability Operations," 1-3.
- 49 Madden, "Evolution of Precision Counterinsurgency," 5.

## "Operation Beanie Baby" Endnotes

- 1 Sergeant First Class (SFC) Brad D. Rendition\* and SFC Dan A. Marvin\*, interview by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 7 December 2015, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, quote from SFC Rendition\*.
- 2 SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015, quote from SFC Marvin\*.
- 3 Briefing, "ODA 7224: Lessons Learned from Daykundi," 1 August 2010, ODA 7224, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 SFCs Relation and Martens interview, 7 December 2015.
- 5 Briefing, "ODA 7224: Lessons Learned from Daykundi," text; SFCs Rendition\* and Marvin\* interview, 7 December 2015, quote from SFC Marvin\*.