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CIVIL AFFAIRS WARRANT OFFICERS

Bridging the Technical Capabilities Gap.

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The active component Civil Affairs (CA) community has witnessed significant changes in capabilities over the past 17 years while actively contributing to counter-terrorism efforts globally (in combat operations and Phase 0 shaping activities). This Active component of the branch has grown from one Battalion (BN) with five geographically-aligned Companies to a Special Operations aligned Brigade (BDE) manned with over 1,300 Soldiers. Today, the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) provides Civil Affairs support to the global Special Operations Forces (SOF) network through the training, manning, and equipping of five subordinate, regionally-aligned Battalions in support of Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs). In recognition of the overwhelming impact and

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A U.S. Army Civil Affairs team provides instruction on how to increase civic actions and involvement in the community to reduce the influence of violent extremist organizations to the 12th Regional Infantry Commando Battalion in Burkina Faso. The routine transition of experienced officers and senior NCOs in the Civil Affairs regiment has created significant gaps in detailed technical expertise, institutional knowledge, and experienced operational planning on Civil Affairs Teams.

U.S. ARMY PHOTO COURTESY OF THE 91ST CIVIL AFFAIRS BATTALION (AIRBORNE)

desire for Civil Affairs capabilities in the full range of military operations, the Army implemented the growth of the 85th Civil Affairs Brigade to meet the increased number of mission requirements. With five of their own regionally aligned Battalions in support of Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs), the 85th provided support to the Conventional Force. As the Department of Defense and Army reduced capabilities in the mid-late 2010s, the battalions and headquarters of the 85th Civil Affairs Brigade was deactivated completed through early 2018, leaving only the 83rd Civil Affairs Battalion with regionally aligned companies to support the ASCCs.

Despite the obvious benefits of increased CA capacity, there have been challenges to such rapid expansion and then contraction. The most critical of these challenges may be viewed in terms of operational experience, detailed technical knowledge of critical systems (such as those used in mapping and understanding aspects of the Human Domain), and Army and Joint operational planning capacity at the tactical and operational levels (Joint Planning Process, Army Operational Planning Methodology, etc). The routine transition of experienced officers and senior NCOs, although necessary for development, created significant gaps in detailed technical expertise, institutional knowledge, and experienced operational level planners. It is very common for Captains to remain on a Civil Affairs Team (CAT) for a short 24 months before being moved to critical staff positions at higher headquarters and Branch critical requirements. The same is true for the enlisted population, where an increased number of senior NCOs are waiting to complete key developmental positions (e.g. Team Sergeant). In some cases, this has hindered the ability to leave highly

competent and capable personnel in place for more than 24 months. The common theme across both enlisted and officer populations is lack of operational planning depth, detailed knowledge of non-lethal targeting mechanisms, and significant experience at the company level, which begs the question: What is the focal point of these desired capabilities within the Company and higher? Continuity is a part of the solution, but the need for a highly trained, capable Soldier, is the main part of the solution.

THE ARMY'S TECHNICAL EXPERTS: WARRANT OFFICERS

In the traditional sense, a Warrant Officer provides technical expertise in a specific Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) that he or she has mastered over time through experience, schooling, and mentorship. This highly specialized individual also provides continuity to the command leadership as senior Commissioned and Non Commissioned Officers (NCO) rotate through their various key developmental positions. Across the services, Warrant Officers fill the gap of experience and knowledge, ensuring the continuity of military efforts for their organization. The Civil Affairs Branch has not had the benefit of this capability. Only in the past five years has the Army provided Warrant Officers as a part of the Civil Affairs Battalion's staff expertise; through Maintenance Technicians, Property Book Officers, and Targeting Officers.

CA WARRANT OFFICERS: WHY NOW?

The implementation of a Civil Affairs Warrant Officer career field is not a new idea to the branch. The concept has been studied for potential implementation over the last 10-15 years; however, the viability of a CA Warrant Officer has not been acceptable until now. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) has long benefitted from the experience and expertise of Warrant Officers. In 2014, then-Commander, John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Major General Eric Wendt issued guidance to both the Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Commandants to examine the feasibility of developing a combined Warrant Officer program for the two respective branches. In USASOC Strategy 2035, one of the core competencies that makes ARSOF unique is, "providing joint force commanders with culturally astute professionals who are agile, adaptive, flexible, bold, innovative, and possess a high degree of advanced training." Only through sustained exposure in garrison and the operational environment can ARSOF Soldiers develop the necessary skills and education to have a nuanced understanding of a region, a country, or a culture's opportunities and challenges.

Since the transition in 2006 from a Functional Area to an Active component Branch (in addition to the Reserve CA Branch), Civil Affairs Soldiers have professionally developed and matured into a highly

sought after, often employed portion of ARSOF capabilities (in addition to Psychological Operations and Special Forces). As the Army discusses potential options to make additional reductions to the Active and Reserve components, the Civil Affairs branch is not exempt. In order to adequately retain and invest in the experience and education of these Soldiers, a Warrant Officer program in Civil Affairs is appropriate.

THE CIVIL AFFAIRS WARRANT (380A): PROPOSED CONCEPT

If implemented, a CA Warrant Officer would fill vital roles within the SOF Civil Affairs community with priority of fill going to those positions with the greatest need for longevity. Given the relatively small composition of the active duty CA force, initial implementation should be focused within the 95th CA BDE (SO) (A) and the training/education pipeline. This can be accomplished by eliminating 38A billets that are traditionally not used or that are rarely filled due to a shortage of branch qualified Captains and inserting a Chief Warrant Officer Two (CW2) billet. A Warrant Officer at the Company level would work in the Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC), becoming the keeper of all institutional and operational knowledge within the Company for a minimum of three years, but no longer than five. During this time he or she should be working diligently towards achieving an undergraduate degree prior to their primary zone of consideration for advancement to Chief Warrant Officer Three (CW3). Advanced educational opportunities which emphasize planning would further professionally develop the newly-appointed Warrant Officer and prepare them for future assignments at various echelons. Ideally, the Warrant Officer would remain at the Company for the majority of their time as a CW2. Figure 01, page 40, is a draft model for potential implementation.

As a Chief Warrant Officer Three (CW3), Civil Affairs Warrant Officers would work in positions focused on planning and analysis at the BN level. The BN staff is another entity within a military organization that typically sees a fairly regular turnover of personnel. Once again, we can see the need in certain sections for increased continuity. Those positions (*shown in Figure 01, page 40*) cover a wide range of critical staff functions. Top performers from this population will be afforded the opportunity for assignment outside the traditional Civil Affairs organizations. These positions include, but are not limited to the Special Forces Group's 4th BN S9s, Combat Training Center Observer, Controller, Trainer (CTC/OTC), Doctrine Writer, CA Selection and Training Cadre or as Professional Military Education instructors at the Army, Service, and Joint education centers. They would also have the same advanced schooling opportunities that were afforded to them while working in the CMOC. Civil and military education progression in this phase moves toward focusing on the obtainment of baccalaureate degree and attendance to Warrant Officer Intermediate Level Education (WOILE), prior to their primary zone of consideration for promotion to Chief Warrant Officer 4 (CW4).

Initial assignment as a Civil Affairs CW4 would place the Warrant Officer inside the BDE headquarters, mirroring the same functions they performed as a member of a Battalion staff but with increased scope and responsibility. What is unique about this grade is that it would be the first time in a CA Warrant Officers career that he or she had the opportunity to apply for and

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CA WARRANT OFFICERS

attend advanced civil schooling through the National Defense University (NDU), Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), or the National Defense Intelligence College (NDIC). It also serves as the first occasion in which to compete for nominative or Joint assignments such as the Proponency Office as the Civil Affairs Proponent Warrant Officer, Human Resources Command as the Career Manager, in the Civil Military Advisory Group (CMAG), potentially selected to serve as a Command Warrant Officer for one of the Civil Affairs battalions. However, CA CW4s are not competitive for selection to serve in one of the aforementioned positions until minimum of three years has been completed in S-3 Training, S-3 Operations, CAPT, CIM, or the Fusion Cell.

The pinnacle of the Civil Affairs Warrant officer program would be selection to Chief Warrant Officer 5. As the senior Civil Affairs Warrant officers in the Branch, these highly experienced and specialized Soldiers, would serve in a variety of critical roles, both inside, and outside of Brigade. These positions include the Command Warrant Officer for the 95th CA BDE (SO) (A), Chief Warrant Officer of the Civil Affairs Branch (CWOB), and potentially as a key member of a Geographic Combatant or Functional Command staff.

tions Forces (ARSO), USASOC gains the benefit of a seasoned, qualified planner and deep area knowledge expert relative to his/her Language and Regional Educational Concentration (LREC). This Soldier has multiple operational rotations that are accompanied with the requisite understanding of Army SOF and conventional capabilities to build and develop Special Warfare campaign plans. For US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), the wider SOF portfolio gains a culturally attuned, advanced practitioner that has worked in Joint Operational and Strategic levels capable of understanding the underlying causes of instability and can craft long term SOF campaign Plans to meet Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) and Country Team objectives. For the Nation and for the Soldier's family, the benefit is a highly trained, agile, flexible, and adaptive leader.

MAKING THE CASE: AN INVESTMENT FOR THE FUTURE

Just stating a need for a capability doesn't necessarily provide an adequate argument for why something is needed. In the case of a CA Warrant Officer program, an example may be more appropriate. The example used in Figure O2 starts from the position of a senior CW4, CW4 Chris Geracz and moves backward to SFC Chris Geracz over the life span of his later military service.

The case of CW4 Chris Geracz goes beyond the immediate benefit to the individual Soldier or a Civil Affairs unit. In the case of Army Special Opera-

GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE: IMPLEMENTATION

The concept of developing and implementing a Civil Affairs Warrant Officer program is not without considerable, but worthwhile challenges. Implementation requires much analysis and consideration. Above all, two major considerations are required: the Army's Average Grade Distribution Matrix (AGDM), which governs the sustainability of a Ca-

PROPOSED CA WARRANT OFFICER (380A) DEVELOPMENT MODEL																					
Warrant Officer Time in Service	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
Rank	CW2				CW3				CW4				CW5								
Professional Military Education	Warrant Officer Advanced Course (Branch Specific)				Warrant Officer Intermediate Level Education (Branch Inmaterial)				Warrant Officer Senior Service Education (Branch Inmaterial)												
Assignment Oriented / Additional Training	UWNDC, Joint Targeting Staff Course, Joint CA Planners Course, Joint CMO Course, CMOS				UWODC, Joint CMO Course, SOF MILDEC				Pre-Command Course												
Additional Training	Air Assault, Ranger, Pathfinder, Jumpmaster, SPIES / FRIES				Lean Six Sigma, School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS)																
Developmental Assignments	• CMO				• S3 Training • S3 Operations • CAPT • Fusion Cell • CIM				• BDE S3 Training • BDE S3 Operations • BDE CAPT • BDE CIM • BDE Fusion Cell • BN CMD Warrant Officer				• BN CMD Warrant Officer • Chief Warrant Officer of the Branch (CWOB)								
Broadening Assignments					• SWCS • CTC OC/T • Doctrine Writer				• SWCS • TSOC • Proponency Warrant Officer • Career Manager (HRC) • Doctrine Writer • CMAG												
Self Development (Civilian Education)	Associates Degree (Recommended prior to promotion to CW3)				Baccalaureate Degree (Recommended prior to promotion to CW4)				Masters Degree (Recommended prior to promotion to CW5)												
National Defense University, Naval Postgraduate School, National Defense Intelligence College																					

Figure O1

LAYING OUT THE CHALLENGES: DOTML-PF IMPLICATIONS

As with developing and implementing force structure and career development changes, there are a host of implications across the DOTML-PF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Leadership, Personnel and Facilities) domains (*shown right*). Additional analysis is required prior to implementation of a Civil Affairs Warrant Officer program. The analysis listed below is not to be considered all inclusive.

CONCLUSION

The benefits of establishing a Civil Affairs Warrant Officer program are many and the challenges are many, but the benefits far exceed the challenges. As ARSOF capabilities continue to mature and the Civil Affairs branch plays a key role in conflict mitigation and prevention, the need for a highly experienced and expert Soldier is evident. 

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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1st Sgt. Christopher R. Grez is assigned to Co. D, 97th Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade. As a member of a Civil Military Support Element, 1st. Sgt. Grez has deployed twice to Bangladesh. He also had a CMSE rotation in the Philippines in support of Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines, with a follow-on assignment to the Regional CMSE in Singapore. He also served as a member of a Theater-CMSE in Hawaii.

DOTMLPF ANALYSIS

DOCTRINE – Development and implementation of doctrine relevant to the Civil Affairs (CA) Warrant Officer will take significant time. Until creation and approval is complete, 380As would use a hybrid form of 38A, 131A, and 180A doctrine to guide their training and utilization. Appropriate doctrine will be identified for use from each MOS field and approved by CA Proponency prior to execution of the initial round of Professional Military Education (PME), Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC).

ORGANIZATION – CA Warrant Officers would be initially utilized and positioned within CA Battalions and Brigade (BDEs). Reallocation of an underutilized billets; with appropriate recoding of MOS requirements and Advanced Skills Identifiers (ASIs), will minimize the need for position growth at the company and battalion levels. Positions at the BDE and higher would be created to allow for continued career progression of the 380A.

TRAINING – Like the doctrine aspect of this analysis, the training portion will take time to create. Prior to the establishment of a formal training pipeline, CA Warrant Officers would attend the necessary schooling upon completion of CA Assessment and Selection from the BN in which they will be assigned. Maximum utilization of already existing opportunities in the 180A and 131A highlighted in the Professional Development Model will reduce the need for creation of new courses. This training progression and prioritization will be monitored at the BDE level and by the CMD Warrant Officer with a bi-weekly or monthly reporting requirements to the CA Proponency.

MATERIAL – There will be new material needed for the development of the 380A Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) but it will be material that is already organic to the Army inventory. Equipment for additional personnel will be utilized from existing positions at the company level therefore there will be zero increase in equipment outside of new technological developments. However, there will be an increased authorizations for weapons, night vision devices, and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Electrical equipment, equal to the increase in personnel seen at the BN level and above.

LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION – Professional and military development will occur across all ranks of the MOS. The initial training pipeline will culminate in appointment of graduates to Warrant Officer One (WO1). While the grades of WO1 and Chief Warrant Officer Two (CW2) training outside of the pipeline will be focused on planning and analytics at the tactical level of war. Prior to promotion to Chief Warrant Officer Three (CW3), 380As will attend the Warrant Officer Advance Course (WOAC). Additional education opportunities will become available in advanced planning and analytics while in grades of CW3 and Chief Warrant Officer Four (CW4). PME for senior CW#s and CW4s will be in accordance with the pre established Warrant Officer Education System (WOES). This system outlines that CW3s who have successfully completed the WOAC and have a minimum 1 year Time In Grade (TIG) are eligible for attendance to the Warrant Officer Immediate Level Education (WOILE). CW4s who have successfully graduated from WOILE and have a minimum one year TIG will be eligible for attendance to the Warrant Officer Senior Service Education (WOSSE). Additionally it is in these same ranks that the opportunity to compete for advanced civil schooling opportunities in pursuit of a Graduate Degree from the National Defense University (NDU), the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), or the National Defense Intelligence College will present itself. Chief Warrant Officer Five (CW5) personnel selected for assignment as a Command Chief Warrant Officer will attend the Pre-Command Course Prior to assuming duty.

PERSONNEL – Further analysis must be conducted to determine the amount of qualified people on hand for peacetime, wartime, and various contingency operations the 380A will be utilized for.

FACILITIES – Creating the 380A MOS will require no change in real property already being utilized Civil Affairs organizations.