

SIGAR

**Special Inspector General for
Afghanistan Reconstruction**

SIGAR 19-03 Audit Report

Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces: DOD Lacks Performance Data to Assess, Monitor, and Evaluate Advisors Assigned to the Ministries of Defense and Interior



SIGAR 19-03-AR/MOD and MOI Advising

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SIGAR

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction

WHAT SIGAR REVIEWED

According to the Department of Defense (DOD), one of the United States' main goals in Afghanistan is to create well trained, equipped, and sustainable Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) that are capable of securing the country. To achieve this goal, DOD, through U.S. Forces–Afghanistan (USFOR-A), works with other members of NATO and the international community through the NATO Resolute Support (RS) train, advise, and assist mission. The mission provides advisors to the Afghan Ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior (MOI) to improve their resource management, procurement, logistics, and maintenance capabilities, and overall sustainability.

DOD uses five types of personnel to fill advisor positions at the MOD and the MOI: (1) uniformed military, (2) Afghanistan Hands, (3) civilians in the Ministry of Defense Advisors program, (4) DOD Expeditionary Civilians, and (5) contractors. Since 2010, DOD has awarded four contracts, worth \$1.62 billion combined, to DynCorp International to provide the contracted advisors at the MOD and MOI. Two of these contracts, worth more than \$421 million, are ongoing and currently expected to end in November 2018.

The objectives of this audit were to evaluate the extent to which DOD (1) evaluates its advising efforts to the MOD and the MOI; (2) tracks advisors assigned to the MOD and the MOI; and (3) trains its advisors in preparation for their assignments at the MOD and the MOI.

October 2018

Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces: DOD Lacks Performance Data to Assess, Monitor, and Evaluate Advisors Assigned to the Ministries of Defense and Interior

SIGAR 19-03 AUDIT REPORT

WHAT SIGAR FOUND

Although the advising effort at the MOD and the MOI is one of DOD's primary missions in Afghanistan, SIGAR found that DOD has not fully evaluated these efforts, and does not know whether the advisors assigned to MOD and MOI are meeting goals and milestones because it has not assessed, monitored or evaluated the advising efforts as required by its own guidance. Specifically, DOD was not following its security cooperation oversight guidance, DOD Instruction 5132.14, *Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy for the Security Cooperation Enterprise*, which requires it to monitor the progress of its security cooperation assistance using a standard assessment, monitoring, and evaluation program. While initially DOD officials told us that this instruction did not apply to its advising effort at the MOD and the MOI, in April 2018 and in a response to SIGAR's preliminary findings, DOD changed its position and agreed that current methods of assessment were insufficient.

In addition, DOD cannot track progress, if any, at the MOD and the MOI because the advising goals and rating system used to measure progress toward meeting those goals has frequently changed. SIGAR analyzed all of the plan of action and milestones (POAM) goals—intermediate goals and tasks that the advisors teach to—listed in RS' monthly POAM trackers from January 2015 to December 2016 and found that in 2015, 96 percent of the MOD POAM goals changed and 86 percent of the MOI POAM goals changed. In 2016, 28 percent of the MOD POAM goals changed, and 58 percent of the MOI POAM goals changed. Under this system, each POAM was assigned a percentage-based score that subjectively measured how close that POAM was to completion. In the fall of 2017, RS switched to a system where advisors used a "yes" or "no" assessment to track whether the MOD and the MOI achieved the individual tasks associated with each goal along with a date by which the goal is supposed to be achieved. RS said the new rating system removed "all of the subjectivity inherent in the old percent based . . . model," but acknowledged that it was too early to gauge the new system's effectiveness. As a result, DOD does not have a baseline on which to measure progress.

Moreover, DOD cannot assess the performance of contract advisors because its two current contracts, worth \$421 million, with DynCorp do not have measurable performance standards against which to assess the contractor's performance. This occurred because the U.S. Army Contracting Command and Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan (CSTC-A) did not write performance work statements that clearly described the work DynCorp should accomplish in a way that can be measured and assessed, even though the Federal Acquisition Regulation requires that agencies enable assessment of contractor performance against measurable performance standards to the maximum extent practicable. Instead, the contracts include

four broad requirements, such as, “the contractor shall provide advisors and mentors to the coalition’s RS mission per the specifications contained in the performance work statement,” and “the contractor shall provide advice and mentoring in support of the tasks associated with the coalition’s ministerial development plan.”

SIGAR also found that DOD reassigns personnel to advising duties once they are in Afghanistan, but does not track these reassignments, despite its own requirements to monitor the resources applied to security cooperation efforts, such as the MOD and the MOI advising effort. CSTC-A stated that the databases used by DOD to track personnel and their original assignments are “updated systematically to ensure the right numbers of people are requested and assigned to the proper duties.” However, CSTC-A does not track personnel reassignments or report them to the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). As a result, neither the Joint Chiefs of Staff nor those responsible for planning staffing requirements know whether they are requesting personnel with the right type of experience or enough personnel for advising positions at the ministries. For example, SIGAR conducted an anonymous online survey of 103 people who self-identified as being in an advisor position or conducting advising tasks at the MOD or the MOI. Four of the seven Afghanistan Hands advisors who responded to the survey and 9 of 20 uniformed advisors had less than 1 year of experience related to the positions they were currently assigned.

Finally, SIGAR found that DOD does not ensure that all uniformed personnel complete advisor training before deploying to Afghanistan as advisors to the MOD or the MOI, despite a CENTCOM requirement that all advisors attend training. Senior CSTC-A officials have identified a lack of or poor training as a key challenge to the advising efforts in Afghanistan. CENTCOM’s theater entry requirements mandate that deployed personnel must have advisor-specific training. However, DOD has acknowledged that many deployed advisors did not attend the training, and of the 20 people who responded to SIGAR’s survey and identified themselves as uniformed personnel, 9 indicated that they did not receive any advisor training before deploying. As a result, advisors may not have the skills needed for the positions they are filling. Uniformed advisors with little or no advisor-specific training may achieve poorer results from their advising efforts compared to advisors who have completed advisor-specific training. In a July 2018 memo, the CENTCOM Commander cited the use of training waivers as a primary reason that advisors did not receive training. In some cases, these untrained advisors could decrease the MOD’s and the MOI’s capabilities, and thus do harm to DOD’s and RS’s overall goals for the advising mission.

WHAT SIGAR RECOMMENDS

To ensure that DOD’s advising efforts at the MOD and the MOI are as effective as possible, SIGAR recommends that the Secretary of Defense:

- 1. Comply with DOD policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including DOD Instruction 5132.14.**
- 2. Incorporate specific, measurable performance standards into its current and future ministerial advising contracts.**
- 3. Develop and implement a mechanism to accurately identify and track all personnel performing advising tasks at the MOD and the MOI.**
- 4. Enforce existing requirements for all uniformed U.S. personnel to receive advisor-specific training before deploying to Afghanistan to be advisors at the MOD and the MOI.**

SIGAR received written comments on a draft of this report from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia. In the comments, DOD concurred with all four recommendations. In response to the first recommendation, DOD stated that it is fully committed to complying with all departmental policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including, but not limited to, DOD Instruction 5132.14. With regard to the second recommendation, DOD noted that the ministerial advising effort must be designed so all types of advisors—military, civilian, and contractors—are working in unison to build capacity at the ministries. With regard to the third recommendation, DOD stated that it will direct the appropriate organizations to identify and track all positions that are intended to perform advisory functions. Finally, with regard to the fourth recommendation, DOD acknowledged concerns about the number of training waivers CENTCOM has issued and committed to review ways to address the problem.



SIGAR

Office of the Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

October 26, 2018

The Honorable James N. Mattis
Secretary of Defense

General Joseph L. Votel
Commander, U.S. Central Command

General Austin Scott Miller
Commander, U.S. Forces–Afghanistan and
Commander, Resolute Support

This report discusses the results of SIGAR’s audit of the Department of Defense’s (DOD) use of advisors to build capacity within the Afghan Ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior (MOI). According to DOD, one of the United States’ main goals in Afghanistan is to create well trained, equipped, and sustainable Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) that are capable of securing the country. To do so, DOD, through U.S. Forces–Afghanistan (USFOR-A), works with other members of NATO and the international community as part of the NATO Resolute Support train, advise, and assist mission. The mission provides advisors who help the MOD and the MOI improve their resource management, procurement, logistics, and maintenance capabilities, and overall sustainability.

We are making four recommendations. We recommend that the Secretary of Defense (1) comply with DOD policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including DOD Instruction 5132.14; (2) incorporate specific, measurable performance standards into its current and future ministerial advising contracts; (3) develop and implement a mechanism to accurately identify and track all personnel performing advising tasks at the MOD and the MOI; and (4) enforce existing requirements for all uniformed U.S. personnel to receive advisor-specific training before deploying to Afghanistan to be advisors at the MOD and the MOI.

We received written comments on a draft of this report from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, which are reproduced in appendix II. In the comments, DOD concurred with all four recommendations. In response to the first recommendation, DOD stated that it is fully committed to complying with all departmental policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including, but not limited to, DOD Instruction 5132.14. With regard to the second recommendation, DOD noted that the ministerial advising effort must be designed so all types of advisors—military, civilian, and contractors—are working in unison to build capacity at the ministries. With regard to the third recommendation, DOD stated that it will direct the appropriate organizations to identify and track all positions that are intended to perform advisory functions. Finally, with regard to the fourth recommendation, DOD acknowledged concerns about the number of training waivers U.S. Central Command has issued and committed to review ways to address the problem. DOD also provided technical comments, which we incorporated into this report, as appropriate.

SIGAR conducted this work under the authority of Public Law 110-181, as amended, and the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; and in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFHands	Afghanistan Hands Program
ANDSF	Afghan National Defense and Security Forces
CENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan
DOD	Department of Defense
DOD-EC	Department of Defense–Expeditionary Civilians
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
MOD	Ministry of Defense
MODA	Ministry of Defense Advisors
MOI	Ministry of Interior
POAM	program of action and milestones
RS	Resolute Support
USFOR-A	U.S. Forces–Afghanistan

According to the Department of Defense (DOD), one of the United States' main goals in Afghanistan is to create well trained, equipped, and sustainable Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) that are capable of securing the country.¹ To achieve this goal, DOD, through U.S. Forces–Afghanistan (USFOR-A), works with other members of NATO and the international community as part of the NATO Resolute Support (RS) Train, Advise, and Assist mission.² However, in our September 2017 Lessons Learned report, we reported that the U.S. government was not properly prepared from the outset to help build an Afghan army and police force that was capable of protecting Afghanistan from internal and external threats, and that the U.S. lacked a comprehensive approach to building capacity within the Ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior (MOI).³

According to DOD, building capacity at the MOD and the MOI is one of the main efforts of the RS mission. To accomplish this, RS, with support from DOD and other coalition partners, assigns advisors to the MOD and the MOI to improve the ministries' resource management, procurement, logistics, and maintenance capabilities, and overall sustainability. It did so initially through eight "essential functions."⁴ In spring 2018, RS placed all ministerial development activities under the Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan (CSTC-A) and discontinued using the essential function model.⁵

This audit focuses on DOD's advising efforts for the MOD and the MOI from January 2015, when the RS mission started, to April 2018. The objectives were to assess the extent to which DOD (1) evaluates its advising efforts to the MOD and the MOI; (2) tracks advisors assigned to the MOD and the MOI; and (3) trains its advisors in preparation for their assignments at the MOD and the MOI.

During this audit, we reviewed DOD's security cooperation and personnel policies, the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), and DOD and RS guidance related to evaluating security cooperation programs.⁶ We interviewed officials with DOD, RS, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), USFOR-A, CSTC-A, the Army Contracting Command, and DynCorp International. We also conducted an anonymous online survey, distributed by USFOR-A via email, of 103 people who self-identified as being in an advisor position or conducting advising tasks at the MOD or the MOI.⁷ The respondents consisted of U.S. military personnel and civilians, and contractor personnel. We conducted our work in Kabul and Parwan Provinces, Afghanistan, and Washington, D.C., from January 2017 to October 2018, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Appendix I has a more detailed discussion of our scope and methodology.

¹ Department of Defense, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, June 2017.

² We refer to NATO and other member countries of the RS mission as "the coalition" throughout this report. As of May 2017, there were 39 members, including the United States.

³ SIGAR, *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, SIGAR 17-62-LL, September 2017.

⁴ The eight essential functions were EF–1 Plan, Program, Budget, and Execute; EF–2 Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight; EF–3 Rule of Law; EF–4 Force Generation; EF–5 Sustain the Force; EF–6 Plan, Resource, and Execute Effective Security Campaigns; EF–7 Develop Sufficient Intelligence Capabilities and Processes; and EF–8 Maintain Internal and External Strategic Communication Capability.

⁵ CSTC-A is the U.S.-led command of military and civilian personnel from 13 nations that directs efforts to organize, train, and equip the ANDSF.

⁶ DOD defines security cooperation as "all Department of Defense interactions with foreign security establishments to build security relationships that promote specific United States security interests, develop allied and partner nation military and security capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide United States forces with peacetime and contingency access to allied and partner nations." See Department of Defense, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, August 2017, p. 206.

⁷ When our survey was active in July 2017, USFOR-A reported that there were 190 personnel in advisory positions at the MOD and the MOI. In addition to these 190 personnel, DOD reported that there were 277 contracted advisors at the MOD and 110 contracted advisors at the MOI as of April 10, 2017.

BACKGROUND

During the course of this audit, RS, with the assistance of DOD—through USFOR-A and CSTC-A—assigned U.S. advisors to build the capacity of the MOD and the MOI through the eight essential functions as a part of the NATO mission to Afghanistan. USFOR-A allocated the advisors, which were provided by DOD’s military services and various civilian agencies, and CSTC-A oversaw them as part of its broader responsibilities for developing the ANDSF through essential functions 1 (Plan, Program, Budget, and Execute), 2 (Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight), 3 (Rule of Law), and 5 (Sustain the Force).

DOD’s Process for Advising at the MOD and the MOI

The advising process at the MOD and the MOI is a continuous cyclical process that begins with the Commander of RS and USFOR-A establishing the strategic goals of the advising effort. This is followed by RS, USFOR-A, and the Afghan government determining the ministries’ baseline capabilities and developing the overall advising requirements. Once determined, DOD and NATO created a program of actions and milestones (POAMs), which are intermediate goals and tasks that the advisors teach to, and when accomplished, lead to the overall advising goals set by DOD, NATO, and the Afghan government.⁸ DOD and NATO then select and train advisors who can teach the Afghans the skills necessary to meet the POAMs. While the advisors teach, they give feedback on the ministries’ progress in meeting the POAMs to the Security Force Assistance Center at RS, which tracks progress in a spreadsheet called the POAM tracker and adjusts the POAMs as necessary. DOD and NATO also use the feedback to improve and adjust the overall advising goals. Figure 1 shows the MOD and the MOI advising process.

Figure 1 - DOD’s Process For Advising the MOD and the MOI



Sources: DOD and RS documentation and interviews.

Types of DOD Personnel Who Advise at the MOD and MOI

The process that identifies and deploys U.S. personnel to act as advisors in Afghanistan is managed through DOD’s Global Force Management system, which assigns personnel around the globe to meet each command’s needs and objectives. This process starts when commands, in this case CSTC-A or USFOR-A, identify and request the types of personnel they need. Once approved, deployment orders are issued to mobilize personnel

⁸ The original POAMs that guided ministerial advising for 2015 and 2016 were in the *2015-2016 Ministerial Development Plan*. This plan is marked “Classified.” Therefore, we could not include information from the POAMs in this report.

and assign them to perform specific duties for a specific amount of time. For the advisors in Afghanistan, CSTC-A or USFOR-A creates the request, which CENTCOM then approves, followed by the Joint Staff, which has oversight over all uniformed DOD personnel. CENTCOM then requests personnel from DOD, and they are provided by the department's services and civilian agencies.

DOD uses the following personnel to fill advising positions at the MOD and the MOI.

1. **Uniformed military personnel:** These DOD personnel come from four of the branches of the U.S. military: Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy. Other coalition countries also assign members of their armed forces to be advisors at the MOD and the MOI.
2. **Afghanistan Hands (AFHands):** These uniformed personnel come from the DOD's Afghanistan Hands Program. AFHands serve three consecutive 1-year tours: an initial deployment to Afghanistan, an Afghan-related posting in the United States, and a second deployment to Afghanistan.
3. **Ministry of Defense Advisors (MODA):** Individuals in the MODA program are senior civilian DOD personnel with technical skills, knowledge, and experience. MODAs deploy to and assist the security ministries in a number of countries, including Afghanistan, for 1 to 2 years.
4. **DOD-Expeditionary Civilians (DOD-EC):** Formerly known as the Civilian Expeditionary Workforce, this is the overall program for DOD civilians who deploy outside of the United States and includes MODAs. Non-MODA personnel can be in any grade level. According to the department, DOD-EC personnel provide advising services below the ministerial level and perform support functions.
5. **Contractors:** DynCorp International personnel have advised at the MOD and the MOI since 2010 through four contracts awarded by the U.S. Army Contracting Command. The firm hires personnel with technical skills, knowledge, and experience to provide advising services. As of August 2018, the advising contracts have been valued at \$1.62 billion. The Army Contracting Command awarded the two current contracts, worth \$421 million combined, in 2014. They end on November 30, 2018, with options to extend them until March 31, 2019.⁹

While the number of advisors at the MOD and the MOI varies from month to month, in July 2017, USFOR-A reported to us that there were 190 personnel in advisory positions working at the MOD and the MOI. Of these 190 advisors, 72 were a part of the MODA program, 29 were AFHands, and 89 were uniformed personnel. USFOR-A did not provide the number of DOD-EC or advisors working under the DynCorp International contracts. In response to a separate request, on April 10, 2017, DOD responded that there were 277 contractors serving as advisors at the MOD and 110 contractors serving as advisors at the MOI.

Policies and Organizations Responsible for the Planning and Oversight of Ministerial Advising Efforts

DOD is required to follow six current regulations, instructions, and directives to plan, execute, and oversee its ministerial advising activities. Table 1 shows the applicable guidance.

⁹ The current MOD contract—number W56MY-15-C-0005—has a period of performance from January 1, 2015, to at least November 30, 2018, and is worth \$191.9 million. The current MOI contract—number W56MY-15-C-0006—has a period of performance from January 1, 2015, to at least November 30, 2018, and is worth \$229 million. The prior MOD contract—number W91CRB-10-C-0030—had a period of performance from February 12, 2010, to December 31, 2014, and a cost of \$298.4 million, while the prior MOI contract—number W91CRB-11-C-0053—had a period of performance from October 20, 2010, to December 31, 2014, and a cost of \$899.6 million.

Table 1 - DOD Policies Related to Ministerial Advising in Afghanistan

Title and Effective Date	Summary of Requirements
<p><i>The Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance</i> July 14, 2008</p>	<p>This handbook discusses specialty training for advisors, stating</p> <p>As a minimum, all unit members should undergo cultural awareness training and basic language for the target area. Additionally, training in rapport building, negotiation, small group team building and mentoring should be offered at all levels . . . For advisor team members themselves, training in the areas mentioned above should be extensive. Mastery of these topics should be a prerequisite for continuation in the advisor program.^a</p>
<p>DOD Directive 5132.03, <i>DOD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation</i> October 24, 2008 Updated and re-issued on December 29, 2016</p>	<p>This policy states that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will “oversee and conduct programmatic level assessments and conduct all security cooperation program assessments.”^b</p> <p>The re-issued policy states that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is required to establish policy guidance for and provide oversight of the assessment, monitoring, and evaluation of security cooperation activities.</p> <p>CENTCOM is also required to “inform the CJCS [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] and the USD(P) [Under Secretary of Defense for Policy] of obstacles to execution of plans, including shortfalls in security cooperation authorities or resources, joint capability shortfalls, or shortfalls in partners’ capabilities.”^c</p> <p>In Afghanistan, CENTCOM is required to “monitor and evaluate ongoing security cooperation activities to gauge effectiveness, determine whether corrections are needed, and capture lessons learned.”^d</p>
<p><i>Guidance on Common Training Standards for Security Force Assistance</i> January 2014</p>	<p>This document cites DOD Directive 5100.01, <i>Functions of the Department of Defense and its Major Components</i>, which states that the military “shall organize, train, and equip forces to contribute unique service capabilities to the joint force commander to conduct Building Partner Capacity/security force assistance activities.”^e</p>
<p><i>Security Force Assistance Guide</i> July 1, 2014</p>	<p>The guide lists advisor training requirements and states that training should be completed before deployment. Specifically, it states that</p> <p>It is essential to operational success that nominated advisors meet the requirements of the job description and mission, including experience, background, qualifications, and language proficiency . . . Advisors should therefore attend designated national and NATO-led RS PDT [pre-deployment training] prior to deployment. Deploying Units should equally meet standards and requirements.^f</p>
<p>Training Annex BB of NATO’s <i>Joint Force Command Brunssum OPLAN 30312, Revision 2.2</i> December 20, 2016</p>	<p>This guidance identifies pre-deployment training requirements, including specific advising skills.</p>
<p>DOD Instruction 5132.14, <i>Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy for the Security Cooperation Enterprise</i> January 13, 2017</p>	<p>This policy mandates various tasks, including conducting initial assessments, creating an “initiative design document,” and monitoring the progress of the initiatives.</p> <p>The instruction states, “Evaluations should be evidence-based, relying on verifiable data and information gathered using the standards of professional evaluation organizations. Both quantitative and qualitative methods can be rigorous and are usually required to answer evaluation questions.”^g</p> <p>This instruction also requires DOD to conduct “centralized independent and rigorous evaluations of significant security cooperation initiatives to examine their relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability,” disseminate best practices and lessons learned, and give unclassified summaries of all evaluations when possible.^h</p> <p>The instruction cites the importance of “monitoring progress of significant security cooperation initiatives toward desired outcomes by tracking inputs (e.g., funding, manpower, and expertise), then determining whether programmatic milestones are achieved within anticipated timeframes, budgets, and outcomes, including whether desired results or effects are occurring within the timeframe anticipated.”ⁱ</p>

Sources: DOD and NATO.

Notes:

^a *The Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance*, July 14, 2008, p. 23.

^b DOD Directive 5132.03, *DOD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation*, 2008, p. 4.

^c DOD Directive 5132.03, *DOD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation*, December 29, 2016, p. 12.

^d DOD Directive 5132.03, *DOD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation*, 2016, p. 12.

^e *Guidance on Common Training Standards for Security Force Assistance*, January 2014, p. 1.

^f *Security Force Assistance Guide*, Annex C, July 1, 2014, p. C.1.

^g DOD Instruction 5132.14, *Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy for the Security Cooperation Enterprise*, January 13, 2017, p.16.

^h DOD Instruction 5132.14, *Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy*, p.3.

ⁱ DOD Instruction 5132.14, *Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy*, p.3.

Three DOD offices and groups are tasked with overseeing the department's advising efforts globally. At the highest levels of the department, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is the principal staff assistant and advisor to the Secretary of Defense for all matters related to the policies and oversight of security cooperation programs, which includes advising security institutions in partner countries, such as Afghanistan. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency provides guidance to DOD components on conducting security cooperation programs and oversees the MODA program.

In addition to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, DOD uses two groups to oversee its advising efforts at the MOD and the MOI. The Ministerial Development Governance Board has a mandate to oversee, support, and monitor ministerial development efforts, while the Afghanistan Resources Oversight Council reviews and approves contracts worth more than \$50 million per year or \$100 million in total.^{10;11} Finally, the Commander of RS and USFOR-A provides an additional layer of oversight through bi-annual periodic mission reviews to assess the overall status of DOD's efforts in Afghanistan, including the status of the ministerial advising mission. These period mission reviews include reviews of equipment, sustainment, ministry advising, and emerging capability requirements and are based on input from DOD, as well as the MOD and the MOI.

DOD HAS NOT FULLY EVALUATED THE PROGRESS MADE IN ITS MOD AND MOI ADVISING EFFORTS

DOD Has Not Implemented Its Own Guidance to Assess, Monitor, and Evaluate the MOD and the MOI Advising Effort

According to DOD Instruction 5132.14, effective January 13, 2017, all DOD security cooperation efforts, including those in Afghanistan, must follow a standard assessment, monitoring, and evaluation program. The instruction cites the importance of conducting initial assessments to inform an "initiative design document" that guides all significant security cooperation initiatives as well as establishing a baseline against which progress can be tracked. The instruction also states that DOD should conduct independent, rigorous evaluations of security cooperation efforts to examine their relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability; disseminate best practices and lessons learned; and create, and make publically available, unclassified summaries of all evaluations when possible.¹²

DOD officials gave us conflicting responses about whether this instruction applied to its advising effort at the MOD and the MOI. In March 2017, three months after the publication of DOD Instruction 5132.14, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy told us it was working to implement the new instruction and that following it could increase the effectiveness of security cooperation activities. However, 6 months later, in October 2017, the officials said the instruction and its requirements to create specific documents, such as baseline assessments and initiative design documents, were not applicable because the advising effort in Afghanistan had its own funding source, namely the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund.¹³ However, based on

¹⁰ The Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Defense for Security Cooperation and for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia co-chair the Ministerial Development Governance Board. The other members are from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; Comptroller; the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; the Defense Security Cooperation Agency; CSTC-A; the Joint Staff's Strategic Plans and Policy directorate; and CENTCOM's Strategy, Plans, and Policy directorate.

¹¹ The Afghanistan Resources Oversight Council is composed of the Principal Deputy Under Secretaries of Defense for Policy; Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; and Comptroller; and senior representatives from the Joint Staff, CENTCOM, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management and Comptroller).

¹² DOD Instruction 5132.14.

¹³ Congress created the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund to allow DOD to provide the ANDSF with equipment, supplies, services, training, and funding.

our review of the exclusions cited in DOD Instruction 5132.14, we determined that Afghan security cooperation activities, including advising at the ministerial level, are not exempt from the instruction regardless of their use of that fund.

DOD also said it uses multiple organizations or forums to oversee the MOD and the MOI advising effort, specifically, the Ministerial Development Governance Board, the Afghanistan Resources Oversight Council, and periodic mission reviews. We found that they provided partial and fragmented reviews, and did not allow for a complete assessment of the results of the advising effort at the ministries. Specifically:

- We reviewed minutes from all four of the Ministerial Development Governance Board's meetings and found that the only discussions related to advisors concerned MODAs and DOD-ECs. They did not mention the other types of advisors, including uniformed personnel, AFHands, or advisors hired under the DynCorp advising contracts, which comprise three of the five personnel pools that advisors assigned to MOD and MOI are pulled from. As a result, the board only provided oversight of civilian advisors.
- The Afghanistan Resources Oversight Council's only responsibility for the advising effort at the ministries is reviewing and approving the two DynCorp advising contracts.
- The Commander of RS and USFOR-A conducts periodic mission reviews focusing on the entire mission in Afghanistan, including, but not limited to, advising at the MOD and the MOI. While the periodic mission reviews should include an assessment of the advising efforts, DOD provided a summary of the spring 2017 review that did not mention or evaluate the progress of advising at the ministries.¹⁴

DOD changed its position regarding the applicability of DOD Instruction 5132.14 to the ministry advising effort in Afghanistan again in April 2018, stating, in a response to the preliminary findings of our audit, that the Office of the Under Secretary for Policy agreed with our assessment of the instruction and DOD's current oversight methods. An official from that office said the current oversight methods are insufficient to achieve comprehensive oversight of the advising effort and do not meet the instruction's requirements. In addition, other officials at the Office of the Under Secretary for Policy said the department intends to follow Instruction 5132.14 with regard to its activities in Afghanistan, but it may take time to do so. Furthermore, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2019 required DOD to submit a plan to Congress outlining its planned monitoring and evaluation of security cooperation activities, specifically including those using the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund.¹⁵ DOD officials said they intend to submit this plan to Congress before the deadline set by the legislation.

DOD Lacks a Baseline and Consistent Metrics to Track the Progress of the MOD and the MOI Advising Effort over Time

Since October 2008, DOD Directive 5132.03 has required DOD to conduct assessments of its security cooperation, including advising, activities. Beginning in January 2017, DOD Instruction 5132.14 clarified that metrics used in the assessments must have baselines to allow for tracking progress over time. According to that instruction,

Evaluations should be evidence-based, relying on verifiable data and information gathered using the standards of professional evaluation organizations. Both quantitative and qualitative methods can be rigorous and are usually required to answer evaluation questions.¹⁶

¹⁴ This was the only periodic mission review summary provided by DOD.

¹⁵ John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act, 2019, Pub. L. No. 115-232, § 1211. The legislation requires DOD to submit the monitoring and evaluation plan prior to expending more than 50 percent of the operation and maintenance funds made available to DOD for fiscal year 2019 for activities under 10 U.S.C. § 333.

¹⁶ DOD Instruction 5132.14.

Despite this guidance, the POAM goals, which are intermediate goals and tasks that advisors teach to, have changed frequently, making it difficult to track progress from year to year. In addition, according to RS officials, advisors and the RS command subjectively evaluated the MOD and MOI progress.

To determine how consistent the POAM goals were, we analyzed all of the POAM goals listed in the monthly POAM trackers for the MOD and the MOI from January 2015 to December 2016, and identified the percentage of the POAM goals that changed every 6 months (see table 2).¹⁷ In 2015, we determined that 96 percent of the MOD POAM goals changed, and 86 percent of the MOI POAM goals changed. In 2016, 28 percent of the MOD POAM goals changed, and 58 percent of the MOI POAM goals changed.

Table 2 - SIGAR's Analysis of POAM Goals, January 2015 to December 2016

	MOD	MOI
Percentage of POAM goals that changed from January to June 2015	96	82
Percentage of POAM goals that changed from July to December 2015	30	70
Percentage of POAM goals that changed in 2015	96	86
Percentage of POAM goals that changed from January to June 2016	22	44
Percentage of POAM goals that changed from July to December 2016	20	49
Percentage of POAM goals that changed in 2016	28	58

Source: SIGAR analysis based on POAM assessments conducted each month from January 2015 to December 2016.

Note: Percentages are based on the total number of POAMs assessed for the year.

When we asked why the goals changed, the RS official in charge of tracking them said the POAMs are “living documents” that change over time. Highlighting the “living” nature of the POAMs, DOD’s December 2017 *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* stated that the Security Force Assistance Center and the essential functions refine the POAMs every 6 months to ensure that they accurately project the ministries’ ability to achieve POAM goals.¹⁸

RS also changed how advisors rated the ministries’ progress in meeting POAM goals. During 2015 and 2016, it moved from a system where each POAM received a single score regardless of how many advisors worked toward the POAM goal, to a system where each advisor provided his or her own individual scores measuring the overall progress to date, as well as scores for a variety of topics, such as “Doctrine, Procedures” and “Leadership, Delegate.” Under these assessment systems, each POAM was assigned a percentage-based score that subjectively measured how close that POAM was to completion. Under the rating system where each POAM received a single score, the monthly POAM tracker did not explain how the single score was calculated if multiple advisors worked toward the POAM goal.

In the spring of 2017, RS stopped reporting progress on each POAM on a monthly basis and moved to a quarterly reporting system. This was followed by a change in the fall of 2017, where RS switched to a system where advisors used a “yes” or “no” assessment to track whether the MOD and the MOI achieved the individual tasks associated with each goal along with a date by which the goal is supposed to be achieved. When we asked about the move away from percentage-based ratings to the new POAM rating system, RS responded that “the subjectivity of the percent based assessments [of the POAM ratings] . . . creates a deficit with the historical baseline ratings,” and that “these historical assessments do not provide an objective sustainable date or target completion date, just a percent complete.”¹⁹ RS said the new rating system removed

¹⁷ The number of POAM goals listed on the monthly tracker changed over time as POAM goals were added, removed, or modified.

¹⁸ Department of Defense, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 1, 2017.

¹⁹ RS response to SIGAR, October 2, 2017.

“all of the subjectivity inherent in the old percent based . . . model,” but acknowledged that it was too early to gauge the new system’s effectiveness.²⁰

We have previously reported that changing goals and subjective assessments makes it difficult to measure the progress of DOD’s efforts to build the ANDSF at the tactical level. Specifically, in 2014, we found that DOD’s assessments of the ANDSF’s abilities were subjective and that the frequent rotations of personnel made it difficult to track progress with such subjective measurements, noting that new advisor teams had a tendency to rate units lower than their immediate predecessors did.²¹ We believe a similar situation exists with advising at the ministerial level because the changing POAM goals and the subjective assessments from 2015 to the fall of 2017 make it difficult to assess the effectiveness of DOD’s advising effort over time. Thus, the progress and impact of DOD’s advising efforts to build the MOD and the MOI capacity is unknown, despite U.S. funding over the past 3 years, due to the changing nature of both the POAMs and the system used to track POAM progress.

DOD Lacks Measurable Performance Standards to Assess the Contracted Advisors

The FAR “requires the use of performance-based acquisitions for services to the maximum extent practicable.”²² Performance-based contracts for services are required to include “measurable performance standards (i.e., in terms of quality, timeliness, quantity, etc.) and the method of assessing contractor performance against performance standards.”²³ The FAR also requires performance-based contracts for services to include a performance work statement and performance incentives, where appropriate.²⁴

Under its contracts with DOD, DynCorp International (DynCorp) hires personnel with technical skills and experience to provide advising services at the MOD and the MOI and ensure that a minimum percentage of its contracted positions are filled, as required in the contracts’ performance work statements. However, we found that DOD is unable to track DynCorp’s performance because while the performance work statements provide four broad requirements for the contractor to follow, they do not include measurable performance standards, even though the FAR requires that agencies “[e]nable assessment of work performance against measurable performance standards” to the maximum extent practicable.²⁵ The performance work statements listed DynCorp’s four broad requirements as:

- The contractor shall provide advisors and mentors to the coalition’s RS mission per the specifications contained in the performance work statement.
- The contractor shall provide advice and mentoring in support of the functions of the coalition’s ministerial development plan.
- The contractor shall provide advice and mentoring in support of the objectives of the coalition’s ministerial development plan.
- The contractor shall provide advice and mentoring in support of the tasks associated with the coalition’s ministerial development plan.²⁶

²⁰ RS response to SIGAR, October 2, 2017.

²¹ SIGAR, *Afghan National Security Forces: Actions Needed to Improve Plans for Sustaining Capability Assessment Efforts*, SIGAR 14-33-AR, February 2014.

²² FAR 37.000.

²³ FAR Subpart 37.601(b)(2), “Performance-Based Acquisition: General,” and Subpart 37.603(a), “Performance-Based Acquisition: Performance standards”

²⁴ FAR Subpart 37.601(b)(1), 37.601(b)(2), and 37.601(b)(3), “Performance-Based Acquisition: General.”

²⁵ FAR 37.602.

²⁶ Performance Work Statement for contract number W560MY-15-C-0005, Technical Exhibit 1, and Performance Work Statement for contract W560MY-15-C-0006, Technical Exhibit 1.

In fact, a DOD quality assurance representative who was tasked with the daily monitoring of the contractor's performance said there are no measurements of progress in the contracts. The lack of measurable performance standards occurred because the U.S. Army Contracting Command and CSTC-A did not write performance work statements that clearly described the work DynCorp should accomplish in a way that can be measured and assessed. In response to the preliminary findings of our audit, DOD officials noted that it would be difficult to create measurable performance standards that measured the contractor's performance in a useful manner.

However, without measurable performance standards, DOD cannot measure the effectiveness of its more than \$421 million contracts with DynCorp. Moreover, in May 2018, a senior DOD procurement official who we briefed on our findings told us the Afghanistan Resource Oversight Council directed CSTC-A to "(1) measure the [advising] contract's effectiveness in outcomes achieved by the Afghans as a result of mentoring and (2) include metrics in all future contract instruments beginning in fiscal year 2018 that require specific metrics to measure performance to comply with [FAR] requirements."²⁷ On September 12, 2018, DOD released a draft performance work statement for a follow-on contract to provide advisory services at the MOD and the MOI that included two general performance requirements. This draft performance work statement would measure the contractor's performance by measuring CSTC-A's satisfaction with the advisors' efforts and the contractor's adherence to meeting CSTC-A's milestone schedule.

DOD REASSIGNS ADVISING PERSONNEL BUT DOES NOT TRACK THOSE REASSIGNMENTS

According to DOD Instruction 5132.14, DOD is required to monitor the progress of security cooperation initiatives by tracking inputs, including staffing requirements. Furthermore, DOD Directive 5132.03 requires CENTCOM to inform the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy of obstacles to implementing plans, including shortfalls in staffing.²⁸ These requirements mean that DOD should monitor the resources, such as the personnel and their responsibilities, that are being applied to advising efforts, including those in Afghanistan.

CSTC-A said the databases DOD uses to track personnel and their original assignments are "updated systematically to ensure the right numbers of people are requested and assigned to the proper duties." However, CSTC-A does not track personnel reassignments or report them to CENTCOM. When advising positions are not filled, essential function commanders and program managers reassigned personnel without officially changing their job titles.

CSTC-A reported that unfilled positions "present a challenge," but it was "unable to provide quantitative data to effectively communicate the challenge." Separately, one senior CSTC-A official responsible for overseeing advising efforts at the MOD stated that empty advisor positions are one of the biggest challenges to the advising mission. When an advisor position is not filled, CSTC-A said it "simply attempt[s] to apply resources to an evolving TAA [advising] effort" and "completes its mission with all available resources and works diligently within the established procedures to request and fill the billets [positions] needed."²⁹ The same senior CSTC-A official charged with overseeing advising at the MOD stated that when advising positions are empty, he must decide if he should reassign personnel to fill the empty position, or leave that advising position vacant.

When we asked for documentation of how often advisors are reassigned once they arrive in Afghanistan, CENTCOM provided a classified response. CENTCOM also stated that in cases where qualified personnel are already in Afghanistan or deploying soon, the reassignment is coordinated with the individuals and their parent units. However, CSTC-A acknowledged that informal moves do take place, stating, "As far as reassigning

²⁷ DOD Response to Statement of Facts, April 27, 2018.

²⁸ DOD Directive 5132.03, *DOD Policy and Responsibility Relating to Security Cooperation*, 2016.

²⁹ CSTC-A response to SIGAR, October 9, 2017.

personnel upon arrival to theater, we do not have records that track assignment of individuals to duties outside of their original tasking.” As a result, when these informal personnel moves occur, CENTCOM is not notified of them. This may lead to DOD requesting personnel with the wrong type of experience or requesting insufficient numbers of personnel for advising positions in Afghanistan.

To question as many advisors at the MOD and the MOI as possible, we created an anonymous online survey for U.S. advisors to the MOD and MOI. This survey was sent out by USFOR-A to individuals they designated as advisors. We received responses from 103 people who self-identified as advisors, with each respondent identifying as being from one of the five personnel groups providing advisors. See appendix I for a more fulsome description of the survey. Four of the seven AFHands advisors who responded to our survey had less than 1 year of experience related to the positions they were currently assigned. Additionally, 9 of the 20 uniformed advisors who responded had less than 1 year of experience related to the positions they were assigned. Additionally, while DOD-EC personnel provide advising below the ministerial level and fill non-advising support positions, we found that DOD-EC personnel do advise at the MOD and the MOI. Six DOD-ECs who responded to our survey said they are in advisory positions and perform advisory work at the ministries. As a result of reassigning personnel who have minimal experience in the roles to which they are assigned, some advisors may not have the requisite experience needed to properly advise at the MOD and the MOI.

In response to preliminary findings of our audit, an official from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy said, “The CEW [Civilian Expeditionary Workforce] Program (pre-cursor to the DOD-EC program) was never intended to field advisors of any type CEWs were supposed to perform support functions However, many got tasked to be advisors.” As a result, DOD-EC personnel who are not supposed to advise at the ministerial level and who receive 3 weeks of training—far less training to be advisors than MODAs—were nevertheless performing ministerial advising duties.

The DOD Office of Inspector General has raised similar concerns regarding the lack of experienced advisors. In December 2017, it found only 2 of the 21 Afghan inspector general offices had U.S. or coalition advisors with relevant experience.³⁰ The DOD Office of Inspector General recommended that RS and DOD “ensure the assignment of enough U.S. and Coalition inspector general advisors with the experience and training to assist the MOD Inspector General...”³¹

Reiterating the need for experienced advisors, the Afghan First Deputy Minister of Defense emphasized the importance of advisors’ experience and having the right personnel advising on their expertise. “Using [advisors] that have been here before makes it easier,” he explained. “Infantry officers can’t provide advice on artillery; we need artillery officers for artillery.”³²

DOD DOES NOT ENSURE THAT MOST UNIFORMED ADVISORS COMPLETE ADVISOR TRAINING BEFORE DEPLOYING TO AFGHANISTAN

According to several documents guiding the train, advise, and assist activities and senior CSTC-A staff we interviewed, completing advisor-related training before arriving for duty in Afghanistan is considered a best practice, highly preferred, and required by CENTCOM guidance. However, unlike MODA, AFHands, DOD-EC, and contractor personnel, DOD does not ensure that uniformed advisors take advisor training before deployment, despite a CENTCOM theater entry requirement mandating the training.

³⁰ DOD Office of Inspector General, *Evaluation of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Enable the Afghan Ministry of Defense to Develop Its Oversight and Internal Control Capability*, DODIG-2017-105, August 4, 2017 (declassified on December 5, 2017).

³¹ DOD Office of Inspector General, *Evaluation of U.S. and Coalition Efforts*, DODIG-2017-105.

³² Interview with First Deputy Minister of Defense, April 16, 2017.

The *Security Force Assistance Guide*, *Guidance on Common Training Standards for Security Force Assistance*, *The Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance*, and CENTCOM theater entry requirements all cite the need for trained advisors, and apply to DOD's advising efforts at the MOD and the MOI. Specifically:

- The *Security Force Assistance Guide* defines advisor qualifications and training requirements and states that training should be completed before deployment.³³
- The *Guidance on Common Training Standards for Security Force Assistance* provides training guidance specific to security force assistance, including a list of common advising skills and guidelines for measuring the qualifications of individuals who have been or might be assigned as advisors.
- *The Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance* discusses the importance of specialty training for security force assistance advisors, including cultural awareness, language, leadership, and team building training.
- CENTCOM's fiscal year 2015 theater entry requirements cite a NATO advisor training program in Poland and require personnel from all services and CENTCOM components who are tasked to fill advisor billets to attend.

The use of uniformed advisors who never completed advisor training prior to deployment has been noted at the highest levels of DOD. As early as November 2014, the CENTCOM Commander stated that it was important for advisor personnel to complete training and required that CENTCOM personnel assigned as advisors in Afghanistan attend the available advisor training. Further, according to DOD, in mid-2017, the Secretary of Defense directed the services to provide trained advisors to RS because RS had informed DOD that many of its uniformed advisors arrived without any advisor training. Separately, one senior CSTC-A official said the lack of training was one of the top challenges to advising efforts in Afghanistan, and in August 2017, a former CSTC-A Commander said,

Proper training is probably the most important aspect that must be addressed during pre-deployment training . . . It is essential training for anyone who is being deployed into a ministerial advisor position. An individual who is coming here to be an advisor better understand Afghanistan and her culture.³⁴

He added, "If someone is deploying to be an advisor, part of the pre-deployment training requirement must include training on how to be an advisor."³⁵ A senior CSTC-A official said the AFHands, who frequently have more substantial language training than other advisors, have the most advisor training among uniformed personnel. The AFHands training consists of 16 weeks of Dari language training, 2 weeks of cultural and regional training, and 6 to 10 weeks of combat skills training before the first deployment.³⁶ Before their second deployment, AFHands complete 6 to 8 weeks of service combat skills training and 14 weeks of language sustainment training.

Following the Secretary of Defense's and the CENTCOM Commander's statements, in August 2017, the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance completed a study examining the training and education gaps for senior advisors, concluding that a capability gap did exist. This finding resulted in DOD creating a 10-day Senior Leader Advising Training course, followed by mandating attendance at the NATO advisor training

³³ These requirements are designed to give an advisor the skills necessary to organize, train, equip, build or rebuild, advise and assist, and redeploy Afghan forces. Furthermore, the training requirements state that advisors must meet experience, background, qualifications, and language requirements to become an advisor.

³⁴ Center for Army Lessons Learned, *News From the Front: Ministerial Advisors Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan [CSTC-A]*, August 1, 2017, p. 12.

³⁵ Center for Army Lessons Learned, *News From the Front: Ministerial Advisors*, p. 13.

³⁶ Combat skills include land navigation, communications, counter-improvised explosive device tactics, and lifesaving skills.

program in Poland. According to DOD, in February 2018, the Resolute Support Commander approved this training program, and U.S. Central Command updated its training guidance accordingly.³⁷

Despite this requirement, the pre-deployment training for uniformed personnel varies, and according to the CENTCOM Commander, U.S. attendance at the advisor training programs “remains less than satisfactory.”³⁸ Out of the 103 people who self-identified as advisors at the MOD or the MOI who responded to our survey, 20 identified themselves as uniformed personnel. Of those 20 uniformed personnel, 9 indicated that they did not receive any advisor training before deploying. Furthermore, according to officials we interviewed, the uniformed advisors tend to have the least advisory-specific training. For example, the senior CSTC-A official with oversight of coalition advising personnel said other NATO and coalition countries’ pre-deployment training varies from country to country, but they tend to offer more training than the U.S. armed services.

CENTCOM could not tell us which uniformed personnel attended the required advisor training programs, and the command does not track which advisors complete training. One senior CSTC-A official said that because many uniformed personnel are performing advising duties but are not formally in advising positions, they are not coded as advisors and may not receive advisor-related training. In a July 2018 memorandum, the CENTCOM Commander said the reason many uniformed advisors do not attend the required advisor training programs is “the combination of training waivers and sourcing process with a heavy reliance on individual augmentees.”³⁹ In this same memorandum, the commander requested that the Army review the sourcing process to increase attendance at the advisor training programs. In commenting on a draft of this report, DOD noted that it is aware of concerns about the number of waivers and will review ways to address this problem.

Furthermore, CSTC-A stated that it does not have the authority to mandate training requirements, and that it is up to whichever military service or agency that provides the advisor to ensure that person is properly trained. In its technical comments in response to a draft of this report, CENTCOM disagreed with this assertion and stated that USFOR-A can mandate training requirements for USFOR-A personnel and subordinate commands, such as CSTC-A. In its response, CENTCOM attributed the personnel not attending the required advising training to confusion over whether the personnel fall under RS command and control. RS stated that each service is responsible for meeting the training requirements for all deployments. In May 2017, a senior CSTC-A official told us the current CENTCOM mobilization orders do not mandate that personnel complete advisor training because the mobilization orders state that advisors “should” attend advisor training, allowing the services to view the training as optional. The official said CSTC-A is attempting to change the orders to mandate training. However, because DOD had not given us copies of the orders as of the date of this report, we cannot determine whether the language changed.

CSTC-A said it is addressing the lack of training in other ways. According to DOD, upon arrival in Kabul, some CSTC-A personnel participate in the RS Individual Key Leader Training at RS headquarters. This training lasts for 4 days and covers the RS organization, ministerial advising, and force protection. Additionally, some senior CSTC-A advisors also took a 4-day version of the MODA training course, which was offered once as a trial class.

Uniformed advisors with little or no advisor-specific training prior to deployment may not be as effective when compared to advisors who have completed advisor-specific training.

CONCLUSION

Although the MOD and the MOI advising effort is one of DOD’s primary missions in Afghanistan, the department has not fully planned, monitored, or evaluated the effort in accordance with its own requirements. Additionally, it has not developed measurable performance standards to assess DynCorp’s performance under

³⁷ According to DOD, the updated CENTCOM training guidance only requires attendance at a service-certified school, not the specifically created Senior Leader Advising Training course.

³⁸ CENTCOM Commander, *Memorandum for Chief of Staff of the Army*, July 20, 2018.

³⁹ CENTCOM Commander, *Memorandum for Chief of Staff of the Army*, July 20, 2018.

the two advising contracts. Moreover, the changing POAMs and subjective nature of the assessments used to measure progress in achieving them from 2015 to the fall of 2017 mean that DOD cannot assess the effectiveness of the advising effort over time. As a result, DOD, Congress, and taxpayers lack the information necessary to assess the impact the advising effort has made in building the capacity of the MOD and the MOI, or the effectiveness of its \$421 million advising contracts. To complicate matters further, DOD does not track all advisor reassignments, which could hurt the advising effort, as less qualified personnel would be advising at the MOD and the MOI. Finally, because of confusion over training requirements and the use of training waivers, advisors at the MOD and the MOI may be missing crucial knowledge needed to perform their duties

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that DOD's advising efforts at the MOD and the MOI are as effective as possible, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense:

1. **Comply with all DOD policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including DOD Instruction 5132.14.**
2. **Incorporate specific, measurable performance standards into its current and future ministerial advising contracts.**
3. **Develop and implement a mechanism to accurately identify and track all personnel performing advising tasks at the MOD and the MOI.**
4. **Enforce existing requirements for all uniformed U.S. personnel to receive advisor-specific training before deploying to Afghanistan to be advisors at the MOD and the MOI.**

AGENCY COMMENTS

We provided a draft of this report to DOD for review and comment. We received written comments from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, which are reproduced in appendix II. In the comments, DOD concurred with all four recommendations. DOD also provided technical comments, which we incorporated into the report, as appropriate,

With regard to the first recommendation, DOD stated that it is fully committed to complying with all departmental policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including, but not limited to, DOD Instruction 5132.14. DOD also stated that it will submit to Congress its plan for assessing, monitoring, and evaluating security cooperation programs conducted under the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund, as required by Section 1211 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2019.

With regard to the second recommendation, DOD said it is important to hold contractors accountable but this alone will not ensure that the ministerial advising effort will have the desired outcomes. DOD noted that the ministerial advising effort must be designed so all types of advisors—military, civilian, and contractors—are working in unison to build capacity at the ministries.

With regard to the third recommendation, DOD stated that it will direct the appropriate organizations to identify and track all positions that are intended to perform advisory functions.

Finally, with regard to the fourth recommendation, DOD acknowledged concerns about the number of training waivers that CENTCOM has issued and will review ways to address the problem.

APPENDIX I - SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This report discusses the results of SIGAR's audit of the Department of Defense's (DOD) use of advisors to build capacity within the Afghan Ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior (MOI). The objectives of this audit were to assess the extent to which DOD (1) evaluates its advising efforts to the MOD and the MOI; (2) tracks advisors assigned to the MOD and the MOI; and (3) trains its advisors in preparation for their assignments at the MOD and the MOI. We focused on DOD's advising efforts from January 2015, when the NATO Resolute Support (RS) mission started, to April 2018. To accomplish our objectives, we reviewed relevant regulations and guidance, including the Federal Acquisition Regulation, DOD Instructions and Directives, and other applicable guidance that were effective from 2015 to 2018.

To evaluate the extent to which DOD evaluates its advising efforts to the MOD and the MOI, we reviewed DOD Instruction 5132.14 and DOD Directive 5123.03, which contain policies relating to security cooperation activities, including advising efforts.⁴⁰ We also reviewed the founding charter, terms of reference, and meeting minutes for the Ministerial Development Governance Board and the Afghanistan Resource Oversight Council; a 2017 unclassified periodic mission review assessment from the Commander of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) and RS;⁴¹ a prior SIGAR report on assessments of the Afghan security forces;⁴² and DOD's 2017 report to Congress on its efforts in Afghanistan.⁴³ To review the DOD's two ministerial advising contracts with DynCorp, we reviewed the Federal Acquisition Regulation, performance work statements, base contracts, and contract modifications.⁴⁴ We analyzed the monthly plan of actions and milestones tracker for the MOD and the MOI for each month from January 2015 through December 2016. We compared the changes month to month with RS' summaries of the changes every 6 months and annually. We also interviewed officials with U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), USFOR-A, Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A), the Defense Contract Management Agency, Army Contracting Command, and the Afghanistan/Pakistan Hands Program, as well as RS officials from the Security Force Assistance Center and advisors to the Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior.

To evaluate the extent to which DOD tracks advisors assigned to the MOD and the MOI, we reviewed DOD Instruction 5132.14 and DOD Directive 5123.03, staffing documents we received in response to requests for information from CENTCOM and CSTC-A, documents guiding the Global Force Management process, and a prior report from the DOD Office of Inspector General on developing the MOD's internal control capabilities.⁴⁵ In addition, we interviewed the manager of DOD's Afghanistan Hands program, and officials from CENTCOM, USFOR-A, and CSTC-A responsible for overseeing the advising effort. We also interviewed Afghanistan's First Deputy Minister of Defense.

To evaluate the extent to which DOD trains its advisors in preparation for their assignments at the MOD and the MOI, we reviewed *Guidance on Common Training Standards for Security Force Assistance*, *The Commander's Handbook for Security Force Assistance*, the *Security Force Assistance Guide*, and the *Joint*

⁴⁰ DOD Instruction 5132.14, *Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy for the Security Cooperation Enterprise*, January 13, 2017, and DOD Directive 5123.03, *DOD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation*, December 29, 2016.

⁴¹ Resolute Support, *Commander Resolute Support Narrative Assessment*, Spring 2017.

⁴² SIGAR, *Actions Needed to Improve the Reliability of Afghan Security Force Assessments*, SIGAR Audit-10-11, June 29, 2010.

⁴³ *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, December 2017.

⁴⁴ MOD Contract – W560MY-15-C-0005. MOI Contract – W560MY-15-C-0006. The current base periods for the MOD and MOI contracts are December 1, 2017, to November 30, 2018, with the first option period from December 1, 2018, to January 31, 2019, and the second option period from February 1, 2019, to March 31, 2019.

⁴⁵ DOD Office of Inspector General, *Evaluation of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Enable the Afghan Ministry of Defense to Develop Its Oversight and Internal Control Capability*, DODIG-2017-105, August 4, 2017 (declassified on December 5, 2017).

Force Command Brunssum OPLAN 30312, Revision 2.2. In addition, we reviewed a Center for Army Lessons Learned report and conducted interviews with officials from CENTCOM, CSTC-A, and USFOR-A responsible for the advising mission.⁴⁶ To gain insights from as many advisors at the MOD and the MOI as possible, we conducted an anonymous online survey of U.S. advisors to the ministries. We designed a survey through an online survey creation site. The survey contained questions such as

- How many years of experience do you have in the area(s) you are advising?
- How well did the pre-deployment advisor training prepare you for your advisory assignment?
- Do you have a defined set of individual goals to achieve during your tour/assignment?

In consultation with the USFOR-A Audit Liaison, DOD sent the survey link to personnel they felt were within the scope of our audit. During the time our survey was active in July 2017, USFOR-A reported that there were 190 personnel in advisory positions at the MOD and the MOI. In addition to these 190 personnel, DOD reported that there were 277 contracted advisors at the MOD and 110 contracted advisors at the MOI as of April 10, 2017. One hundred and eight respondents participated in the anonymous survey. However, we did not include five respondents because they answered that they did not advise Afghans and were not officially designated as advisors, thus were outside the scope of our audit. The 103 respondents we included consisted of personnel from all five advisor pools including Afghanistan Hands, uniformed military personnel, Ministry of Defense Advisor personnel, DOD Expeditionary Civilians, and contractor personnel.

We relied on computer-processed data when compiling data from our survey of U.S. advisors to the MOD and the MOI. To assess the reliability of the feedback the MOD and MOI advisors provided on our questionnaire, we examined the responses for obvious errors, missing data, and inconsistencies. Although we did not independently verify the accuracy of the self-reported information, we took a series of steps—from survey design through data analysis and interpretation—to minimize potential errors and problems. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report. We also assessed internal controls to determine the extent to which DOD assessed the advising efforts at the MOD and the MOI; the results of our assessment are included in the body of this report.

We conducted our audit work in Kabul and Parwan Provinces in Afghanistan, and Washington, D.C., from January 2017 to October 2018 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. SIGAR performed this audit under the authority of Public Law No. 110-181, as amended, and the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.

⁴⁶ Center for Army Lessons Learned, *News From the Front, Ministerial Advisors Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan (CSTC-A)*, August 1, 2017

APPENDIX II - COMMENTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE



ASIAN AND PACIFIC
SECURITY AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2700 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2700

24 OCT 2018

The Honorable John Sopko
Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
1550 Crystal Drive, 9th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Sopko:

Enclosed please find the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the recommendations in the draft audit report, "Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces: DOD Lacks Performance Data to Assess, Monitor, and Evaluate Advisors Assigned to the Ministries of Defense and Interior."

After receiving the draft audit report on September 10, 2018, my staff followed up with the audit team to inform them of recent developments on this topic. For example, we provided your staff with documentation on pre-deployment advisor training requirements in place since February 2018 and discussed the draft plan for assessment, monitoring, and evaluation of security cooperation programs expected to be included in a forthcoming report to Congress. We also addressed plans to issue – as a result of an Afghanistan Resources Oversight Council review – guidance for implementing specified performance metrics for the new ministerial advising contract to be awarded in 2019.

We understand that the SIGAR has incorporated these updates into the report, including one of the recommendations. DoD concurs in all of the report's recommendations, and will continue to take appropriate actions to ensure the concerns the SIGAR identified are remedied.

DoD welcomes the opportunity to remain engaged with the SIGAR to perform effective oversight and ensure U.S. taxpayers' money is spent wisely through U.S. Forces – Afghanistan's support for the NATO Resolute Support (RS) train, advise, and assist mission.

Sincerely,

Colin F. Jackson
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia



SIGAR DRAFT REPORT DATED SEPTEMBER 10, 2018
SIGAR 118-A
“AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES: DOD LACKS
PERFORMANCE DATA TO ASSESS, MONITOR, AND EVALUATE ADVISORS
ASSIGNED TO THE MINISTRIES OF DEFENSE AND INTERIOR”

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS
TO THE SIGAR RECOMMENDATIONS

DoD submits the following responses to the four recommendations made to the Secretary of Defense in this report to ensure that DoD’s advising efforts at the Ministries of Defense (MoD) and Interior (MoI) are as effective as possible:

Recommendation 1: Comply with all DOD policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including DoD Instruction 5132.14.

DoD response: Concur. DoD is fully committed to complying with all departmental policies regarding security cooperation assistance, including but not limited to DoD Instruction 5132.14. DoD agrees that DoD Instruction 5132.14, Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy for the Security Cooperation Enterprise, which requires DoD to monitor the progress of its security cooperation assistance using a standard assessment, monitoring, and evaluation program, applies to advising efforts supported by the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF). The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will submit to Congress his plan for assessment, monitoring and evaluation (AM&E) of security cooperation programs conducted under ASFF as required by Section 1211 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019.

Recommendation 2: Incorporate specific, measurable performance standards into its current and future ministerial advising contracts.

DoD response: Concur. We note that although it is important to ensure the contractor is held accountable, this alone will not ensure desired outcomes from the ministry advising effort. Instead, the overall ministry advising effort must be designed so that all types of advisor personnel—military, civilian, and contractor—are working in unison to build the capacity of the ministries to perform their critical functions.

Recommendation 3: Develop and implement a mechanism to accurately identify and track all personnel performing advising tasks at the MOD and the MOI.

DoD response: Concur. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will direct the appropriate organizations to identify and track all positions that are intended to perform advisory functions at the MoD and MoI level within the appropriate manpower systems.

Recommendation 4: Enforce existing requirements for all uniformed U.S. personnel to receive advisor-specific training before deploying to Afghanistan to be advisors at the MOD and the MOI.

DoD response: Concur. As previously discussed with the SIGAR, pre-deployment training was approved by General Nicholson, then-the Resolute Support (RS) Commander (COM-RS), in February 2018, and U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) updated its training guidance accordingly. The pre-deployment advisor training consists of a 10-day Senior Leader Advisor Training course at Ft. Polk, Louisiana, provided jointly by the 3rd Battalion, 353rd Armor Regiment (3-353rd) and the Ministry of Defense Advisors program. This is followed by a 10-day training event at the NATO Joint Force Training Centre. We are aware of COM-RS concerns about the number of waivers that USCENTCOM has issued and will review ways to address this problem.

APPENDIX III - ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The mission of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) is to enhance oversight of programs for the reconstruction of Afghanistan by conducting independent and objective audits, inspections, and investigations on the use of taxpayer dollars and related funds. SIGAR works to provide accurate and balanced information, evaluations, analysis, and recommendations to help the U.S. Congress, U.S. agencies, and other decision-makers to make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions to:

- improve effectiveness of the overall reconstruction strategy and its component programs;
- improve management and accountability over funds administered by U.S. and Afghan agencies and their contractors;
- improve contracting and contract management processes;
- prevent fraud, waste, and abuse; and
- advance U.S. interests in reconstructing Afghanistan.

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