

ARMOUR BULLETIN

2008 - 2009



- 2** *Director of Armour's Foreword*
- 3** *Colonel Commandant's Foreword*
- 4** *Editor-in-Chief's Foreword*
- 5** *Corps Sergeant Major's Corner*
- 6** *"The Progression of the Reconnaissance Vehicle" by Maj P. Sauvé*
- 8** *"OMLT Challenges on TF 1-09" by LCol Martin Perron*
- 11** *"The Armour Corps Within CMTC" by Maj J.P. Huet*
- 13** *"Tactical Laws in Simulation" by Col C.S Oliviero*
- 16** *"Forward Air Control" by Capt C.M. Summerfield*
- 18** *"OMLT in Afghanistan – the Exit Strategy" by Maj R.D. Dove*

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Article Submission Requirements

The *Armour Bulletin* welcomes articles and comments on topics relevant to the Armour Corps. The editors ask that the following guidelines be followed:

- Articles can be submitted in either official language;
- Only material of an unclassified nature should be submitted;
- Articles should be between 500-1500 words and submitted electronically to the editorial staff. Images and endnotes should not be embedded in the text;
- Photographs must be accompanied by the name of the photographer. Please note that you have unrestricted use of the *National Defence and Canadian Forces Image Gallery* (www.forces.gc.ca) so long as you cite the photographer;
- Comments may be submitted directly to the editorial staff, preferably via email;
- The editorial staff reserves the right to deny the publication of an article/comment or to edit articles/comments for content and/or length; and
- Each article must be accompanied by a brief biography and recent photograph of the author.

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About the Cover:

Mounted and dismounted Canadian troops from the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment Battle Group move into position in the Zharey District, AF, during OP JANUBI TAPU 2, 25 Nov 08.

Photo by : Cpl James Nightingale, Photographer JTF-Afg Roto 6

2009 - 2010 Armour Bulletin



Director of Armour's Foreword
By Colonel J. Cade, CD



It is an honour to be invested with the responsibility and privilege of shepherding The Royal Canadian Armoured Corps into the future. All know that we live in busy and challenging times; certainly this is the highest tempo I've seen in my 30 years of service. The war in Afghanistan and its unique employment requirements for the Tank and Reconnaissance Squadrons, the increasing demand for Reserves on deployed operations, Army Transformation and the evolution of the Armoured Corps in order to stay relevant to the demands of today and tomorrow are challenging our Corps in every aspect. The wide variety of topics in this edition of the Armoured News Bulletin reflects on the complexity of our Contemporary Operating Environment.

Fortunately we have had Colonel Lowell Thomas as our Director. He leaves me "a bar set very high" as he has put his heart and soul into representing the Corps' interests. Colonel Thomas spent countless hours working closely with Army staffs to ensure the voice of those who have to live with the decisions was not lost. He engaged our Commander when appropriate and delivered the right message regardless of whether it was palatable or not. You should note that he did all this while holding one of the busiest colonel appointments in the Army – Director of Army Training. Colonel Thomas juggled all these demands on his time and tirelessly wrestled with extremely complex problems because he is devoted to the men and women of our Corps and to ensuring their future remains bright and relevant. Lowell - thank you!

So what lies ahead with me as your new Director? First and foremost, I must maintain the momentum of evolution that Colonel Thomas has started. With the close battle, I will continue to work with both Reserve and Regular COs and RSMs in ensuring the Corps meets its operational missions and institutional duties without breaking our people or their families; easier said than done as the tempo is heavy and we are in a marathon not a sprint. We will succeed, however, because the Corps emphasizes intelligent and flexible leadership at all levels. Looking to the near future, we have to ensure our Reserve regiments are assigned meaningful armoured roles that best support the Army Commander's vision, and not allow them to be slotted into capability gaps or tasks of convenience. The distribution of the new tank fleet has to be balanced between the Corps' force generation needs and the Army's ability to sustain the fleet. The challenges of the Coyote fleet and its eventual replacement will require imagination and cooperation from a wide host of interested parties. Difficult decisions lie ahead but the Corps' flexibility, intellect and cohesiveness will guide us through them. The Corps must adapt but "the baby can't be thrown out with the bathwater;" the fundamentals have not changed, only the situations.

I am a social animal by nature so I expect will see many of you in the coming year and look forward to many discussions; rest assured, I will listen.

Worthy.



Colonel Commandant's Foreword

By Major-General (Ret) C.J. Addy, OMM, OSTJ, CD



Since last year, I have had the privilege to travel to Germany and Afghanistan to see our troops in training and operations in both recce and tank missions. I have visited the school twice and some seven of our 18 reserve units including our newest, the Halifax Rifles, (thanks Ned), and all our regular units. I am most impressed with the state and professionalism of the Corps.

We are in the midst of change. Our School is seeing a change of command and staff after the gruelling challenge of redefining the individual training at all levels of our Corps in tanks and recce to support our NATO mission in Afghanistan. I would like to salute, publicly, Mike Nixon and his team, most of whom are also moving on, for the very high calibre of their contribution to the success of this monumental task. They, in close cooperation with the units, in particular the LdSH(RC), were able to produce what the Army needed and the Corps demanded for our support to this mission. We should be cognizant of the fact that we were near bankrupt in depth of tank crew expertise when this mission began and we have now built that expertise since 2006 to top world class level. Well done, Mike! The Corps salutes and thanks you and your team for this splendid display of professional competence.

We were also blessed over this period to have as our Director, Colonel Lowell Thomas. Fresh from Command and a tour in Afghanistan moving the force from Kabul to Kandahar, he has guided both the Training of the Army and our Corps in superb fashion and will be replaced by Colonel Jamie Cade who recently returned from Afghanistan himself. We could not be better served.

The pace is hard, and repeated tours and training tasks are challenging our Sgt/WO and Capt/ Major levels throughout the Army. In this demanding time we have relied most heavily on our reserves and they continue to respond with great class and capacity. As I witnessed from the recce troop tasked with the protection of logistic convoys from Kandahar, they shine and are a visible testimony to the quality and reliability of our armour regular/reserve team that has been our hall-mark since Worthy put us together.

We have lost 15 soldiers in this mission and the units right across Canada have paid tribute and looked after the families of these warriors in splendid fashion and continue to do so for the far more numerous wounded. It is a high cost that we bear for the security of our fellow citizens and the protection of Afghans and our comrades.

To all, well done and keep it going! The Army, the Forces and Canada need us.

Worthy!



Editor – in – Chief's Foreword
By Lieutenant-Colonel W.R. Foster, MVO, CD



It is a great privilege to provide you with this most recent edition of the Armour Bulletin. I hope that it provides you with a degree of insight into some of the many different areas where our members are actively engaged.

Given the operational demands being placed on the Army, it should be of little surprise to see that the Corps and its members are naturally being called upon to fulfill a diverse range of tasks. On top of our tank and reconnaissance responsibilities, armoured personnel are distinguishing themselves as leaders in many domains: PRT, OMLT, FAC, all levels of staff and command in various headquarters in both domestic and expeditionary operations, and in the many training and technical fields across the CF. Whatever the task, the units and members of the Corps continue to rise to any challenge given, with the flexibility, intellect, drive and determination for which we are well-known.

The Corps faces important challenges in the future: the management and care of our people, the modernization of training, the determination of our future reconnaissance platform as well as integrating the Leopard 2 into our fleet back in Canada. The importance we attach to learning "how to think and not what to think", will set us in good stead to meet these challenges. There is much to discuss and debate in order to help us as we evolve in the future, and I solicit your input and participation in this professional dialogue.

My sincere thanks go out to those who have contributed to this summer's edition, and to the Managing Editor, Maj Robbin Dove for making it possible to publish in time for the Summer Corps Conference. I encourage members across the Corps to contribute to future editions and to engage in active professional discourse.

Worthy!



Corps Sergeant Major's Corner
By Chief Warrant Officer D.R. Harvey, MMM, CD



It is hard to believe that another year has passed since the last armoured Bulletin was published. During this time I have had the privilege to travel and see first hand Armour personnel in various different jobs throughout the world. This addition of the bulletin has a theme of diversity in tasks, a common challenge for Armoured soldiers which we have trained for as FLEXIBILITY is one of the main characteristics of Armour.

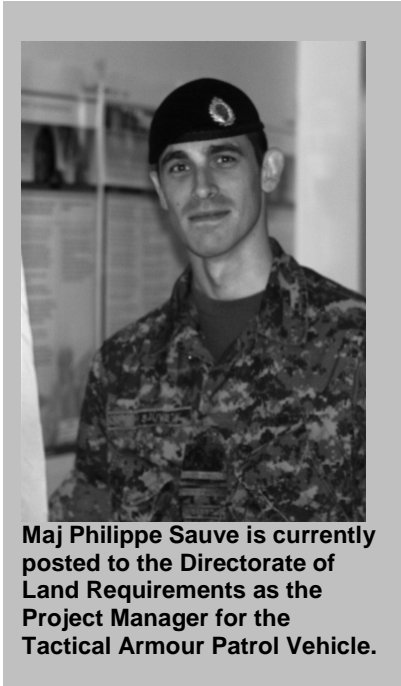
It starts with the essence of crew training where we all learn to work as a member of a crew, troop, squadron, and as a member of a regiment. This training has carried many members of the Corps from all ranks to jobs and employment that most would not have consider when they first entered a Regiment. To name a few we have personnel working as Canadian Defence Attaché in several countries or on staffs within the VCDS, CLS, SJS,CEFCOM CANSOFCOM, DLR,CTC, CMTC, Area, Brigade and Operational HQs, Bases and Helicopter squadrons. These are but just a few areas where you will find our soldiers employed outside of a regiment. However, in every case we the Armour Corps are making a difference where ever they are outside the turret.

It is because of our common training and the principles of the Armoured Corps that has carried us successfully wherever we go. As a member of the Corps you should be proud of your successes



The Progression of the Reconnaissance Vehicle

By Maj P. Sauve, CD



Maj Philippe Sauve is currently posted to the Directorate of Land Requirements as the Project Manager for the Tactical Armour Patrol Vehicle.

The progression of the Reconnaissance Vehicle - From a FERRET to a LYNX to a COYOTE to a Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle

Following the Second World War, Canada acquired a fleet of FERRET vehicles to conduct reconnaissance tasks. These armoured cars were small 4x4s, crewed by a driver and commander and mounting a .308 cal / 7.62mm general purpose machine gun (GPMG). The next evolution in reconnaissance vehicles for the Canadian Forces came in the shape of the M113 ½ LYNX, acquired in the late 1960s to replace the FERRET. It provided increased tactical mobility with a powerful motor, transmission and tracks, greater firepower for the commander with a .50 cal heavy machine gun (HMG) in a heavy gun mount with remote firing capability, and an additional crew member to serve as radio operator and GPMG gunner. The 1990s saw the replacement of the LYNX with the current in-service COYOTE vehicle. The COYOTE provided even more firepower with a 25mm chain gun and turret with a dedicated gunner, increased load capacity with its larger size, increased protection due to its armour and speed, and a vastly improved surveillance system for the dedicated surveillance operator. While operational mobility was improved to cover a far greater area of operations, tactical mobility in difficult terrain decreased due to its wheeled driveline and related characteristics.



FERRET



LYNX



COYOTE

The current operational theatre and those envisioned in the future security environment require even better protected vehicles, especially with the increasing threat of land mines and improvised explosive devices. So, where do we go from here?



We are no longer in a Cold War scenario, where the enemy is to our front and “sneak and peek” tactics are the Canadian way. Warfare has become predominantly asymmetric; the enemy seems to know our every move and easily blends into the population. Therefore, what should we be looking for in future reconnaissance vehicles? Are high levels of protection essential? Is a small, agile vehicle appropriate? What is the need for tactical, cross-country mobility? These and many more questions are being considered by DLR.

The Army of Tomorrow (AoT) is devised around a system of systems (SoS) called the Family of Land Combat Systems (FLCS) that encompasses eight systems that together will provide necessary resources on the battlefield. The Future Combat Vehicle System (FCVS) is a major sub-system of the FLCS that will hold as its core tenet that the Army is a medium weight fighting force equipped primarily with the Light Armoured Vehicle III (LAV III) platform. An extensive upgrade program is planned for LAV III that will maintain the fleet's viability well in the future. At the heavy end of the FCVS spectrum, LEOPARD tanks will continue to play an important role in non-permissive theatres, supported by a new armoured fighting vehicle for the infantry to be acquired by the Close Combat Vehicle (CCV) Project. At the light end of the FCVS spectrum, the TAPV project is envisioned to become the workhorse of the Army.

The Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle (TAPV) is a key component of the Future Combat Vehicle System (FCVS) program and will provide a multi-purpose combat capability that is the hallmark of the Land Force. The project will field a modern fleet of tactical modular general-utility armoured vehicles for use in domestic and expeditionary operations that are highly mobile and extremely versatile, and provide a very high degree of crew protection. The project plans to replace our tired and aging COYOTE fleet along with the RG-31 Armoured personnel vehicle (APV), and augment the LUVW (G-Wagon) fleet. It will be used in a multitude of tasks including but not limited to reconnaissance, liaison, command and control, and personnel carrier. While the project is its infancy, it is garnering much attention and many allied countries are making giant strides to properly balance protection, mobility and firepower. An upgraded LAV-Recce surveillance suite (LRSS UP) will be installed in the reconnaissance vehicle in order to provide enhanced surveillance using sustainable equipment. Coupled with a new battle management system, expect that information acquisition, fusion, analysis and dissemination amongst troops and different headquarters will be improved in order to effectively influence the battle.

The ageless debate of wheels versus tracks continues in the undercurrent of AFV acquisition discussions, if not the forefront. TAPV is envisioned to be a wheeled vehicle that could be employed overseas in a combat zone, or equally within Canada and North America on domestic related operations. The current and future security environments require the ability of task forces to travel over greater distances than before in order to achieve an effect. The need for greater operational mobility will remain; therefore, a wheeled vehicle is the preferred solution for the current and future operating environments.

One major adaptation that TAPV will potentially require is with respect to situational awareness (SA). Expected to be a relatively light vehicle with elevated levels of protection, TAPV will not be able to accommodate a two-man turret. The options remaining are a one-man turret (for the commander or gunner) or a remotely operated weapon system. Either approach will severely impact the crew commander's 360 degree view and, in turn, his overall situational awareness. However, judicious positioning of the crew commander's hatch relative to the RWS and installation of new technologies such as local situational awareness systems (LSAS) promise to ensure continued SA under most operating conditions.

Another important change in TAPV will be a reduction in firepower compared to COYOTE. It is impossible to mount a heavy 25mm chain gun on a light vehicle while still balancing the need for protection and mobility. Therefore, a reduction in firepower is inevitable. The TAPV project therefore intends to procure a primary weapon system that is suited to self-defence and will likely be limited to something in the order of a 20mm cannon or lightweight 25mm. In order to destroy hard targets and fire efficiently at long ranges, anti-tank guided missiles and rockets are being considered. The primary weapon, coupled with a second weapon will provide TAPV with sufficient firepower, redundancy and maximum flexibility for its various missions.

Armoured reconnaissance vehicles have evolved constantly over the years and the future of Canadian reconnaissance systems is bright. Due to the menacing and ever-expanding threat, as well as the primacy of protection of our crewmen in shaping today's AFV designs, a mind shift is necessary. It is guaranteed that whatever the Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle Project acquires, our new platform will provide enhanced protection to our troops while ensuring mission success.

Maj Sauv  was born in Pembroke on June 7th, 1978. While carrying out his studies in Computer Engineering at the Royal Military College of Canada, he completed his phase training at the Combat Training Centre in Galetown. Upon graduation from RMC in May 99, Maj Sauv  joined 12^o RBC at CFB Valcartier as a tank troop leader. His second year at the Regiment was spent as a Recce Troop Leader on the Coyote, followed by a year as assistant adjutant. His extra-Regimental posting saw him complete the Combat Arms Fighting Systems Course (CAFS) at the Royal Military College of Science in Shrivenham, United Kingdom. He was subsequently employed at Directorate of Land Requirements (DLR) in Ottawa where he worked for two years on the Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Night Observation (STANO) project.

During his second year at DLR, he completed a six-month tour in Sarajevo, Bosnia as part of OP BOREAS, the European Force (EUFOR) mission to Bosnia. Immediately upon his return from Bosnia, he was posted back to 12eRBC, where he occupied the positions of Battle Captain and then Squadron second-in-command for A Squadron on OP ATHENA Roto 4.

Upon completion of his second Regimental tour, he returned to Ottawa to become Project Director for the Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle.



OMLT Challenges on TF 1-09 **By LCol M. Perron, CD**



LCol Martin Perron is currently serving as the DCO of the OMLT on TF 1-09.

Writing an article on the challenges of the OMLT is a complicated matter; it would be very easy to simply come up with a laundry list containing only negative points. Despite everything, through all the disorder of our work-up training and relations with the Afghan National Army (ANA), particularly the officers and men of the 1st Brigade 205th ATAL Corps (better known as 1-205th Brigade), there is much positive to speak of. Occasionally we have to look closely so as not to overlook the positive things as they are often of strategic importance. Many articles have been written about the relationships between the mentor teams and the ANA, most of which are true, but it is hard for one to believe all that is done here by our ANA counterparts. I will not get into a list of anecdotes but will rather give an overview of the three big challenges particular to the OMLT following the first three months of deployment in Afghanistan. I do not believe that the challenges which we have encountered to date are new and are likely very similar to those encountered by other rotations.

Since our arrival in Afghanistan, we knew that we faced big challenges. The first was to apply our understanding of the mission to the reality on the ground. To understand our challenges, one must understand the nature of our unit and in so doing it is easier to explain what we are not. We are not a unit of command, manoeuvre, or support but rather one of liaison and operational mentoring as the name implies. The task of liaison is the most simple of the two but includes significant challenges at both Kandak and Brigade HQ level. Mentoring is more complicated since there is a level of confidence which must be gained between the mentor and the assigned Afghan "mentoree", all through the intermediary of an interpreter. Mentoring is not part of our usual tasks within Canada. Notwithstanding the fact that training and teaching resemble mentoring the most closely, there exists a large gap between these disciplines. Knowledge of the culture and the language is an incredible asset since this accelerates the establishment of mutual confidence as with all interpersonal relations. It is difficult to better explain the nature of our unit without speaking of our primary challenges.

The first major challenge is that the OMLT does not command the ANA. This may seem an obvious statement but it is the impression held by many of our fellow soldiers. We ensure the liaison between two units and that is all. We are able to influence them, to convince them of the logic behind our actions, to push them and plead with them but, in the end, it is they who will decide on what they will do and how they will do it. We recently reviewed the disposition of the Kandaks on the ground in order to prepare for summer operations and the upcoming presidential election in August 09. Our mission remains unchanged, to mentor and liaise with 1-205 Brigade. However, developing a plan to better position our mentors while respecting force protection measures and remaining in a position to maintain good communications with which to mentor and liaise is not an easy task; this becomes further complicated since the ANA have not yet developed a plan since they are not aware of our intentions. We had to put ourselves in the shoes of the ANA in order to develop several plans and decide which could most easily be supported. Of course the plan that was chosen was not one which we had identified, but luckily it was one for which the support plan remained largely unchanged. Following this, the OMLT CO had to convince the Commander of 1-205 Brigade of the plan. This was the easy part, since we are still at the battle procedure stage. The execution stage, including tactical infrastructure, the support and resupply plan as well as the manoeuvre plan, remain to be completed. All is done at short notice



and therefore the logistic chain and engineers have struggled to support the plan. As well, on the tactical side at the Company level, if a commander decides to shorten patrols or fails to exploit opportunities for whatever reason, the mentor team can only follow what is being done regardless of any expectations from our own chain of command.

The second large challenge of the OMLT is its structure and internal needs. Basically, we have the command organisation of a Brigade but without the troops normally associated. This means that there is an empty structure which places a mentor in each position of influence from Company Commander to Brigade Commander level, including staff positions within the Kandaks and the Brigade. The challenges of such a structure is apparent, the first being a lack of manpower. 1-205 Brigade is composed of three infantry (Inf) Kandaks, one combat support (CS) Kandak and a combat service support (CSS) Kandak with its Brigade HQ. The lowest level of mentorship is at the Company level.

Training needs specific to the OMLT are such that each mentor team must be autonomous like an infantry company, since they are deployed with the ANA companies. The qualifications required are numerous and they apply to all team members since they are frequently required to operate independently alongside the ANA. In other words, the mentor team requires nearly all the same qualifications found within an infantry company. It is out of the question to withdraw a complete mentor team to be sent on leave since the liaison and mentoring must continue; this means that most teams are operating at reduced strength for the majority of their tour. Luckily, upon arrival in theatre, we received reinforcements from within Task Force Kandahar (TFK). This saw the mentor teams boosted from four to eight members, the extra personnel having originated from the NSE, Battle Group and TFK HQ. The logic for this was relatively simple. Firstly, the company mentor teams occupy, along with the ANA, many FOBs, Strong Points (SPs) and Patrol Bases (PBs) across the area of operations. Further, vehicle movement must be done with at least two armoured vehicles along with the ANA. You will note that it is normally three armoured vehicles which must travel together and that, in and RG-31 there is a crew commander, a driver and a gunner. I will let you do the math.



Photo by Sgt Paz Quillé

Furthermore, the structure is in constant evolution. Each time 1-205 Brigade acquires new capabilities, our structure must change, which is very difficult to do in the short term. For example, the previous roto prepared and mentored the CSS Kandak, from HERO Camp, to conduct Forward Logistics Groups (FLG) in order to support operations. Now, the CSS Kandak has executed several FLG in support of ops however we are still not configured to support these FLG. Like the Brigade HQ, which has deployed several times since our arrival, changes continue within the OMLT. Our CSS Kandak and Brigade HQ mentors cannot follow their counterparts forward since they have neither vehicles nor crews. In order to mitigate this, our mentors move from FOB to FOB or SP as transport is available, in order to follow along. It goes without saying that the liaison and mentoring of the FLG is very difficult and takes enormous coordination to deploy and redeploy all personnel as required to meet established timelines.



The first month in Afghanistan has been a period of adaptation and evaluation. First of all, there was real mentoring to be done, which completely occupied our time. Some Brigade mentors wore two or three important hats; G3 and G3 Ops mentors were our S5 and also ensured liaison between TFK and other units such as 2R22eR BG, TF 2-2 IN (US) and RBG(S) (UK). We have also lost the Police-OMLT (P-OMLT) to the PRT, which meant a certain loss of flexibility of personnel and equipment. Further, the Red-Yellow-Green cycle of the ANA is now applied differently; Kandaks must manage the rotation of their personnel internally in order to maintain the maximum number of sub-units deployed. The intent is to augment their effective strength to 120% to make up for shortfalls. This being said, with the return of Kandak 2-1 from leave in April, we had to restructure the Training Kandak mentors to become mentor teams, as well as having the team work in partnership with the companies of 2R22eR BG. The concept is being implemented and increased collaboration between the ANA, OMLT and the BG is a result. It is simple on paper but putting it all into play is not so easy. This is a news story with strategic repercussions. The fact that there are now three INF Kandaks on the ground has an impact on the ANA disposition as well. Realignment tactical infrastructure, communications and supply are real-time problems and take time to adjust. After several weeks of change we are still refining things and there is much work to be done. There is a sixth Kandak on the horizon for August and talks are ongoing to decide who will be their mentors. The current option is to have the Americans provide an Embedded Training Team (ETT) and then have follow-on rotations take over mentorship.

Finally, the last big challenge of the OMLT remains mentoring. The first month was a honeymoon in a manner of speaking. We got to know the ANA and establish relationships at company, Kandak and brigade HQ levels through framework ops. We established a 1-205 Brigade mentoring plan in order to ensure they would be ready to support the Presidential elections and to be ready to meet the specific OMLT criterion. Without getting into details we have in fact four months to get them ready to ensure the security of the elections in August. Following the elections, we will see Ramadan which ends in September and will then begin the relief in place which signals the end of our tour. Our agenda is very full and time is marching past at a rapid pace. This being said, 1-205 Brigade HQ has deployed four times since our arrival, which is in itself no small feat. The FLG of the CSS Kandak has also deployed and resupplied their troops and is now participating in the distribution of humanitarian aid. With each operation there are many lessons learned and improvement shown, with occasional regression; overall, things are moving forward.

The second month has been tougher and the honeymoon is over (for many it was very short). We are now in the tough love phase. We took a step back and are trying to push them to fly on their own. This is the difficult part of mentoring, since we must balance letting them make mistakes with ensuring that the mission does not fail. The role of the mentor is not well understood by the ANA. They often see us as the easy solution in which we give them a good plan, additional resources such as MEDEVAC, fire support, UAV coverage and logistics support (notably generators, refrigerators, freezers, rations and water). If we fail to provide these resources, the ANA immediately consider us to be useless and poor mentors. It is at these times that the real mentors step up and earn their pay.

The third month saw the pendulum swinging back to the centre and relations returning to normal. We have had many discussions and are presently trying to improve the capabilities of 1-205 Brigade. The Brigade Commander receives briefings on the status of Kandaks each morning and his ability to make decisions has improved. Tactical infrastructure is taking shape as are the support elements of the Brigade. Kandaks are busy with one operation after the other and the partnership with the BG is progressing as well. In summary, we are at mid-tour point and have now hit cruising speed.

We are ready for the coming months, the Commander of 1-205 Brigade has issued his order to his staff and Kandak Commanders in view of the summer fighting season. The next step is the preparation and support to Presidential elections.

Until the next time!



Photo by Sgt Paz Quillé