2017
WORLD RELIGIONS: SMARTBOOK
ORSLC
Chaplain (Major) J. Nathan Kline, US Army Chaplain Center & School (September 2017)
“An operational commander, however well trained in the military issues, who is ignorant of or discounts the importance of religious belief can strengthen his enemy, offend his allies, alienate his own forces, and antagonize public opinion. Religious belief is a factor he must consider in evaluating the enemy’s intentions and capabilities, the state of his own forces, his relationship with allies, and his courses of action.”

Advise the Command: A Required Capability

U.S. Army Chaplain Corps

Required Capabilities

Provide
Nurture
Care
Honor

Advise
Internal
External

Core Competencies

Ref. ATP 1-05.01, ATP 1-05.03, AR 165-1

The Unit Ministry Team has the required capability to advise the command of religion, ethics, morals, and morale (pertaining to religion). *Internal Advisement* includes advising the command on religious support to include specific requests from commanders’ soldiers for religious accommodation (requests for exceptions to policy on the basis of the free exercise of religion). *External Advisement* includes assisting the command and staff with a clearer understanding of how religion shapes the battlefield and impacts mission success. The Unit Ministry Team provides external advisement primarily through one activity and two products.

Soldier and Leader Engagement (SLE), the activity of external advisement, is taught in the common core of Advanced Individual Training (AIT) for all Military Occupation Specialties (MOS) and every officer branch’s Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC) and Captains Career Course. During the past decade UMTs often referred to these engagements as Religious Leader Liaisons (RLL), Religious Leader Engagements (RLE), or Key Leader Engagements (KLE). Today, SLE is the standard term across the force. While it is presumed the majority of those UMTs will engage in the Operational Environment (OE) will be religious leaders, this may not always be the case.

Religious Area Analyses (RAA) and Religious Impact Assessments (RIA), the two products of external advisement, are unique to the Chaplain Corps, though common core cultural awareness lessons do include assignments for students to conduct country studies, a basic or generic form of these products. RAAs serve the command and staff sections as a resource or reference to aid when conducting mission planning and execution. Rarely are they designed for the purpose of briefing a staff or a deskside brief to the commander. RIAs, on the other hand, speak directly to how religion shapes the OE and provides predictions of how religion will impact the mission to include recommended courses of actions (COAs) and desired end states.
Religious Advisement at the Operational Level

Lessons from the field and from the training centers identify the need for UMTs to be more operationally focused. The slide to the left captures the UMT observer controllers’ emphasis on the required capabilities to provide and advise, mission and Army decision making models, and UMTs’ fuller integration with command and staff.

External Advisement speaks directly to nearly all 21st Century Soldier Competencies:

- Character & Accountability
- Comprehensive Fitness
- Adaptability & Initiative
- Lifelong Learner
- Teamwork & Collaboration
- Communication & Engagement
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Cultural and JIIM Competence
- Tactical and Technical Competence

Other staff sections brief the commander on religion in the OE, such as the J2 and Civil Affairs. Only when the UMT is successfully integrated with these other staff sections will it mitigate for redundancy and add much needed clarity in its external advisement products (RAA & RIA). While these other staff sections capture religious data much like anthropologists and sociologists might, UMTs help answer for the command more transcendent and ultimately significant questions such as “for what are those in the OE willing to live or die?” UMTs are commanders’ subject matter experts on not only transcendent issues of life and death, but also relationships of trust and ethical and moral actions. UMTs provide critical and unique insight commands need to succeed.
Unit Ministry Teams are an indispensable resource to commands and staff during mission planning. The following is guidance to commanders on the benefits (and risks) of chaplains’ contributions during mission planning. Found in GTA 41-01-005, this training aid published by the Army’s Civil Affairs branch at the Special Warfare Center & School in Fort Bragg, NC provides key insights to supervisory UMTs.

“At the direction of the commander, the unit chaplain can provide a broader view of religion’s influence on the mission. Although the primary function of a chaplain is not necessarily to be a subject-matter expert in world religions, he is an internal resource that can aid the staff in exploring and bringing into focus factors that might affect mission planning. Chaplains provide staffs with religious perspectives that can assist in exploring religious impacts on mission planning, and they provide a theological voice throughout the mission planning process. Their role as religious and military leaders and their education in religious schools uniquely position them to understand religion from an insider’s point of view. It is imperative that leaders and planners consider the mental flexibility and adaptability of chaplains—as well as other Soldiers—before including them in an examination of the religions in different cultures. Inflexible individual and theological prejudices or blind insistence on one particular worldview can preclude thorough religious and cultural consideration in mission planning. Still, it is better to have some understanding of religion than to have none, and the inclusion of chaplains in the planning process can enhance the understanding of religious factors.” (GTA 41-01-005 Religious Factors Analysis, February 2015, Special Warfare Center & School, Fort Bragg, NC.)
External Advisement is most specifically laid out in **ATP 1-05.03 Religious Support and External Advisement**, published in May 2013. Its four chapters and two appendices are laid out to walk the UMT through considerations before, during, and after conducting SLEs and designing both external advisement products (RAA & RIA). The ATP is nested in FM 1-05 and the Army’s Capstone Doctrine Publications. The ATP is designed to be accessible and the primary resource for external advisement in all three learning domains (self-development, institutional, and operational domains). Supervisory UMTs are wise to carefully consult the ATP when planning and executing UMT training on external advisement. Supervisory UMTs will ensure subordinate UMTs commands are aware external advisement is a required capability their UMTs can provide when directed by the command.

**Actors in the OE**

- Indigenous populations
- Host Nation military and organizations
- Multinational partners
  - Militaries
  - Government Organizations (GOs)
  - Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)
Self-Awareness

All thinking, rational humans are biased. One’s bias is one’s attitude, preference, position, or pre-conception about everything. We have a **three-fold responsibility regarding our biases:**

- Be aware of them
- Understand how we acquired them
- Ensure they are informed by our values

Just as responsible, critical thinking requires we are aware of and avoid logical fallacies in our thinking. Supervisory UMTs can help subordinate UMTs increase self-awareness and further develop their critical and creative thinking skills.

Resources


DLI Defense Language Institute/Foreign Language Center Online Learning: [http://www.dliflc.edu/#homepage-tab1](http://www.dliflc.edu/#homepage-tab1)

Center for Army Lessons Learned: [http://usacac.army.mil/](http://usacac.army.mil/)

University of Military Intelligence: [https://rdl.train.army.mil/catalog- ws/view/100.ATSC/558A0F93-FD12-4496-87C5-83858F039AE5-1276037829519/cultural_awareness/cultural_awareness.htm](https://rdl.train.army.mil/catalog-ws/view/100.ATSC/558A0F93-FD12-4496-87C5-83858F039AE5-1276037829519/cultural_awareness/cultural_awareness.htm)

State Department Country Studies: [https://www.state.gov/countries/](https://www.state.gov/countries/)
“Although the United States has a secular, representative government that clearly separates church and state, other states have varying degrees of religious participation in their governments. Countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia have codified versions of Shari’a (Islamic legislation). Shari’a uses the Quran as the foundation for the national constitution. Religion is often a central defining characteristic in some forms of government and cannot be discounted by external actors. Informal governance, such as local elders or sheiks, may also play an important role. Ultimately, the form of government adopted must reflect the host nation customs and culture rather than those of the intervening actors” (ADRP 3-07, Stability, 2-90).

**Soldier and Leader Engagements (SLE)**

Prior to planning Soldier Leader Engagements (SLE) UMTs must ensure the following two critical pre-conditions are met first:

- Any activities within the OE, such as Soldier Leader Engagements, occur **only at the direction of the commander**.
- Chaplains will **not** act in any way that compromises their non-combatant status.

Prior to executing SLEs, UMTs must plan and coordinate visits and include supervisory UMTs and other relevant staff sections. In addition to security and safe, reliable transportation, UMTs must understand the commander’s mission and intent. Make a list of possible questions, should the appropriate moment present itself; these might include:

- What Religious beliefs are influencing the situation?
- What are the religious teachings regarding this issue?
- How are the clergy responding to ...?
- What are the religious motivations behind a certain event?
Religious Affairs Specialists (Chaplain Assistants) make their own significant contributions to producing external advisement products and conducting SLE. In addition to ensuring security and reliable travel, Religious Affairs Specialists are best positioned to take careful notes during an engagement. Ask permission from your guest/host before taking notes; otherwise, it could raise suspicion or alarm. Supervisory UMTs must ensure subordinate UMTs are strictly adhering to the two critical pre-conditions to SLE. They must also ensure subordinate UMTs are following the planning, execution, and reporting principles of successful SLEs. (See Chapter 2 and Appendix A of ATP 1-05.03.)

- Consider the **SLE an operational mission** with four phases:
  - Planning
  - Preparation
  - Execution
  - Assessment
- Conduct thorough preparation. *(Rehearse!)*
- Rehearse with your interpreter.
- **Show respect to culture, religion, and your counterpart.**
- Your actions after the SLE are just as important as your actions during the SLE.

In addition to promoting relationships of mutual trust and respect, chaplains conducting SLE help “promote human rights, and deepen cultural understanding *between* unit personnel and the local populace” ATP 1-05.03 (2-9).
Basic Rules during SLE

- Don’t agree to any first offer at the table.
- Don’t ever lie, bluff, or make threats.
- Don’t assume your counterpart does not know/speak English.
- Avoid discussion of politics, or ‘policy’.
- Don’t have side-bar conversations (very rude).
- Don’t tell jokes—they do not translate well.
- Don’t look at your interpreter—look at your counterpart when you speak to him.
- Don’t rush off to the next meeting. Make him feel “this” meeting is the most important event in your day.
- Don’t promise anything beyond your ability to control.
- Do know if the partner is a decision-maker.
- Do finish on-time.
- Do stay in your lane.
- Finish with review of agreements made!

Dialogue during SLE according to ATP 1-05.03

Listening: more deeply (think hearing test) and for longer periods of time (think counseling)

Inquiring: to discover others’ values and views

Examining: our own presupposition and separating assumptions from facts

In Order To: demonstrate a thorough understanding of the religious issues within the culture and foster effective relationships between command teams and local leaders (2-12).

SLE: Final Tips

- Consider the SLE a tactical operation with four phases:
  - Planning
  - Preparation
  - Execution
  - Assessment
- Conduct thorough preparation. (Rehearse!)
- Rehearse with your interpreter.
- Show respect to culture, religion, and your counterpart.
- Your actions after the SLE are just as important as your actions during the SLE.
Religious Area Analysis (RAA) & Religious Impact Assessment (RIA)

Religious Area Analyses (RAAs) are UMT products used to advise the command and staff of how religion is shaping the OE. It is important to contrast the analysis of the RAA with the assessment of the RIA. In the civilian world, these two words are frequently used interchangeably. In the language of ATP 1-05.03, it helps to think of these terms in the following way:

- **Analysis (RAA):**
  - Collect data from the OE related to religion.
  - Organize the data using a standard framework—usually the **Operational Variables:**
    - Political
    - Military
    - Economic
    - Social
    - Information
    - Infrastructure
    - Physical Environment
    - Time
  - REMEMBER: An RAA never presents an operational variable on its own. It is the **cross section between each variable and religion** that provides commands and staff the needed information. For example, the “Political”, the “Military”, the “Economic”, etc. are always provided as each intersects with religion.
  - Alternative frameworks include the Mission Variables and ASCOPE

- **Assessment (RIA):**
  - Identify three specific ways religion may likely impact mission success.
  - Each impact will have the following elements related to religion in the OE:
    - **Prediction** of how religion may impact mission success
    - Recommended **Course of Action** (COA)
    - Desired End State
It is important to note the ATP does not designate a format for either RAA or RIA. (In the institutional domain—at USACHCS—assignments related to these products are submitted in a 10 page PowerPoint presentation (RAA) and a 1-2 page Memorandum to the Commander in Word (RIA). In the operational domain, so long as the products provide commanders and staff the needed analysis and assessment in a clear and accessible manner, the format or interface is irrelevant.

To guide the UMT in knowing what data to collect and organize, the following matrix identifies general, but key, questions whose answers are likely to impact mission success. Note the X axis with Operation Variables and Y axis with an alternative ASCOPE together provide more thorough analysis:

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Every UMT, every mission, and every OE is unique; therefore, every SLE and every product (RAA & RIA) will be unique. Should you inherit products from other UMTs, they may be very useful, but will always require revision and update.
All UMT components benefit from maintaining an awareness of National Guard UMTs’ partnership program with many nations in the OE. Mission readiness and training exercises ought to include consulting our counterparts in these nations, together with the UMTs in the corresponding Combatant Commands.

Supervisory UMTs need to remember SLE and external advisement products UMTs prepare for commanders and staff are no less critical at the tactical level than at the operational and strategic levels. Subordinate UMTs are trained to provide external advisement at their AIT, CHBOLC, and C4 courses in the institutional domain. However, they will require updated and reinforced training when they arrive to the operational learning domain. As with all competencies, some UMTs will be more skilled and talented in this area; rely on these UMTs to help provide reinforcement training in the operational learning domain.

“Chaplain liaison in support of military engagement is any command directed contact or interaction where the chaplain, as the command’s religious representative, meets with a leader on matters of religion to ameliorate suffering and to promote peace and the benevolent expression of religion. It is a focused and narrow role that addresses religion in human activity without employing religion to achieve a military advantage. These activities can take place during any phase of an operation and may have implications at all levels of operations” (JP 1-05, III, 2-2).
The following matrix is found in ATP 1-05.03, 1-18. Collecting and organizing religious data in the OE of this sort provides the commander and staff an additional layer of Situational Understanding:

**Ensure UMTs are properly trained and understand:**

- Role of Religious Affairs Specialist
- How to use ATP 1-05.03
- Two critical pre-conditions
- SLE aims
- Interpreter considerations
- Staff (and technical support chain) integration

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<tr>
<th>Religious Factors Matrix</th>
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<td><strong>Levels of Religious Factors</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Influential Religious Leaders</strong></td>
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Internal Advisement:
Ministry in a Pluralistic Environment

Every Army Chaplain is commissioned by the Army and endorsed by an agent of a religious community or denomination. Endorsers support their chaplains individually and many through the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces, which oversees The Covenant and The Code of Ethics for Chaplains of the Armed Forces.

A chaplain performs religious support directly to those soldiers who share the chaplain’s own religious faith. A chaplain provides religious support through coordination and full support to all other soldiers. Unit Ministry Teams must recognize the very existence of the Chaplain Corps hinges on the need to provide all Soldiers religious support. This fact is grounded in Army Doctrine, Department of Defense Instruction, U.S Code and ultimately in the United States Constitution, specifically the First Amendment:

Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, Para 1-6, states:
“Congress recognizes the necessity of the Chaplain Corps in striking a balance between the establishment and free exercise clauses.”

The same paragraph also emphasizes “chaplains cooperate with each other, without compromising their religious traditions or ecclesiastical endorsement requirements, to ensure the most comprehensive religious support opportunities possible within the unique military environment.”  Chaplains are required to minister within a pluralistic (“religiously diverse”) military environment. It can be difficult to discern one’s way through cooperation without compromising, but no chaplain is alone. His or her endorser, supervisory chaplain, and chaplain peers are present to mentor, guide, and encourage the chaplain.
Religious Accommodation

Soldiers seeking to freely exercise their religion when doing so is contrary to Army regulations may request religious accommodations (an exception to policy). Such requests will fall into the following categories:

- worship practices
- wear and appearance of the uniform
- personal grooming
- dietary practices
- medical practices

AR 600-20, Para 5-6, a. emphasizes the importance of these requests:

Army Directive 2017-03, dated 3 Jan 2017, moved the level of approval for many of these requests from the much higher Department of the Army level to that of the brigade commander. These include unshorn hair and beards for Sikhs and hijabs for Muslims.

Unit chaplains may write Memoranda to the Commander for a Soldier to include in his or her packet requesting religious accommodations from the command. Chaplains are expected to meet with the Soldier and perform any research, referencing, and background checks to allow them to assess the following:

- The Soldier’s sincerity in belief
- The legitimacy of the request (Is it a practice observed by the religious community?)
- Chaplains may choose to conclude the memo recommending the commander approve or disapprove the Soldiers’ request.
“a. The Army places a high value on the rights of its Soldiers to observe tenets of their respective religions or to observe no religion at all. In accordance with Sections 2000bb through 2000bb-4, Title 42, United States Code (42 USC 2000bb-2000bb-4) and DODI 1300.17, the Army will approve requests for accommodation of religious practices unless accommodation will have an adverse impact on unit readiness, individual readiness, unit cohesion, morale, good order, discipline, safety, and/or health. As used in this regulation, these factors will be referred to individually and collectively as “military necessity.” All requests for accommodation of religious practices will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Each request must be considered based on its unique facts; the nature of the requested religious accommodation; the effect of approval or denial on the Soldier’s exercise of religion; and the effect of approval or denial on military necessity. Accommodation of a Soldier’s religious practices must be examined against military necessity and cannot be guaranteed at all times.”