

USEUCOM/USAFRICOM

Regional Joint Intelligence Training Facility

Bulletin

Survival Africa - Staying Safe

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In last month's article, "Survival Africa - Just Getting There" we discussed some of the challenges travelers experience in going to Africa. In this article we will cover my thoughts on staying safe, what our military brethren call force protection. As previously mentioned, every situation you find yourself in is probably going to be unique and when faced with new situations it is important to rely on your training, experience, and common sense. If you do not know something, then ask your supervisor, your chain of command, and/or the U.S. Embassy. Don't hesitate to ask for help, but keep in mind that it is best to ask the right person the right question, and given enough time, verify the information that you get from multiple sources.

STAYING SAFE - FORCE PROTECTION

Violent crime is prevalent across some African countries and likely in others. It affects local residents and visitors alike so force protection should be uppermost in your mind. My mantra is "Be alert and don't get hurt". The statistics in some African countries show that crime rates are alarmingly high while in others, the locals feel it is safer in their country (i.e., Rwanda) than it is in the United States. Of greatest concern to the traveler is violent crime. Africa has war zones where violence and corruption are common, while other countries have reportedly high crime rates, such as Nigeria and South Africa. I spent a great deal of time in these latter two countries and I was never a crime victim. So be diligent.

In regards to safety, my greatest concerns for my team in Africa were armed muggings, pick-pocketing, assaults, ATM theft, and car jacking. In general, I prohibited any member of my ACOTA team to go anywhere in Africa by themselves. Almost all of my team members were combat veterans of Viet Nam, Grenada, Panama, OIF,

and Afghanistan. They had been around the block a few times, had hero medals, and purple hearts, and the scars that go with them. But they knew the score and followed my instructions. Their experience told them that the instructions were sound and had their safety in mind. My fundamental rule was that when they ventured from the hotel, they had to go with a minimum of two-people during daylight and preferably much larger groups after dark. Everyone knew the areas placed off-limits by the U.S. Embassy and no one was allowed to go to those locations. They are declared off-limits by the embassy for a reason.

When you are out and about, and in a well-traveled location such as a tourist site or mall, take note of your surroundings. Be on the lookout for anything suspicious. If the locals start to thin out of the area, then it is time to make your way back to your hotel. I never wore anything that gave away my national origin and you should not give the appearance of wealth - don't flash your money about. As a matter of fact, leave expensive jewelry and large amounts of cash in a safe location - preferably at home. Visitors with secure hotel accommodations should consider only carrying a copy of their passport and leaving the original in their hotel room safe in the event they become a victim of pick-pocketing or mugging. That said, hotel safes are reasonably secure from those who are honest but a criminal can crack them in minutes. I carried my passport in an ankle wallet.

For transportation, I normally hired a rental vehicle with a trusted driver, either working for the rental car company or recommended by the embassy. If you do not have that capability, then use commercial metered taxi services or organized tourist buses. Avoid hailing taxis on the street; instead use hotel taxis or those called/recommended by the restaurant or shop you are patronizing. Do not ride in privately operated mini-buses (known as "combis") that follow fixed routes. Crime safety aside, these vehicles are often not road-worthy and operate at excessive speeds.

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Do not enter areas used by gang members, drug dealers, prostitutes, or petty criminals. If you or your team finds themselves in these kinds of areas, then extricate as soon as possible. Be alert for any kind of disturbance, demonstration, or other kind of dangerous activity and choose a route that skirts them. One of my rules is to never knowingly walk into trouble and to choose discretion and humility over heroism.

Keep doors locked and windows rolled up when traveling by taxis or car. Intersections are often crowded with vendors and vagrants, and curbsides are often patrolled by self-appointed “parking attendants,” all of which make an excellent cover for thieves and car jackers. Cell phone theft out of open car windows and “snatch and grab” of other valuables from vehicles is a common crime in Africa. Valuables should not be displayed in a vehicle, whether parked or waiting at a stoplight. If there are items displayed in a vehicle that pique criminals’ interest (even if not generally considered valuable), they are not above breaking the vehicle’s window and attempting to steal the item. It is best to lock up everything you can in the trunk of the car.

If you go for a PT run - go in a group, never alone. Do not run in isolated areas and do not stay out after dark. It makes sense to put a jump-rope in your checked baggage and exercise in your room or in the hotel courtyard.

Be aware of notable local scams and criminal threats. Although I shy away from using ATMs unless they are inside a bank, they are generally safe to use in Africa. However there have been incidents of individual machines being technically compromised by criminal gangs. Local and foreign criminal gangs have skillfully crafted and camouflaged bank credit card and PIN readers and installed them on some ATMs. Many of these are installed so cleverly that it is very hard to detect an individual ATM has been compromised. That is why I recommend that ATM users make use of machines in more controlled/secured areas such as bank lobbies, hotels, or areas with a strong security presence. In addition to concerns about technical ATM fraud crimes, also be wary of the “helpful citizen” who offers to assist you with your ATM transaction, especially if he or she sees you having trouble. When the machine “doesn’t work” (likely because it’s been intentionally broken) the helpful citizen may palm you back someone else’s ATM card, and then walk off with your card and PIN. Pick your ATM machines carefully, and don’t accept help. Be alert.

Cocktail doping is not uncommon, especially at large tourist hotels. The following incident actually happened to one of my team members on his first

trip to Africa. It was November 2006 and he was in a nice, reputable hotel in Accra, Ghana. He was having a beer at the bar and struck up a conversation with an elegant local lady. The next thing he knew he was waking up on the floor in his ransacked hotel room, and his money was gone. Oops! He was out \$5,000 but I considered him very lucky to be alive. I was a criminal investigator for 10 years and experienced scam artists do not leave much trace evidence and I guarantee you that the Accra Police Department does not have access to the resources that CSI New York has. He could have ended up much worse than he did. Bottom line, be informed on the local scams and be wary.

You should also be aware of local credit card fraud. While using credit cards in reputable stores and restaurants is normally quite safe, credit card fraud can occur, just as it can anywhere else in the world. So be careful to whom you give your card and read your statements closely upon returning home. Have the waiter bring the credit card charge machine to your table and conduct the transaction there. Do not let your credit card out of your sight and when it is returned to you, verify that it is in fact your card. Also, if you can, set up your credit card account so that it sends you an e-mail or text message anytime a large or unusual transaction occurs.

Whenever I leave my hotel room I lock up my luggage and I secure my valuables. I also turn the TV on to a local news channel (not CNN or BBC), lock the windows, close the curtains, leave a light on, put the “Do Not Disturb” sign on the outer door knob, and make sure that the door is locked. When I return to the hotel room, I lock it from the inside and secure the chain to the door.

Mob justice is not uncommon in Africa. Avoid going to the aid of someone you don’t know who is being roughed up or beaten by a group of individuals; the “victim” may have just been caught committing a crime. Although vigilantism is illegal under the law, your rescue efforts might make you an additional target of the group’s rage. Always avoid confrontation.

Armed assailants have been known to enter restaurants, shopping malls, or other public gathering places to rob cashiers and patrons alike. In the vast majority of cases, compliant victims walk away unhurt. If caught in one of these situations, remain calm, don’t make sudden movements, don’t stare at the assailants, and surrender your valuables. Remember that “additional assailants” are often hidden in the restaurant in advance serving as “back-ups” should a skirmish break out during the robbery. As for valuables, I keep less than \$100 in my wallet and keep the rest of my money in an ankle wallet and in an inside the waist wallet.

Civil disturbances and demonstrations are not uncommon in Africa. Tragically, recent headlines attest to that. Anti-U.S. demonstrations have occurred around U.S. diplomatic missions and in some major cities though in reality, this is rare in sub-Saharan Africa. Labor unions have occasionally staged peaceful public demonstrations regarding disagreements over U.S. foreign policies. There have also been public demonstrations regarding the local government's inability to provide basic services. These demonstrations have the potential to become violent so visitors should avoid any demonstrations. In the summer of 2007 a colleague and I were returning from the airport in Lusaka to our hotel at the Taj Pamodi. We were caught in a demonstration of university students who were expressing their discontent with the unemployment situation. They were on a public highway, blocking it, and we had to slow down. They shook the vehicle, threw trash at it, and chanted their slogans as we inched our way forward. No harm was done but it was a reminder that things can turn sour in Africa, even in the safest of places, without much warning. This also brings up

the fact that when you are traveling between your hotel and worksite by vehicle, you should vary your route on a daily basis. Likewise, keep the doors locked and the windows rolled up.

As you can imagine, I own a number of books on survival and on what to do in "Worst Case Scenarios" and I have conducted many criminal investigations over the years. While it is a fascinating subject for the student, it is a very disturbing event for the victim. Be aware of your surroundings and your situation at all times. If something doesn't feel right, exit the area as soon as you can, by the safest means possible. Be informed. Know where the nearest police department and medical facilities are. Talk to your points of contact at the embassy about the local situation, get a briefing from the embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO), and add their contact information to your list of emergency numbers. Always carry your phone with you, charged and ready to go and always have an escape route planned if things start to turn sour. Finally, be alert and don't get hurt.

RJITF MINOC-A II

By: SMSgt Jason Raether



The second edition of the Military Intelligence Noncommissioned Officer Course - Africa (MINOC-A) kicked off on 29 August 2012 in Dakar, Senegal. The previous edition was hosted by the United States, in Grafenwöhr, Germany.

There are 23 students attending the course from the West Africa region. Countries represented include: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Senegal and Tunisia. Students were from various military backgrounds and experience, ranking from SGT to Adjutant Chief. This iteration is the first MINOC-A to be conducted on the continent of Africa and to use Associate Instructors for all classes and practical exercises. The instructor pool consists of military intelligence professionals from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Senegal and the U.S., with RJITF instructors coaching, and mentoring all phases of the course. It is important to highlight that the MINOC-A curriculum complements the curriculum taught in the Military Intelligence Basic Officer Course, aligning officer and enlisted intelligence training in Africa.

In addition to the academic program, students have participated in several intramural football (soccer) matches at local schools organized by the Commandant. The football matches have provided the students an opportunity to build camaraderie, leadership, and team work.

The class has also visited Gorée Island, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated historical site as the "Point of no Return" for approximately 20 million slaves during the slave trade between the early 1500's-mid 1800's. The trip to Gorée Island supports Human Rights instruction provided throughout the course and gives the students a visual example why Human Rights must be a consideration in any military operation.

The course will run until 17 October 2012.

Afghanistan: When the Moon Sets, Watch out

By: Michael Yon

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Last Friday night, the moon phase left Afghanistan in near total darkness. Even with clear skies, the enemy knew that at the brightest moment, the moon would only appear as an irrelevant orange sliver. Such times are called “red illumination,” or “red illum.” Planning calendars in Afghanistan highlight periods of red illum because they hamper aviation.

Even though this is the year 2012, and the Curiosity Rover is beaming images from Mars more than four decades after astronauts first trod on the lunar surface, the moon phase remains important when planning operations. The moment that the nighttime attack on Camp Bastion was reported, the moon phase could have been safely guessed without looking up.

In every respect, Southern Afghanistan is a dark part of the world. Without moonlight, most villages are black at night. The brightest places in the country are our bases. Cultural lights present little danger to Taliban moving at night. Our air assets, including our aerostat balloons, are often their biggest concern.

This war is mature. The enemy knows us, and we know them. After 11 years, the Taliban realizes that most helicopter traffic ceases during red illum. Most birds will only fly for urgent MEDEVAC, or for special operations. The enemy closely observes our air traffic. Operations slow under red illum, so air traffic declines, and the chances of being spotted by roving aircraft are reduced.

There is a misconception that UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) such as Predators can detect everything. They cannot. Their field of vision is like looking through a toilet paper roll. The UAVs are great for specific targets, such as watching a house, but imagine patrolling. It is like trying to visually swat mosquitoes using no ears, no sense of touch, and only the ability to look through a toilet paper roll. You will get some, and miss many.

We only have enough UAVs to cover small splotches of the country, and there are bases, roads, operations, and targets spread throughout Afghanistan and elsewhere that need watching. The enemy can spoof observers by using a “pattern of life” (POL) for camouflage. So even if our UAV operators see apparently unarmed natives moving, it is no guarantee of early detection.

Our UAVs over Afghanistan fly with their strobes flashing to avoid collisions. If a Predator or Reaper crashes into a commercial airliner because it was flying blacked out while staring at the ground, that is a problem. The enemy can see

our UAVs from miles away.

A key realization: the enemy uses cheap night vision gear in the form of cameras that have night functions. When our IR lasers, our IR strobes, our IR illumination or our IR spotlights are radiating, they can easily be seen using cheap digital cameras. I recently told this to some Norwegian soldiers, who were as surprised as our soldiers to learn it. I learned this from the enemy, not from our guys. The Taliban even use smart phone cameras to watch for invisible lasers. The enemy in Afghanistan has been caught using cameras for night vision. It is just a stroke of common sense: I have been doing it for eight years since I noticed an IR laser one night in Iraq.

A Norwegian trooper explained that one dark night in Afghanistan, they got ambushed with accurate but distant machinegun fire. When they turned off their IR strobes, the fire ended. When they turned the IR strobes back on the fires resumed. When they turned it off for good, it was over.

Many of our people believe that the enemy does not use night vision. There was a time when this was true, but the war has matured and this is now false. If your firefly is strobing on your helmet, or if you are carrying a cracked IR chemlight, do not be surprised if you take accurate fire during a black night. When JTACs mark targets with IR lasers, or when aircraft such as Predators lase for Hellfire shots or for target ID, they look like purple or green sunbeams though nightvision optics and they are crazy bright. You cannot miss them.

To maximize chances of success for an assault such as that at Bastion last Friday, the Taliban know that it is best to start early, on a moonless night, just after red illum has begun. Other Afghans engaged in normal masking movements can provide POL camouflage. The enemy knows that only “Terry Taliban” is skulking around after midnight, so they start early when possible.

By 7PM last Friday, the night was very dark, and by 8PM, it was thick and black, making a perfect time to close in on the target. Camp Bastion would appear lit up like Las Vegas, standing alone, glowing like a giant bubble of light in the “Desert of Death.” On the darkest nights, the lights of Bastion sometimes reflect orange off the clouds above, and they can be seen for miles around, causing Afghans to ask why the base glows like the morning sun, yet they do not have a drop of electricity. The days of goodwill and hope are over.

During periods of utter darkness, many of our light-intensifying systems are useless. There is not enough light for them to work with, which is why many aircraft do not fly during red illum. This also affects ground troops whose systems likewise do not have enough light to intensify, and it reduces their air cover, and thus all air and ground operations.

Last Friday was dark without infrared spotlights, or IR illumination fired from cannons and mortars. It is not always a good idea to fire those around major airbases. And besides, the spotlights and illumination rounds have limitations and cannot see around contours. Thermal imagers work during complete darkness but they cannot see into hidden gullies. Ground surveillance radar (GSR) and other sensors are of limited use, especially when the enemy uses masking POL. All of these systems work together, and they can be helpful, but they can be foiled through experience and subterfuge, especially when our forces are complacent in the armored cocoons of the mega-bases.

Camp Bastion is set far back in the desert as a security precaution. Approaches can be seen for miles. Consulting Google Earth and other imagery might lead you to believe that there is no approach that cannot be observed. This is true when the air assets are up, and it is true up close whether the aerial surveillance platforms are up or not. But the desert is not flat like a billiard table. We all know what water and wind can do to terrain. The surface is closer to a waffle than to a pancake.

I scouted around Camp Bastion more than six years ago, before the camp was up and running, and since that time I have flown low-level there on many occasions. Many ripples and folds provide cover from direct observation from the base perimeter. The micro-terrain might not be obvious from Google Earth or from maps, but there are dead space approaches that locals can use. Afghans have long been expert at traveling unseen in what appears to be wide-open territory. This is one of their strengths, and it has been described in accounts of war after war. Just as navies can hide in the open seas, Afghans can hide in treeless deserts, unless aircraft or roving patrols detect them.

The Taliban's major vulnerability is our mastery of the air, but if they can negate it, we are approaching tactical equality because they have home turf

advantage, and they have lived there since antiquity. Local Afghans have had six years since Bastion was built to map ingress and egress routes, and to probe ISAF defenses and reactions.

This morning, four days after the attack, ISAF HQ in Kabul announced that they had arrested one of the Taliban leaders behind Friday's attack. According to ISAF, they nabbed him in Nad'Ali district. This district is a green zone about sixteen miles from Camp Bastion. Some of the closest built-up areas contiguous to Nad'Ali are just a handful of miles away from Camp Bastion. If the enemy were coming to shoot rockets or mortars at Bastion with the intention of escaping, the hazard would be high, depending on ISAF rules of engagement. But attackers who are prepared for a one-way trip have demonstrated that they can achieve success.

Last Friday, a few hours after sunset, the Taliban struck at about 10PM. They killed two US Marines, one of them a commanding officer, and they wiped out roughly 8 percent of our Harrier jet force. Harriers are no longer manufactured, so these aircraft cannot be replaced. Scratch one squadron, and now the military must reallocate aircraft to cover the deficit.

The enemy fooled all of our high-tech gadgetry with training, observation, intelligence, terrain, planning, rehearsal, and audacity, using basic military tactics that were perfected long before anyone reading this was born. Persistence and luck was also a key factor: the Taliban have attempted similar attacks at different bases in the past with poor results. The Taliban only have to be lucky once. We have to be lucky all of the time.

The Taliban destroyed six jets, damaged two possibly beyond repair, leaving Marine VMA-211 squadron with only two aircraft, and they killed the squadron commander.

All of this by Taliban who likely never served in any military. If they did serve, they joined up, they got some good training, and then they put it to use.

Partner Nation Training Schedule

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| 29 Aug-17 Oct | Military Intelligence Non-Commissioned Officer Course | Senegal |
| 8-12 Oct | Critical Thinking and Structured Analysis - P | Poland |
| 9-12 Oct | NATO Intelligence Analyst Course | Oberammergau |
| 22-26 Oct | Africa Area Studies Seminar | Italy |
| 29 Oct - 2 Nov | Advanced Writing and Briefing | Estonia |
| 5 Nov | Introduction to Statistical Analysis | Poland |
| 6 Nov | Counter Terrorism Social Network Analysis | Poland |
| 5-16 Nov | Critical Thinking and Structured Analysis - P | Senegal |
| 19-23 Nov | Intelligence in Stability Operations Seminar | Great Britian |
| 26-30 Nov | Intelligence in Stability Operations Seminar | Great Britian |
| 27-28 Nov | Central Africa Course | Italy |
| 29-30 Nov | Southern Africa Course | Italy |

To enroll in an RJITF course, you have three options:

- Enroll through AGILE on SIPR Net (<http://jivu.dse.dia.smil.mil/>) or click the AGILE link on the RJITF SIPR home page (<http://cfapps2.jac.eucom.smil.mil/apps/rjtf/>). This is the preferred method.
- Contact your unit training coordinator.
- Contact your theater training coordinator:
 - MAJ Beall (AFRICOM Molesworth, David.Beall@jac.eucom.smil.mil or DSN 268-5187)
 - SSgt York (EUCOM Molesworth, jeremy.york@jac.eucom.smil.mil or DSN 268-2611)
 - Harriet Loney (EUCOM Stuttgart, harriett.loney@eucom.smil.mil or DSN 430-8398)

If you're having a problem with AGILE that your training coordinator can't solve, contact the RJITF training coordinator:

- SMSgt Xochitl Lara-Thell (xochitl.larathell@eucom.smil.mil or DSN 430-2201)
- Barbara Karis (barbara.karis@jac.eucom.smil.mil or DSN 268-2665)
- Jason Pagel (jason.pagel@jac.eucom.smil.mil or DSN 268-2101)

Some courses, including all MTTs, are subject to controlled enrollment. To obtain placement in one of these courses, contact your theater training coordinator.

COURSES AT RJITF, RAF MOLESWORTH OCTOBER 2012

| <i>Course</i> | <i>Start Date</i> | <i>Duration</i> |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| Religion and Conflict Course: An Examination of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam | 10 Oct | 3 days |
| Theater Core | 15 Oct | 5 days |
| NATO Intelligence Analyst Course | 22 Oct | 5 days |
| Africa Area Studies Seminar | 22 Oct | 5 days |
| EUCOM/AFRICOM Collections Course for Analysts | 22 Oct | 4 days |
| Critical Thinking and Structured Analysis | 22 Oct | 8 days |

COURSES AT RJITF, RAF MOLESWORTH NOVEMBER 2012

| <i>Course</i> | <i>Start Date</i> | <i>Duration</i> |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| Social-Cultural Analysis and the Conflict Environment | 5 Nov | 4 days |
| Theater Core | 5 Nov | 5 days |
| Advanced Critical Thinking | 13 Nov | 4 days |
| Intermediate Analytical Intelligence Writing and Briefing Course | 26 Nov | 5 days |
| Advanced Critical Thinking | 26 Nov | 4 days |

MTTS ↻ OCTOBER 2012

| <i>Course</i> | <i>Location</i> | <i>Start Date</i> | <i>End Date</i> |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Middle East Area Studies Seminar | Darmstadt | 16 Oct | 19 Oct |
| Intermediate Analytical Intelligence Writing and Briefing Course | Stuttgart | 22 Oct | 26 Oct |
| Religion and Conflict Course: An Examination of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam | Stuttgart | 22 Oct | 24 Oct |

MTTs ↻ NOVEMBER 2012

| <i>Course</i> | <i>Location</i> | <i>Start Date</i> | <i>End Date</i> |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Advanced Critical Thinking | Darmstadt | 5 Nov | 9 Nov |
| Advanced Counterterrorism Research and Methodologies Course | Stuttgart | 13 Nov | 16 Nov |
| Theater Core | Stuttgart | 26 Nov | 30 Nov |

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