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Marshal Fahim National Defense University Green on Blue, 5 August 2014
AR 15-6 Investigation
EXSUM

Background and Chronology of Events

On 5 August 2014, at approximately 1155 local time, an Afghan National Army (ANA) Military Policeman (MP) opened fire on a large group of Coalition and Afghan Forces who were conducting a series of briefings at the Marshal Fahim National Defense University (MFNDU) in Kabul, Afghanistan. MG Harold Greene, DCG, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A), was killed and 18 other Coalition and Afghan Forces were injured. The shooter was also killed.

CSTC-A is executing a phased construction plan for MFNDU using the US Army Corps of Engineers as the construction agent. The NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan, Unified Training and Advisory Group, had planned a Key Leader Engagement with CSTC-A to visit a number of locations at MFNDU in order to highlight the ongoing construction to senior leaders. The focus of the visit was not so much on the construction itself, but on highlighting the subsequent officer production capability of the MFNDU once complete, and its importance to the ongoing growth and development of the ANA. Of late, problems had arisen with the Afghan Construction Property Management Directorate (CPMD) coming through with its requirement to increase water supply and distribution, essential to supporting the projected population growth of the MFNDU campus. CSTC-A is working on a project to re-award Phase II of the MFNDU construction, but needed assurances from CPMD they could deliver on past promises to address the water challenges.

Initial plans envisioned about 20 participants, but as interest in the event intensified, more interested parties planned to attend. There were ultimately more than 90 US and Coalition Force personnel present for the events of the day, including Personal Security Detachments (PSD) and Close Protection Teams (CPT) from the United States, the UK, and Germany. The Danish Security Platoon, assigned to the UK Force Protection Company at Camp Qargha, provided overall site security. Of note, the party included a total of eight general officers from the ANA and ISAF. The total number of attendees was not confirmed by visit planners until the morning of the event. Even at that time, there was not an accurate head count of all participants, as several additional Afghan leaders joined at the last minute.

Despite extensive security planning and a number of site recons by the Danish Security Platoon, and recons by US, UK, and German PSDs/CPTs, there was no comprehensive plan that incorporated all participating security elements. Individual PSDs/CPTs conducted their own preparation. There was no comprehensive mission brief or rehearsal that incorporated the relevant stakeholders. The Danish Security Platoon Leader was the senior force protection leader, and despite the lack of prior coordination, planned to use his platoon as the lead element with the PSD/CPTs responsible for their individual principals. The threat level that day was assessed as low, with no indicators of unusual activity or concern.

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Several stops were planned to orient the delegation to the ongoing construction and highlight problems with the water supply. Due to the late arrival of several members of the party, the decision was made to bypass a planned stop to observe a rifle firing range and proceed directly to an above ground water storage tank. A briefer was scheduled to make a presentation at this stop, but it was decided he should delay so the party could continue on to the most important stop, an underground tank along the boundary of the installation, where the main water supply problem could be addressed. It was decided he could make his presentation at that time. Upon arrival at the underground tank, it was determined to be too dark and crowded for his presentation, so the decision was made to move it back to an open area behind the MP Barracks where the group would pass enroute to their next site visit.

This stop behind the MP Barracks was unplanned and not coordinated with the Danish Security Platoon. There were no concerns at the time, so the platoon leader simply readjusted his perimeter. A crowd of approximately 58 personnel gathered around the briefer for his 15-20 minute discussion (see attached storyboard). An armed ANA MP, recently returning from a security patrol, had arrived to the adjacent MP Company HQ while the party was visiting the underground water tank site. He was instructed to go into the barracks and wait for the delegation to depart, and afterwards he would be given further instructions. This Soldier, now known as Rafiqullah, entered the barracks which was in direct view of the personnel now gathering for the presentation. At some point afterwards, Rafiqullah positioned himself in a bathroom, in direct view of the gathering, stuck the barrel of his M16 rifle out of the bathroom window, and fired approximately 27-30 rounds into the crowd. He hit 18 people, killing MG Greene, and seriously wounded several others before two Coalition Force Soldiers returned fire and killed him. One other participant was injured while trying to escape, but not by direct fire.

What we know about the Shooter

The subsequent investigation did not identify any clear links between Rafiqullah and the Taliban or other extremist groups. Intelligence Agencies and ISAF Counter-Intelligence Analysts continue to investigate. Although there have been many leads, nothing has yet materialized that conclusively links the shooter to any plots, plans, or person of interest. It may be that the shooter was self-radicalized, or that he suffered from some sort of psychological condition (which is what the ANA claims is the cause). From the evidence we have been able to ascertain from the ANA, and from several detained personnel we were able to interview, it appears the shooting was not pre-meditated, and the shooter simply took advantage a target of opportunity provided by the close gathering. More detail is provided in Secret-NOFORN and TS Annexes to the 15-6 Report; however, the conclusions remain the same.

Findings

No negligence on the part of event planners or leaders present. This incident could not have been reasonably foreseen or prevented, appearing as an isolated act of a

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determined shooter without indicators or warnings. Visits are a daily occurrence to the MFNDU site. The Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA) alone has hosted over 100 in 9 months. Group sizes often exceed 20 personnel, and multiple VIPs are not uncommon. Planning for this event was conducted as all others have been before and deemed sufficient. Recommendations (below) can help to mitigate future risk.

Actions of Security Team members in neutralizing the shooter, rendering first aid, and evacuating casualties was superb. Despite the lack of coordinated planning, execution was swift and lives were undoubtedly saved as a result.

Recommendations

Require an appropriately approved Commander's Risk Assessment. This Risk Assessment must be approved at the appropriate level given the grade and number of participants. Control measures must be put into place to limit the number of participants for any event to that which can be reasonably managed and secured.

Require an appropriately approved Security Plan. A Security Plan, informed by the Commander's Risk Assessment, must be implemented. The Security Plan must be approved at the appropriate level given the grade and number of participants. Security Plans for events that include multiple security teams must be fully coordinated, synchronized, and rehearsed with a lead element identified for C2.

Review the operational readiness of Personal Security Detachments/Close Protection Teams (PSD/CPT) and Guardian Angels (GA) and institute a standardized training and certification program across ISAF. ISAF Force Protection SOPs, FRAGOs, and GA Publications do not mandate standardized selection, training, and continuation training for GA. All PSD/CPT and GA personnel and teams must be trained and certified in advance of conducting security operations in Afghanistan.

Review the ISAF standard uniform and the use of Personal Protective Equipment. The risk of not wearing PPE should be addressed in the Commander's Risk Assessment and adjusted, as required, based upon the threat. As a minimum, personnel should always wear their personal identification tags and carry appropriate personal medical accoutrement (tourniquet, bandage, casualty feeder card, etc) on their person. In addition, consideration should also be given to the purchase of concealable body armor to be worn by senior leadership, and possibly by all personnel who work individually or in small groups on a daily basis in Afghan facilities and outside standard ISAF facilities. This would allow a minimally offensive, yet added measure of protection.