



(S//REL) The Special Operations Command Takes the Lead on Planning the Defeat of Terrorism

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(U//FOUO) What is a TSP? Better yet, what is a "brown-moose" message? ... and how are the two related? These terms that leave most NSAers scratching their heads are very important at the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), where they drive exercise and operational planning.

(S//REL) Among the Combatant Commands, USSOCOM has the lead on synchronizing military planning efforts to defeat the al-Qa'ida network of terrorist movements. This is challenging because terrorist targets are fleeting and often travel between -- or run operations that cross -- Command geographic areas of responsibility. When information is received that answers the following USSOCOM Priority Intelligence Requirements:

1. where are high-value Al-Qa'ida targets located?
2. how/when/where will they travel, meet, communicate, or otherwise present themselves?

... the Joint Staff at the Pentagon initiates a Time Sensitive Planning (TSP) process, which USSOCOM then acts upon.

(U//FOUO) The TSP process exploits opportunities to "find, fix and finish" fleeting terrorist targets by developing operational course of action recommendations rapidly (in hours, if necessary) for planners and decision-makers, when quick action is critical to an operation's success. The TSP provides the Joint Staff with recommendations for actions down to the tactical level, for eventual consideration by the SECDEF* and President. It is also used to develop and publish documents that transmit authorities and approvals to move forces and conduct operations, and allows USSOCOM to monitor operations.

(U//FOUO) What kicks off a TSP? The alert order from the Joint Staff is called a "brown-moose" message, a curious name to be sure. A little research revealed how this name came to be. When Secretary Rumsfeld assigned the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) planning mission to USSOCOM back in 2002, a small group was set up at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina to start laying out how USSOCOM would tackle this issue. This group was called the Campaign Support Group. In that group were two individuals named Brown and Moose. They drafted the shell for the alert order, it was briefed to the Joint Staff as the Brown-Moose message, and the name stuck.

(S//REL) Twice a year, USSOCOM tests the TSP process by running major exercises with various military commands, the intelligence community, and other government agencies. These exercises practice real-world scenarios, such as the capture of a high-value target whose movements have become known. USSOCOM's TSP exercises are called ABLE WARRIOR, and the command just completed its most ambitious and realistic one yet, involved the Joint Staff, USCENTCOM, USPACOM, USSOUTHCOM, USNORTHCOM, USSTRATCOM, USTRANSCOM, as well as DIA, NSA, CIA, STATE, and FBI.

(S//REL) All were major players, either as participants or as intelligence providers to drive the scenario. Several SID offices made significant contributions to the latest ABLE WARRIOR exercise: the [Plans and Exercises shop](#) (S132), [Information Warfare Support Center](#) (IWSC - S15), and the Cryptologic Services Group at the command.

(U//FOUO) USSOCOM takes the charter to plan and synchronize the GWOT very seriously. It is a relatively new charge to a command that traditionally dealt with a "man, train, and equip" function. As USSOCOM grows to the task, NSA will be asked to play an ever-increasing role. It's a great time to be here and help the customer understand what NSA can do for them! (Tampa isn't a bad place to hang your hat, either.)

*(U) SECDEF = Secretary of Defense



(U) Tampa, Florida. USSOCOM is headquartered in the city, at MacDill Air Force Base

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