

Polishing Process: **Soldiers, Airmen Lend Helping Hand, Hone Afghan National Police Skills**

By Sergeant Jessica R. Dahlberg

The sound of idling, high-mobility, multipurpose, wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs) resonated in the air at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, as the commander of the Parwan Police Mentoring Team (PMT) briefed the team on mission-related convoy operations. After the briefing concluded, team members mounted their vehicles and embarked on a scenic but treacherous journey over winding mountain roads. Their mission destination was a small village in the Parwan Province of Afghanistan. Their task was to instruct the Afghan National Police (ANP) in hand-to-hand combat, community policing, coordination cell training, and criminal investigation.

The PMT, which consists of Soldiers and airmen who are trained in an array of military occupational specialties, travels all over Parwan Province—coaching ANP to successfully function without the assistance of coalition forces. The combined expertise of the PMT members results in a highly skilled, effective team.

After returning from a meeting in which he discussed the day's objectives with an ANP colonel, the PMT commander said, "Some of the Afghan

people do bad things, but most of the Afghan people want to see the Taliban gone and their country safe—just like we do."

While the PMT commander met with the ANP colonel, the remaining team members prepared for a physical-apprehension restraint techniques class. "We took it upon ourselves to give these training classes," said one of the PMT leaders. He described the PMT as a highly efficient team of Soldiers and airmen who teach a variety of classes based on the needs of the police in each district.

Becoming an ANP officer is not an easy task. At a minimum, applicants must have a high school education, go through testing, and attend a six-week course at one of the country's four academies. Their training is augmented by U.S. forces, who help the ANP retain the training they received at the academy. "The training is very good for us," said one ANP officer. "Our main goal is security, and the classes the Americans give us help prepare us for that goal."

"We want to make the [Afghan] National Police sufficient because in the end, it is not about us at all; it is all about them," said the PMT leader.

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