



This month I want to highlight AIA's contributions to Air Force force protection operations. I think you'll be interested to hear the progress that's been made in this critical mission area as a result of the teaming of security, intelligence, and Air Force Office of Special Investigation personnel.

Simply stated, force protection is about ensuring freedom of action for American forces, not just protection from attack, but also freedom to attack.

Force Protection is achieved by preventing successful hostile actions against friendly forces when they are not directly engaged with the enemy.

As you know, force protection concerns were brought to the forefront of Air Force operations in June 1996 as a result of the deadly Khobar Towers bombing. Subsequently, the Downing Report's findings pointed to a "... lack of organic intelligence support capability in U.S. Security Police units..."

With that in mind, the Air Force defined its Aerospace Force Protection requirement for 'a full-time, highly trained, dedicated, and self-contained force, capable of deploying as part of an initial Air Force contingent. It must be organized to support multiple, concurrent small-scale contingency operations, as well as major theater wars.' This force must be able to integrate anti-terrorism, physical security and personal protective measures in all locations and situations.

To respond to all locations and situations calls for a very dynamic, robust force structure to neutralize the many and varied threat environments Air Force members operate in daily. That force structure is the 820th Security Forces Group, literally a team of security police, civil engineering, intelligence, communications, logistics, transportation, medical and AFOSI personnel. The 820th SFG stood up March 17, 1997, and saw its first real-world action in support of BRIGHT STAR and Air Expeditionary Force V at Shaikh Isa Air Base, Bahrain.

Threat is the determining factor in sizing, equipping, and organizing the protection forces. Intelligence is the key to threat analysis. Therefore, every deployed force protection unit will have direct access to intelligence assets including language specialists, cultural specialists, counterintelligence, defensive information operations, and fused human intelligence, signals intelligence, imagery intelligence, measurements and signatures intelligence, and open source intelligence products. This direct access will include both a reachback capability and, more significantly, an organic intelligence, counterintelligence, and command and control capability reporting directly to the force protection commander.

Air Force intelligence personnel, including AIA assets, are embedded in the 820th SFG, training and deploying with them. Their responsibilities include reporting threat assessments to the force protection commander and preparing vulnerability assessments to aid in the development of the Force Protection Plan. Embedded personnel will also be able to tap into national and Department of Defense intelligence centers.

The AFOSI is also an integral participant in the Force Protection mission. In addition to the agents embedded in the 820th SFG, separate

Anti-terrorism Support Teams provide a rapid deployment capability to execute an initial threat and vulnerability assessment, conducting counterintelligence, anti-terrorism and offensive force protection operations when necessary. The ASTs use intelligence data collected from in-country and U.S. intelligence agencies, including AIA. AFOSI embedded personnel then provide a continuing presence for sustained operations as part of the force protection unit.

AIA personnel are also involved in force protection modernization efforts with the 820th SFG, the Force Protection Battlelab and the Electronic Systems Center. SENSOR GUARD is an AIA initiative designed to provide highly mobile, ruggedized intel support to deployed security forces. It is a user-friendly intel system prototype modeled after the Deployable Wing Intelligence Capability, providing fused and timely intelligence reporting/dissemination, tactical force protection indications and warning, as well as reachback into national assets through AIA. SENSOR GUARD is robust, modular, transportable, tailored to user needs and interoperable with local theater assets.

The prototype was demonstrated to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force Feb. 9, 1998, and was deployed as a fully operational system five days later. Look for more details on the success of this initiative in a future issue of *Spokesman*.

In addition to our deployed intelligence specialists, AIA participates in many other aspects of the force protection mission. Our Information Protect capabilities are crucial to the effectiveness of force protection operations both in preserving the integrity and availability of force protection systems and those of the forces being protected. Intelligence training for officers and enlisted at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas, now includes a force protection block of instruction. Also, the Unit Intelligence Roles and Mission AFI now includes wing- and squadron-level force protection guidance and responsibilities.

For those of you who have deployed within the last year, you know that all Air Force members subject to overseas deployment receive mandatory anti-terrorism and force protection awareness training. AIA also has an Intelink and Intelink-S Force Protection Homepage that provides 'one-stop shopping' for the latest DoD-wide force protection information. Finally, AIA is doing its part to make SCI-cleared personnel available in the force protection unit, ensuring critical intelligence is received by those who need it most.

As intelligence professionals, you need to be aware of both the force protection mission support requirements we have as information operators and the individual responsibilities we each share when deployed to potentially hostile locations. We must work the force protection mission with the same dedication and expertise we provide combat forces. Base defense and force protection shouldn't be perceived as just the responsibility of security forces anymore. It's a team effort, and we're all on the team.

*James E. Mills*