

Civil Affairs As The Premier Maneuver Force For Winning Without Fighting

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The recent development of the Civil Affairs Irregular Warfare and Governance Courses by the Irregular Warfare Technical Support Directorate represents a strategic advancement in equipping U.S. Army Civil Affairs personnel for modern global challenges. This initiative, stemming from a collaboration between the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL), the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS), and the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) (95th CA (SO) (A)), reflects a proactive response to the evolving nature of conflict and competition in the 21st century.

The Civil Affairs Irregular Warfare course integrates diverse methodologies and tools, such as the Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies (ARIS) series, Social Network Analysis, Human Factors Analysis, and Gene Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolent action tied back to the Resistance Operations Concept (ROC). The Civil Affairs Governance Support Course equips Civil Affairs Soldiers with the skills to aid in the establishment and enhancement of local government capabilities. It delves into the critical components that reinforce a governance entity's perceived legitimacy and credibility among its population.

These courses emphasize how Civil Affairs Operations play a key role in strengthening a resistance's legitimacy and in aiding a resistance Transitional Governance from its nascence through its growth phase, culminating in its evolution into a stable governing body.

The curriculum is designed to enhance Civil Affairs' operational capabilities in integrated deterrence, campaign planning, and execution within cross-functional teams. These courses train Civil Affairs Soldiers in the use of Operational Art & Design for campaign planning for their contribution to Irregular Warfare. Another essential aspect of the curriculum is establishing and maintaining legitimacy with Interagency Partners. The training incorporates key principles from The Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC). A key focus is on providing comprehensive training for both Active and Reserve Civil Affairs Soldiers, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of both theoretical frameworks and practical applications.

This initiative marks a significant shift in the preparation of all Civil Affairs forces, emphasizing adaptability and a deeper understanding of nonviolent strategies in complex geopolitical landscapes. Moreover, these courses do not require adjustments in doctrine, leadership, or organizational structure; it simply demands enhanced training and education. This training also aligns with the Army Reserve's 29-day Active Duty for Training (ADT) cycle, making it apt for training COMPO 3 (U.S. Army Reservists) and the new 38G Military Government Specialists. The courses aim not only to equip Soldiers with advanced skills but also to redefine the role of Civil Affairs in contemporary military operations, aligning with the broader objectives of U.S. defense strategy in addressing current and future global challenges.