

World Religions and Advisement Smart Book: 2020



**US Army Chaplain Center and School
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Advise the Command: A Required Capability

The Unit Ministry Team (UMT) has two required capabilities: provide religious support and advise the command.¹ The second required capability consists of *internal* and *external advisement*. When delivering *internal advisement*, the UMT advises the command on religion, morals, and morale within units. The UMT also advises the command on ethical decision making.² Internal advisement includes working with commanders and Soldiers on religious accommodation: requests for exceptions to policy on the basis of the free exercise of religion. When delivering *external advisement*, the UMT assists the command and staff with a clearer understanding of how religion shapes the battlefield and impacts the unit's mission throughout its area of operations (AO).³ The UMT provides external advisement primarily through two products and one activity.

The products of external advisement are *Religious Area Analysis* (RAA) and *Religious Impact Assessment* (RIA). An RAA organizes religious data specific to an AO using the operational variables.⁴ It analyzes the cross-section of religion with each variable. Alternately, it can organize the data using the mission variables (METT-TC) or civil considerations (ASCOPE).⁵ Using the data from the RAA, the RIA speaks directly to how religion in a designated AO impacts a unit's mission.⁶ While the UMT will rarely brief the RAA to the commander, the UMT should prepare the RIA with the intention of presenting its contents to the commander.

The activity of external advisement is Soldier and Leader Engagement (SLE). SLE is taught in common core curriculum for all Military Occupation Specialties, both officer and enlisted. In the past, SLEs were called Religious Leader Liaisons, Religious Leader Engagements, or Key Leader Engagements. Today, SLE is the standard term. When UMT members take part in SLEs, the individuals they meet with are often, but not always, religious leaders.⁷

¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Religious Support*, Field Manual 1-05 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, January 21, 2019), 1-2.

² Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Religious Support and Internal Advisement*, Army Techniques Publication 1-05.04 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, March 23, 2017), 1-3.

³ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Religious Support and External Advisement*, Army Techniques Publication 1-05.03 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, January 21, 2019), 1-2.

⁴ The eight operational variables are Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, Infrastructure, Physical Environment, and Time. They can be remembered using the acronym PMESII-PT.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-2, 2-3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 3-1.

⁷ The information in this paragraph and other portions of this smart book comes from previous editions, written by Chaplain J. Nathan Kline during his time as the USACHCS World Religions Instructor/Writer.

Culture as Context

The Army's Definition of Culture: The set of distinctive features of a society or group, including but not limited to **values**, **beliefs**, and **norms**, that ties together members of that society or group and that drives action and **behavior**.⁸ Chaplains should consider cultural factors both within their units (*internal advisement*) and outside of their units in an AO (*external advisement*).

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Values: | What is valuable? |
| Beliefs: | What is true? |
| Norms: | What type of behavior can I expect? |
| Behavior: | What do I see in the operational environment (OE)? |

Factors which shape culture and impact religious advisement:

- History
- Religion
- Ethnic Identity
- Language
- Nationality

Positive Outcomes of Considering the Culture and Worldviews of Others:

- Creates the opportunity for relationships of trust
- Opens avenues of approach for establishing partnerships
- Helps lead to successful stability operations
- Increases possibility for lasting peace
- Corresponds to Army Professional Ethic, US national values, and enduring principles

The Impact of Religion on Culture:

"Because religion is often an integral part of the values set of a culture, mission preparation and analysis should examine the religions and religious groups in an AO. Religious beliefs, leaders, and institutions are central to the worldview of many societies. The impact of religion on a local population must be considered when planning any operation."⁹

⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, 2009), 7.

⁹ ATP 1-05.03, 1-4.

Internal Advisement Overview

When a chaplain delivers *internal advisement*, he or she advises the command on religion, morals, morale, and ethical decision making internal to the unit.¹⁰ Internal advisement is distinct from the required capability to provide religious support.¹¹ Chaplains are uniquely situated to advise because of their direct access to the commander and all assigned Soldiers in the unit, because they offer complete confidentiality, and because they understand how to function in the Army's religiously pluralistic environment.¹²

Chaplains are religious leaders. As such, they influence and motivate the command to act in the best interests of the unit.¹³ When chaplains deliver internal advisement, they put forth actionable recommendations¹⁴ flowing from their unique knowledge as both pastoral caregivers and professional staff officers. While chaplains often advise commanders verbally, they can also provide written advisement. This can take the form of executive summaries, information papers, and decision papers.¹⁵

Similar to when providing religious support, chaplains must uphold the First Amendment when providing internal advisement. Chaplains *always* assist the commander in upholding both the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses. Internal advisement demands a description of operational impact, with focus on mission and readiness, which is objective and unbiased. If a chaplain senses he or she is unable to advise a commander on a particular issue due to religious conviction, he or she must arrange for another chaplain to perform the duty. This will allow the unit chaplain to maintain moral and professional integrity and to avoid creating a conflict of interests within the command.¹⁶

¹⁰ ATP 1-05.04, 1-3.

¹¹ There are times when the two required capabilities overlap. An example is when a commander speaks with a chaplain about a unit-based issue from both a personal religious perspective (provide) and from a professional ethical perspective (advise). Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 1-3, 1-4.

¹³ Ibid., 1-4.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁶ Ibid., 1-6.

Internal Advisement: Religious Accommodation

Religious Accommodation Defined:

A key component of internal advisement is religious accommodation. The term describes “whether the Army and its commanders will prohibit, or permit and accommodate, particular desired exercise of expression of religion that would otherwise be at odds with other military requirements, objectives, and policies.”¹⁷ Many religious needs can be met without religious accommodation by simply providing religious support (see page 18). For example, a Jewish chaplain can arrange for a Roman Catholic chaplain to hold mass for all Roman Catholic Soldiers within a unit. However, there are occasions in which a Soldier is unable to exercise elements of his or her faith without a specific religious accommodation.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act:

While the First Amendment undergirds federal laws and Army policies regarding religious accommodation, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) of 1993 provides the standard of federal law for the free exercise of religion in the Army. As a part of the US Code, RFRA is law. It says that the federal government may burden an individual’s ability to exercise his or her religion only if there is a compelling government interest to do so, and only if it is the least restrictive means of doing so.¹⁸ An Army directive¹⁹ and an Army regulation²⁰ each define “compelling government interest” as “military necessity.”²¹

Here is an example: a forward-deployed commander may prevent his Soldiers from attending chapel if there is a military necessity, such as a major battlefield operation or movement. The commander has burdened his Soldiers’ free exercise of religion. However, the commander makes sure that his Soldiers can attend chapel at their earliest convenience after the operation or movement is complete. The commander has burdened his Soldiers’ free exercise in the *least* restrictive way.

¹⁷ Ibid., 1-4.

¹⁸ *Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993*, H.R. 1308, Public Law 103-141, 103rd Congress, (November 16, 2013), excerpts from 42 U.S.C. 2000bb-2000bb-4.

¹⁹ Secretary of the Army, *Processing Religious Accommodation Requests Requiring a Waiver to Army Uniform or Grooming Policies*, Army Directive 2016-34 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, October 6, 2016), 1.

²⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Army Command Policy*, Army Regulation 600-20 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, November 6, 2014), 44.

²¹ For further guidance about religious liberty protections in federal law, see US Attorney General Jeff Sessions, “Federal Law Protections for Religious Liberty,” memorandum for all Executive Departments and Agencies, Washington, DC, October 6, 2017, <https://www.justice.gov/crt/page/file/1006786/download>.

The Army's Approach to Religious Accommodation:

Department of Defense and Army policy safeguard the rights of Soldiers "to observe the tenets of their respective religions or to observe no religion at all."²² When a Soldier requires a religious accommodation to observe tenets of his or her religion, the Army's approach is to approve such requests "unless accommodation will adversely affect military necessity, including unit readiness, individual readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health, and/or safety for Soldiers and units."²³

Categories of Religious Accommodation:

Major categories of religious accommodation include: worship services, dietary practices, medical practices, wear and appearance of the uniform, grooming practices,²⁴ religious observance, and religious speech/abstentions. A commander at any level may approve a routine request for religious accommodation – such as an alternate day of worship or a dietary practice – either formally (in writing) or informally. A chaplain interview is not required unless the commander denies the request. In that case, a chaplain interview memorandum is included in the appeal packet.

Requests for accommodation pertaining to uniform and grooming standards fall into one of four categories:

- (1) No request for accommodation is required. For example, a Soldier who is a Latter-Day Saint is authorized to wear sacred undergarments without a religious accommodation. AR 670-1 already allows it.²⁵
- (2) The religious accommodation may be approved by any commander as an exception from local uniformity. For example, a commander can authorize a Soldier to wear long pants and long sleeves during physical training in hot weather for the sake of modesty.²⁶
- (3) The religious accommodation may be approved, disapproved, or elevated by the first general officer with general court martial convening authority. This pertains to requests for accommodation involving hijabs, beards, and turbans with uncut beard and hair.²⁷
- (4) The religious accommodation may be approved or disapproved by the Secretary of the Army or his designee (the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1). This pertains to requests involving uniform or grooming issues other than hijabs, beards, and turbans with uncut beard and hair.

²² US Department of Defense, *Accommodation of Religious Practices within the Military Services*, Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17 (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, February 10, 2009), 2. See also Army Directive 2016-34, 1; ATP 1-05.04, 1-4; and AR 600-20, 44.

²³ Army Directive 2016-34, 1. See also AR 600-20, 44.

²⁴ AR 600-20, 45-47; ATP 1-05.04, A-1.

²⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*, Army Regulation 670-1 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, May 25, 2017), 18-19.

²⁶ AR 600-20, 47.

²⁷ Secretary of the Army, *Approval, Disapproval, and Elevation of Requests for Religious Accommodation*, Army Directive 2018-19 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, November 8, 2018), 1.

The Two Roles of the Army Chaplain in Religious Accommodation:

Army chaplains have two distinct roles in religious accommodation. The first is a pastoral care/general advisory role, in which chaplains advise the command on issues of religion, morals, morale, and ethical decision-making. This role also involves the chaplain advising individual Soldiers on religious belief and practice. The chaplain maintains full confidentiality in this role, as he or she does in all matters of faith and conscience.

The chaplain's second role in religious accommodation is that of a formal interviewer. When a Soldier makes a request for accommodation concerning specific uniform and grooming standards (such as a hijab, beard, or turban), immunizations, or an appeal to a higher level of command, a chaplain must conduct a formal interview.²⁸ When beginning the interview, the chaplain must notify the Soldier that he or she cannot offer confidentiality. Everything the Soldier says during the interview will inform the memorandum the chaplain writes afterward. Because it is possible to create a conflict of interest if a preexisting confidential relationship exists between the chaplain and the Soldier, the chaplain may arrange for a different chaplain to conduct the interview.

In the memorandum, the chaplain must address two issues pertaining to the request for religious accommodation: the religious basis of the request and the sincerity of the request.

(1) Religious basis of the request: the request must be based on religious belief, and not merely upon moral or philosophical belief. According to Chaplain Corps doctrine, "*Religious* refers to professing a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs."²⁹

Examples of interview questions addressing the religious basis of the request:

- What is your specific request for accommodation?
- Why do you want the accommodation?
- Is your religious preference correctly listed in your military record?
- Are you part of a group promoting the practice in question?
- Why is the practice necessary?
- What text or leader supports the practice?
- What are the implications of the request being denied?³⁰

²⁸ Army Directive 2018-19, 1; ATP 1-05.04, 1-5.

²⁹ Ibid., 2-8. See also ATP 1-05.03, 1-3.

³⁰ Office of the Chief of Chaplains, "Chaplain TTPs – Religious Accommodation" (August 26, 2019), slide 4.

(2) Sincerity of the request: “Sincerity involves truth and candor, but also whether a request is sincerely religious and sincerely held in the requestor’s life and practice. This involves core religious conviction rather than temporary or superficial/stylistic preference. Therefore, answers to ‘religious basis’ questions [also] relate to sincerity.”³¹

Examples of interview questions addressing the sincerity of the request:

- How long have you held to this religion and the beliefs underlying your request?
- How important to you is this request?
- Why are you asking for the religious accommodation now?
- How often do you meet with fellow believers?
- Is a religious leader willing to provide written support for your request?
- May I contact this religious leader?
- If your request is denied, will you consider separating from the Army?³²

When chaplains write the religious accommodation interview memorandum, they are not required to make a recommendation regarding whether or not the request should be approved. If chaplains clearly address the religious basis of the request and the sincerity of the request, commanders can make well-informed recommendations for approval or disapproval. In turn, the officer with decision authority for the specific religious accommodation request will be well-equipped to take appropriate action.

³¹ Ibid., slide 5.

³² Ibid.

External Advisement: Self-Awareness

We turn now to *external advisement*: the UMT's required capability to advise the command on how religion shapes the battlefield and impacts the unit's mission throughout the AO.³³ We begin with the issue of self-awareness.

All thinking, rational humans are informed by values and interpret their experiences based on their worldviews. As UMTs, we are responsible for being aware of our own biases, even as we attempt to identify the biases and values of those within a particular AO. A bias is one's attitude, preference, position, or pre-conception about everything. For the chaplain, a bias is often grounded in the theological lens through which he or she observes the world.

That we will have biases is a given. However, we have a three-fold responsibility regarding these biases:

- (1) We must be aware of them.
- (2) We must seek to understand how we acquired them.
- (3) We must ensure they are informed by our values. If we find that our biases do not reflect our values, we must do the hard work of personal, internal change.

Self-awareness of our own biases and values helps us as we seek to identify the biases and values of people in an AO. In turn, this helps us deliver more objective external advisement to the commander about the impact of religion on the mission. This may also help the commander and staff to build relationships of trust with partners in the AO, thereby contributing to mission success.

³³ ATP 1-05.03, 1-2.

External Advisement: Religion #1 and Religion #2

When advising the command on the impact of religion in an AO, it is important to define what exactly we mean by “religion.” The construct of Religion #1 and Religion #2 is a paradigm which helps us more appropriately define religion.

Religion #1 involves the type of information one can typically find in an open-source internet search. It includes such categories as religious beliefs and traditions, practices and observances, scriptures/holy texts, and holy sites. Much of this type of information goes into a Religious Area Analysis (see page 12).

Religion #2 is very different. An open-source internet search typically does not give us much in this category. Religion #2 involves those things that “make people tick.” It addresses those things for which people are willing to live and die. In operational language, it is the Center of Gravity. UMTs learn about Religion #2 by being on the ground in an AO and getting to know the people through personal relationships. UMTs often best understand Religion #2 through Soldier and Leader Engagement (see page 16).

DEFINING RELIGION WHEN ADVISING THE COMMAND

Religion #1

- Traditions & Beliefs
- Practices & Observances
- Texts
- Sites

Religion #2

- What “makes people tick”
- Center of Gravity
- Willing to live/die for
- Comes from the source

External Advisement: Religious Area Analysis (RAA)

RAA Defined:

The first product of external advisement is the RAA. RAA is the process of “researching and collecting data from an OE related to religion and organizing that data using the operational variables Religious area analysis collects as much information about religion in an AO as time allows from as wide a variety of resources as possible.”³⁴ Stated differently, RAA looks at *religious factors* and *the cross-section* of religion with the operational variables.

Religious factors are those physical, human, and ideological factors having to do with religion in a particular AO. They can be characterized as places, people, and ideas:

- Physical factors (places): religious sites, routes, and structures
- Human factors (people): religious leaders, advisors, teachers, networks, and financiers
- Ideological factors (ideas): religious worldviews, history, beliefs, and perceptions that influence behavior. These include such things as values, holy days, and practices.³⁵

RAA looks specifically at the cross-section of *religion* with each of the eight operational variables. If the information does not have anything to do with religion, it should not be included in the RAA. The following graphic depicts the “math” of RAA:

| | | | | |
|----------------------|---|----------|---|-------|
| Political | + | Religion | = | _____ |
| Military | + | Religion | = | _____ |
| Economic | + | Religion | = | _____ |
| Social | + | Religion | = | _____ |
| Information | + | Religion | = | _____ |
| Infrastructure | + | Religion | = | _____ |
| Physical Environment | + | Religion | = | _____ |
| Time | + | Religion | = | _____ |

While you will ordinarily use the operational variables as you construct the RAA, you could instead use mission variables³⁶ or civil considerations³⁷ as frameworks. Another option is to design your own framework. However, the operational variables may work best in terms of “speaking the language” of the operational Army.

³⁴ Ibid., 1-10.

³⁵ Ibid., 1-12.

³⁶ The mission variables are Mission, Enemy, Terrain and weather, Troops and support available, Time available, and Civil considerations. They can be remembered using the acronym METT-TC.

³⁷ Civil considerations include Areas, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People, and Events. They can be remembered using the acronym ASCOPE.

The Form of the RAA Product:

RAA often takes the form of a 10-12 slide PowerPoint product.³⁸ Bullets go in the slides themselves, with the “meat” in the notes section. Include citations in the notes section as well. Keep in mind that you will rarely brief the RAA to the commander. The RAA informs the *RIA*, which *is* briefed to the commander (see page 15). The UMT should share the RAA with other staff sections, such as the S-2, to enable broad collaboration. It can be printed and distributed as needed or hung electronically on share drives.

Locating Existing RAAs:

When a UMT needs to analyze religion in a specific part of the world, it can often use an existing RAA. Division and brigade level UMTs often furnish RAAs to subordinate UMTs. This is currently the practice of observer/controller teams at the Army’s combat training centers. UMTs can also work through their technical chain to contact operations chaplains serving at the Army Service Component Command level. For example, UMTs serving at US Army Central, US Army Europe, and US Army Pacific can provide existing RAAs for countries in their respective areas of responsibility.

Real-World Resources for Research:

When UMTs need to produce a new RAA or refine an existing product, they can research much of the “Religion #1” data they require through open-source internet searches. Here are a few key resources:

- DLI Foreign Language Center: <http://www.dliflc.edu/>.
- CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/index.html>.
- US State Department: <https://www.state.gov/misc/list/index.htm>.

³⁸ Ibid., 2-1.

Example from an RAA:

What follows is one slide from an RAA on Ariana from the Decisive Action Training Environment scenario.³⁹ It specifically addresses the cross-section of the *Political* operational variable and religion. A complete RAA would address each of the seven other operational variables. Information that would go in the notes portion of the slide appears underneath the graphic. UMTs should include citations with the notes portion to denote the source(s) of their information.

| |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">The Islamic Republic of Ariana Cross-Section of Politics and Religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council of Guardians Revolution is at the heart of political power.• Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mahmood Mekhenei and the military control the Revolution.• The Supreme Leader denounces the US as an arrogant nation determined to undermine the Islamic Republic.• Under the authority of the Supreme Leader, President Ahmad Moudin controls Ariana's national government. |
|---|

Notes:

(1) The Revolution deems itself the world's vanguard of rightful Islamic sentiment. It seeks a global conversion to its understanding of Shia Islam and is determined to export its brand of theocratic rule.

(2) Established by the late Ayatollah Khodadad, Ariana's government runs on the principles of *sharia* law. Each state institution is overseen by a clerical body through an ideology called *velayat-e faqih*, "the Rule of the Islamist Jurist." Though Ariana's representative, three-branch government structure ostensibly gives voice to the country's citizens, power is solidly in the hands of the clerics.

(3) Ayatollah Mahmood Mekhenei routinely disparages the US for its greed and contempt of Ariana. He says the US is leading a "cultural onslaught" against it. Ariana's leadership supports armed groups such as the Martyr's Army and Shia Internationalist Brigades, which constitute a threat to US security interests.

(4) While Ariana has legislative and judicial branches, the executive branch holds the majority of federal power. All legislation must be approved by the cleric-controlled Guardian Leadership Council. All appointees of the judicial branch are clerics; each is required to use *sharia* law when adjudicating cases.

All information from:

<https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/DATE/Caucasus/Ariana/Political: Ariana>.

³⁹ <https://odin.tradoc.army.mil/DATE/Caucasus/Ariana>.

External Advisement: Religious Impact Assessment (RIA)

RIA Defined:

The second product of external advisement is the RIA. The RIA is typically based upon the information in the RAA. A UMT can also develop an RIA after a Soldier and Leader Engagement (see page 16). The RIA determines how religion in the AO contributes to stabilization or destabilization in the region and how religion impacts the unit's mission.⁴⁰ It answers the commander's "So what?" question about how religion shapes the battlefield.

The Form of the RIA Product:

The RIA is often a one or two page document. It can take the form of an information paper, quick reference information card, or memorandum.⁴¹ Observer/controllers serving at the combat training centers require the RIA to be brief, offering the commander pertinent information and a practical, realistic recommendation.

Example from an RIA:

The following is a portion of an RIA, written in the form of a memorandum.⁴² It assesses one critical point gleaned from the RAA on Ariana, discussed above. The entire RIA would address two additional critical points from the RAA (for a total of three).

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team

SUBJECT: Religious Impact Assessment for Offensive Operations against Ariana's Military

1. Issue: Arianan prisoners of war (POWs)

a. Prediction: Due to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mahmood Mekhenei's denunciation of the United States as anti-Islamic, captured Arianan soldiers will be highly uncooperative and will behave violently against their American captors.

b. Course of Action: Prior to departing homestation, the Unit Ministry Team (UMT) and paralegal will partner to train each company in the battalion. The UMT will train Soldiers on the nature of Ariana's clerical leadership and its control of politics and the military. The UMT will prepare Soldiers for the possibility of religiously-inspired violence by Arianan POWs. The paralegal will instruct Soldiers on the proper handling of POWs in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.

c. End State: Soldiers throughout the battalion will be better prepared for violent behavior by Arianan POWs and will be ready to respond appropriately and lawfully. Proper treatment of Arianan POWs will endear some Arianans to the American military and cast doubt on the validity of Supreme Leader Mekhenei's mischaracterization of the US.

⁴⁰ ATP 1-05.03, 3-1.

⁴¹ Ibid., 3-2.

⁴² This particular memorandum is intended for training purposes only. This RIA assumes the battalion's mission involves offensive, large scale combat operations against Ariana's military in order to drive it out of neighboring Atropia.

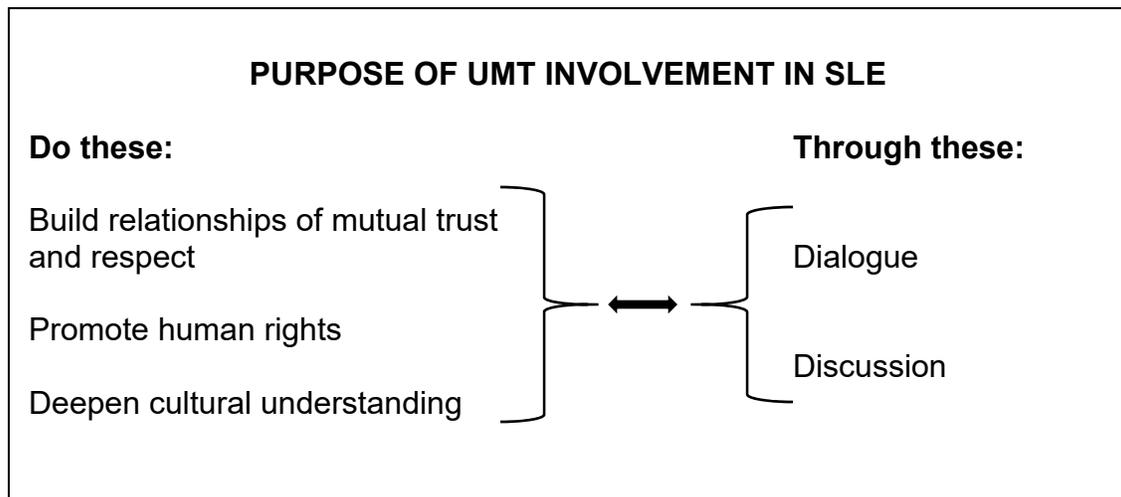
External Advisement: Soldier and Leader Engagement (SLE)

SLE Defined:

Religious Area Analysis and Religious Impact Assessment are *products* of external advisement: something UMTs *produce*. Soldier and Leader Engagement (SLE) is the *activity* of external advisement. It's something UMTs *do*. Soldiers (E-1 through E-4) and leaders (NCOs and Officers) across the Army take part in SLE. Throughout the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, it was not uncommon for commanders at every level to meet – *engage* – with local leaders. SLE is defined as “interpersonal Service-member interactions with audiences in an area of operations.”⁴³

UMT Involvement in SLE:

Chaplains and Religious Affairs Specialists and NCOs engage in SLE *only* when directed by their commanders. The focus of the SLE is religion and its impact on operations, which is the whole purpose of external advisement. UMT members build relationships of mutual trust and respect, promote human rights, and deepen cultural understanding through dialogue and discussion.⁴⁴ When UMTs take part in SLE, they cannot be tasked to collect information for the purpose of intelligence.⁴⁵ Chaplains are non-combatants, and they must not jeopardize that status.



⁴³ Ibid., 4-1.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 4-2, 4-3.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 4-2.

Types of Questions to Ask During SLE:

- What religious beliefs are influencing the situation at hand?
- How are local clergy and non-clergy responding?
- What religious values are being threatened?
- Is there an ideology that needs to be confronted?
- What is being taught in religious education?
- How is religion being used to promote a political agenda?
- Is a religious leader promoting peace? How can the UMT and the unit help?
- What are people willing to live and die for?

The Impact of UMT Involvement in SLE:

Through SLE, UMT members help identify the issues that fall into the category of Religion #2. By developing relationships of mutual respect with local leaders, UMT members gain valuable information about the impact of religion within an AO and advise their commanders accordingly. In doing so, UMTs can make a critical difference on the battlefield, helping to create peace and save lives.

SLE and the Operations Process:

UMTs need to approach SLE using the four phases of the Operations Process:⁴⁶

- (1) Plan
- (2) Prepare
- (3) Execute
- (4) Assess

Planning involves translating the commander's intent into engagement proficiency tasks. UMTs analyze the commander's information requirements, top priorities, and lines of effort. They also consider media reports and the calendar of significant religious events. Preparation involves rehearsals and coordination for all needed resources and support. Execution involves accomplishing the SLE mission to standard, as well as the recovery of all personnel, equipment, and sensitive items. Assessment evaluates the effectiveness of the engagement by identifying successes and challenges. Lessons learned will be applied to future SLEs.⁴⁷

Supervising SLE:

At the operational level, supervisory chaplains support UMTs at the tactical level. They inform higher commands about SLEs taking place within their AO, and they link tactical engagements with strategic objectives. They provide and maintain a Religious Area Analysis and Religious Impact Assessment of the region for the command.⁴⁸ They may also be personally involved in SLEs – at the direction of the commander – with direct impact at the operational level. Through their own involvement in SLE and especially through supervision, chaplains at the operational level, like chaplains at the tactical level, help to promote peace and save the lives of American Soldiers and local nationals alike.

⁴⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *The Operations Process*, Army Doctrine Publication 5-0 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, July 31, 2019), 1-4.

⁴⁷ ATP 1-05.03, 4-6.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

Religious Support in a Pluralistic Context: Perform or Provide

Army chaplains serve in a religiously pluralistic context in which Soldiers come from various religious backgrounds. In other words, the Army is religiously diverse. In accordance with the US Constitution, each Soldier is free to exercise his or her faith.⁴⁹ Federal law, Department of Defense policy, and Army policy ensure that Soldiers can observe the requirements of their religions or entirely abstain from observing religion.⁵⁰

Each chaplain has an ecclesiastical endorser. Army policy requires chaplains to uphold their endorsers' requirements at all times.⁵¹ In order to meet the religious needs of Soldiers in their units, chaplains either perform or provide the required religious support. When chaplains "perform," they minister in accordance with their respective religious tradition's tenets for Soldiers with similar convictions. When chaplains "provide," they facilitate worship for Soldiers outside of their religious tradition by securing someone qualified to do the ministry. This is typically a different chaplain,⁵² though it can be a Distinctive Religious Group Leader (see page 20).

Page 6 of this smart book introduced the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). RFRA is fully applicable to *all* Soldiers, including chaplains. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2013 (amended in 2014) says that military chaplains cannot be required "to perform any rite, ritual, or ceremony that is contrary to the conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs of the chaplain."⁵³ The NDAA also prohibits leaders from taking adverse action against a chaplain for refusing to do so.⁵⁴

Due to the religiously diverse nature of the Army, chaplains often discuss the issue of prayer at military events with mandatory attendance, such as change of command ceremonies. Many chaplains assume that because Soldiers from various faith traditions are present, a chaplain delivering a prayer is required to pray in a general, "non-sectarian" manner in order to avoid causing offense.⁵⁵ This, however, is inconsistent with law and policy.⁵⁶ To begin with, prayer at such events is entirely

⁴⁹ US Constitution, Amend. I.

⁵⁰ *Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993; National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013*, H.R. 4310, Public Law 239, 112th Congress, 2nd sess. (January 2, 2013), 97, excerpt; DODI 1300.17; Army Directive 2016-34, 1; AR 600-20, 44.

⁵¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Religious Activities: Army Chaplain Corps Activities*, Army Regulation 165-1 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, June 23, 2015), 8.

⁵² "Chaplains cooperate with each other, without compromising their religious tradition or ecclesiastical endorsement requirements, to ensure the most comprehensive religious support opportunities possible within the unique military environment." AR 165-1, 1.

⁵³ *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013*.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ "Chaplain prayers offered in accordance with the religious beliefs of the Chaplain and the endorsing Religious Organization, while specific, are not intended to offend others. Prayers offered by Chaplains represent the Army's respect of Religious Freedom, for all religious beliefs, and are not intended to offend those Soldiers who hold no religious beliefs." Office of the Chief of Chaplains, *Public Affairs Guidance: Chaplain Prayers* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, July 28, 2015), 1.

⁵⁶ *Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993; Sect. 533 of National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013* (amended by Sect. 532 of *NDAA for Fiscal Year 2014*); AR 165-1, 7-8.

optional. If the commander chooses to include prayer in a ceremony, the prayer is religious speech and must therefore be free. A commander or another chaplain cannot tell a chaplain how to pray.⁵⁷ To do so would violate the Establishment Clause of the Constitution by establishing a particular kind of prayer. It would also violate the Free Exercise Clause by potentially compelling a chaplain to pray in a way that is incongruent with his or her religious tradition and ecclesiastical endorser.

At all times, chaplains are required to faithfully represent their ecclesiastical endorsers and provide religious support for all Soldiers. With that in mind, if chaplains agree to pray at events with compulsory attendance,⁵⁸ they must pray in a manner that is faithful to their endorser and that takes into account the presence of Soldiers from various faiths (or no faith at all). Jewish chaplains may offer Jewish prayers. Muslim chaplains may offer Islamic prayers. Christian chaplains may offer Christian prayers. The prayers should be as inclusive as possible, yet remain faithful to the guidance provided by the individual chaplain's ecclesiastical endorser.⁵⁹ At no time will a chaplain compel an attendee of an event to pray.⁶⁰ Prayer is completely voluntary. An individual attendee may choose to pray along with the chaplain, may choose to pray silently in his or her own faith tradition, or may abstain from prayer altogether.⁶¹

Whether the issue is delivering religious support in a variety of forms or praying at a mandatory event, chaplains perform or provide. They serve faithfully according to the guidelines of their ecclesiastical endorsers; simultaneously, they ensure that each Soldier's religious needs are met by the appropriate religious leader. In doing so, chaplains aid commanders in upholding the free exercise of religion for all.

⁵⁷ OCCH, *Chaplain Prayers*, 3.

⁵⁸ According to paragraph 3-2 of AR 165-1, chaplains cannot be required to perform religious roles – to include praying at command ceremonies – if it would be at odds with the tenets of their religion. AR 165-1, 8. When a chaplain cannot “perform” by personally giving the prayer, he or she must “provide” by finding another person to do so. It is often another chaplain, though it does not have to be.

⁵⁹ “. . . commanders should expect chaplains to pray according to their faith tradition as long as the religious communication at such events does not proselytize, disparage other faith groups, or undermine good order and discipline. By doing so, military leaders will avoid both entangling government in religion and violating the First Amendment by ‘establishing a religion’ as they proscribe one form of prayer over another.” CH (COL) David A. Bowlus, “Pluralism and Free Speech in Reference to Chaplain-led Public Prayer” (Fort Leonard Wood, MO: March 26, 2018), 2.

⁶⁰ OCCH, *Chaplain Prayers*, 1.

⁶¹ A practical approach is for the chaplain to say, “I invite you to pray with me.” Then the chaplain may pray in the first person (“I” instead of “we”) in a manner consistent with the tenets of his or her religion and ecclesiastical endorser. While some chaplains may choose to give a disclaimer before a prayer (“Each of you is free to pray according to your faith as I pray according to mine”), such a disclaimer is not required. *Ibid.*, 4.

Religious Support in a Pluralistic Context: Supervise Distinctive Religious Group Leaders

Supervising Distinctive Religious Group Leaders (DRGLs) falls primarily within the chaplain's first required capability of providing religious support. DRGLs are qualified individuals certified by recognized religious organizations (ROs). They assist commanders and chaplains in meeting the religious requirements of Soldiers and Family members who belong to religious groups with distinct religious needs which available chaplains cannot meet.⁶² In short, DRGLs help facilitate the free exercise of religion.

A DRGL must be both sponsored and approved by a local chaplain.⁶³ In accordance with standard operating procedures, the installation Religious Support Office or the senior chaplain of the unit will determine who the sponsoring and approving chaplain should be. The DRGL cannot conduct any religious activities outside of the Command Master Religious Plan (CMRP); he or she provides a precise service for a designated period of time.⁶⁴ DRGLs are unpaid volunteers. They do not have access to appropriated funds. However, congregations led by DRGLs may collect offerings and fund distinctive religious group activities with Chapel Tithes and Offerings (CTOF) money in accordance with the approved CMRP.⁶⁵

Prospective DRGLs must submit an application packet which requests the approval and sponsorship of a local chaplain. At a minimum, the packet must include the following:

(1) A signed letter of approval on official letterhead from a RO. The letter must include such details as the group's origin, purpose, general worship practices, and the number of members in the group. It must certify that the prospective DRGL has favorable ecclesiastical standing with the RO and is qualified to serve as a DRGL. It must also acknowledge that the prospective DRGL will comply with the CMRP under the supervision of the sponsoring chaplain.

(2) A letter signed by the prospective DRGL. The letter must include a description of the religious services he or she proposes to offer. It must document the need for the distinctive religious services and why a chaplain or a chaplain-led service cannot meet that need. It must acknowledge that the prospective DRGL will comply with the CMRP under the sponsoring chaplain's supervision. Finally, it must acknowledge that DRGL status is approved annually and that there is a process for both the removal and re-approval of DRGLs.⁶⁶

⁶² AR 165-1, 12.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 13.

Steps for Supervising a DRGL:

1. Conduct an interview with the DRGL.
 - a. Validate the DRGL's certification to lead services with the installation or senior chaplain on your installation.
 - b. Ensure the proper credentials have been submitted and filed.
 - c. Ensure the DRGL has obtained approval to conduct religious services from the approving authority.
 - d. Establish a supervisory relationship with the DRGL.
2. Identify the religious group services and/or meetings for which the DRGL is responsible, to include times and locations.
3. Determine the degree of supervision the DRGL requires.
4. Establish a schedule to attend the religious service or meeting, just as you would observe a subordinate chaplain by attending the chapel service at which he or she serves.
5. Determine which Religious Affairs Specialists or NCOs will be assigned to assist the DRGL and what their responsibilities will entail.
6. Establish a schedule to maintain weekly correspondence with the DRGL, either by phone or in person, to handle administrative needs or issues.
7. Provide chapel, installation, and CTOF SOPs for the DRGL to follow.
 - a. Establish procedures for handling funds.
 - b. Explain the procedure for publishing services.
 - c. Outline the process for obtaining resources.
 - d. Describe the process for terminating or recruiting volunteers.
 - e. Identify procedures for planning and scheduling special activities.
 - f. Provide information regarding printing bulletins and materials.
 - g. Establish procedures for monitoring child care providers during services.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Performance Steps from approved Individual Critical Task 805-D-56A-6403, Supervise Distinctive Religious Group Leaders (May 22, 2017), 3.