



The Social Science Mobile Knowledge Team



The Social Science Mobile Knowledge Team (SSMKT) is a concept designed to provide assistance to Human Terrain Teams (HTT) and Human Terrain Analysis Teams (HTAT) in the field. On 17 November 2010, the SSMKT was tasked by the Director of Human Terrain System (HTS) to conduct a pilot project in order to ascertain value, viability, and feasibility of the SSMKT. From 22 December 2010 to 08 January 2011, the SSMKT embedded with five HTT & HTAT teams in ISAF HQ Regional Command South (RC-S) located in Kandahar Province. The mission of Social Science Mobile Knowledge Team is three-fold:

1. To ensure HTT/HTAT application of HTS social science research methodology
2. To offer HTT/HTAT assistance in research development and fieldwork techniques
3. To provide HTT/HTAT guidance on research ethics as relates to adherence to Institutional Review Board standards

Prior to the pilot project, the SSMKT, in collaboration with the HTS Training and Social Science Directorates, developed a social science toolkit in response to needs identified by deployed personnel. The SSMKT toolkit contains modules on a number of topics to include: HTS Guidelines for Professional Practice, Research Ethics, and the Social Science Research Cycle. Modules presented to the HTTs/HTATs were chosen based on the needs and requests of individual teams. The SSMKT also provided individualized guidance at the request of HTS personnel. In particular, the SSMKT Social Scientist met with the Team Social Scientist to discuss team-specific research practices and methodologies. The SSMKT Research Manager provided one-on-one instruction on information technology issues as required.

The SSMKT will continue team visits in Balkh, Helmand, Herat, and Parwan provinces in the month of February. By May 2011, the SSMKT aims to visit all 30 HTS teams providing assistance to the more than 180 HTS personnel deployed in Afghanistan.



Mr. John Calvin (left) giving SSMKT instruction to Mr. Don Rector (right) and Mr. Craig Harvey (center) of AF04.



Ms. Sandra Doherty has an open discussion with all the members of AF19.



Mr. John Calvin talking with members of AF19.