

Operational Mentorship and Liaison Teams (OMLTs)

What is it?

When directed, Operational Mentorship and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) deploy to the Combined Joint Operations Area – Afghanistan to coach, teach, and mentor Afghanistan National Army (ANA) units; provide a conduit for liaison and command and control; and support the operational planning and employment of an aligned ANA unit in order to support the development of a self-sufficient, competent, and professional ANA. U.S. Augmentation to OMLTs (OMLT-As) builds on State Partnership relationships with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries. The OMLT process demonstrates commitment to emerging nations and strengthens alliances with these nations enabling them to contribute to the teams. OMLTs do not have a standard configuration; they vary in number of rotations and personnel requirements. However, at a minimum, each OMLT-A will have at least 12 U.S. personnel with off-FOB missions.

What has the OMLT done?

OMLT-As are created using the NATO Concept of Operations published by Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE). ARNG Soldiers augment OMLT-As to fill critical vacancies within the structures of the participating NATO countries. In 2008, the Adjutant General (TAG) of Michigan and the Chief of Defense (CHOD) of Latvia partnered in the first OMLT-A rotation. Since then, Michigan has completed their OMLT-A mission with three rotations and Tennessee has completed their OMLT-A mission with four rotations. Ohio is currently training for their eighth of thirteen planned rotations. Minnesota is deployed on their fifth of seven scheduled rotations. Colorado, Indiana, and New Jersey, have been supporting their NATO partners of Slovenia, Slovakia, and Albania respectively; they contribute to Kandak (battalion), Garrison, and Combat Support and Combat Service Support level OMLTs.

What continued efforts does the OMLT have planned for the future?

The Army National Guard has contributed to (7) out of 80 OMLTs currently fielded. One of those (7) OMLT-A Teams Tennessee completed their final rotation in 2011. The State Partnership program as of January 2012 has 65 partnerships, with 21 partnerships in EUCOM.

Why is this important to the Army National Guard?

The OMLT builds upon the strong foundation of the State Partnership Program as well as the influence of NATO. This includes leveraging the existing partnerships of Michigan and Latvia, Ohio and Hungary, Tennessee and Bulgaria, Minnesota and Croatia, and Michigan and Latvia. Without the National Guard's assistance, many NATO partners would be unable to participate in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission.