U.S. Forces Afghanistan Memorandum from General David Petraeus: Supporting the Mission with Operational Energy | June 07, 2011

In a memorandum to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Civilians of United States Forces-Afghanistan, General David Petraeus writes that operational energy "is the lifeblood of our warfighting capabilities and a key enabler of Coalition operations in Afghanistan." General Petraeus also announced the establishment of an office dedicated to improving operational capabilities through changes in energy usage and draws a link between smart energy management and enhanced security. Read the full memorandum below.

HEADQUARTERS
United States Forces-Afghanistan
Kabul, Afghanistan
APO AE 09356

USFOR-A CDR

7 June 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Civilians of US Forces-Afghanistan

SUBJECT: Supporting the Mission with Operational Energy

1. Coalition forces possess the ability to project power around the globe for extended periods, often times in the harshest environments. Inherent to this capability is our need for fuel, which is greater than at any time in history. This "operational energy" is the lifeblood of our warfighting capabilities and a key enabler of Coalition operations in Afghanistan.

2. However, high fuel use imposes risks to the mission and to each of us. In fact, nearly 80% of ground supply movements are composed of fuel, and we have lost many lives delivering fuel to bases around Afghanistan. Moreover, moving and protecting this energy diverts forces away from combat operations. A force that makes better use of fuel will have increased agility, improved resilience against disruption, and more capacity for engaging Afghan partners, particularly at the tactical edge.

3. We can and will do better. First, I expect commanders to take ownership of unit fuel demand. To enable this, I am standing up an office to improve operational capabilities through changes in how Coalition forces use energy. Across the CJOA-A, my team will assist commanders with measuring and managing unit fuel consumption. Commanders will make energy-informed, risk-based decisions on aviation operations, vehicle operations, base camp design, power and water generation, and distribution. This includes decisions on deliveries, improvements to existing structures, and new construction. Commanders will push for rapid technology transition of new fuel savings methods to the field, where appropriate, and will pursue existing, proven alternative energy options that reduce the use and transport of fuel. Finally, commanders will ensure energy considerations are included in requirements and oversight of contracts.

4. On an individual level, I expect commanders to ensure personnel consider the first and second order effects of day-to-day fuel use. This includes turning off unused equipment, repairing faulty equipment, and avoiding use of heating, air conditioning, and lighting in unused or unoccupied structures. Commanders and their personnel should understand that routine energy consumption can either enable or limit combat capabilities.

5. Changing the way we use operational energy will lighten the logistics burden, minimize tactical distractions to the mission, and deny easy targets to the adversary. As we have demonstrated in Afghanistan, the initiative, commitment, and capability of Coalition forces give us unparalleled advantages. By reducing demand for fuel, we will improve operational capability, reduce risk to our forces, and, ultimately, strengthen our security.

Godspeed, Thank you!

DAVID H. PETRAEUS
General, United States Army
Commander
International Security Assistance Force/
United States Forces-Afghanistan