

Information Paper

SUBJECT: CF-SOF Interdependence

Problem Statement. As an interdependent force, how do conventional forces (CF) and special operations forces (SOF) codify and institutionalize the lessons learned over the past 10 years of irregular warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan to ensure future operational effectiveness?

Background.

In 2002 our Nation went to war with two forces: CF prepared to win against traditional adversaries in direct combat and Special Operational Forces prepared to prevail in an irregular environment. For the next few years, the best we could hope for was a deconfliction of activities between the forces. Through observations, insights and lessons (USSOCOM has identified two ideas that drive the demand for greater CF-SOF integration: lessons learned over the last decade of war and the new National Security guidance), we began to realize the importance of integration of these forces. The issue has been that in most cases this integration was bottom up vice top down (DOTMLPF-P integrated).

The following lessons learned were identified after 10 years of conflict:

- A thorough understanding of a unit's capabilities and limitations enhances integration and interoperability planning.
- Successful integration and interoperability of Army conventional and special operations is dependent upon understanding each other's systems, capabilities, and limitations.
- During mission planning, options must be considered to integrate Army conventional and special operations elements for decisive action. Detailed planning and execution coordination is required throughout the process.
- Exchange and use of liaison parties and control elements are critical when conducting operations in the same battle space against the same threat.

In August of 2009, the CSA identified a need to address SO, COIN, SFA/FID, UW, and CT activities and to also improve CF-SOF integration specifically through the generating force.

Current National Security Guidance envisions the following:

- Innovative, low cost, and small-footprint approach
- A mix of direct action and security force assistance
- Building partners and partner capacity around the world
- Regionally-postured, but globally networked and flexible force
- Pioneer new ways to combine and employ emergent capabilities

ADP 3-0, Unified Land Operations, describes the hybrid threat and the challenges posed by non-state entities or nuclear-capable states that use irregular and asymmetric means to threaten U.S. interests. According to the QDR, irregular threats pose the most immediate and frequent threat to our nation for the foreseeable future. Over the next quarter century, U.S. military forces will be continually engaged in some dynamic combination of combat, security,

engagement, and relief and reconstruction. This paper makes some recommendations for defining and developing CF-SOF interdependence solutions for the future.

Facts.

1. The activities currently defined under the umbrella term Irregular Warfare and expressed in the IW JOC 2.0 represent the predominant activities where CF and SOF interact.
2. The Army has not assessed its IW requirements or capabilities. A set of joint IW CBAs has been completed.
3. Current DoD, joint, and Army documents assess that the joint force will operate in an environment that requires capabilities to assess, shape, and influence indigenous populations, partners, and hybrid threats.
4. IW activities (CT, UW, FID, COIN, and Stability Operations) are not enemy or terrain dependent and take place in the human domain – the totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior. (DoDD 3000.07, IW JOC 2.0)
5. IW activities are a critical component of the Army's ability to prevent, shape, and win.
6. The Army functional concepts represent the primary framework utilized to detail how the Army will conduct future operations and give specific direction for future force capability development. Irregular warfare activities and special operations capabilities are not covered by Army functional concepts.
7. Army doctrine does not articulate how Army and joint SOF assets synchronize efforts (to include command and support relationships) in shared operational areas below the JTF level.
8. Lack of doctrine prevents the development of tasks, conditions, and standards to enable and facilitate individual, collective, and leader training that facilitates CF-SOF interdependence.
9. Interdependence is not currently defined in joint doctrine. Interdependence is a reciprocal relation between entities (objects or individuals or groups) that have a shared unity of effort.

Assumptions.

1. The closure of the Iraq Theater and the drawdown of the Afghanistan Theater will decrease the amount of exposure between CF and SOF, thus limiting the interdependence gained from experience.
2. The DOTMLPF solutions for CF and SOF interdependence and integration in IW activities will support solutions in other activities.

Discussion.

Interdependent generating force responsibilities. In order to create interdependent forces, CF and SOF must conduct a joint DOTMLPF analysis to determine how to maximize and integrate capabilities of both elements. This analysis should focus on education and training, however the understanding of cultures is critical to success. While both forces are organizing, training, and equipping units to be successful across the full range of military operations, the approaches are different based on the unique capabilities required.

Organization of functional capabilities. The six Army Functional Concepts describe capabilities necessary for maneuver warfare. These concepts do not adequately organize and synchronize the IW capabilities required to assess, shape, and influence foreign security environments. Within the mental models used by both CF and SOF, there must be doctrinal linkages that consider methods of addressing foreign security environments. The unique resources provided

by both organizations must be synchronized to create effects in training and operations. Designate a tiger team to provide recommendations on developing Special Operations as an Army Functional Concept to enable Army capacity to assess, shape and influence foreign security environments and ensure CF-SOF interdependence.

Assess, shape and influence foreign security environments. In the CSA's Marching Orders, "The Army shapes the environment by sustaining relationships with other Armies, building their capacity, and facilitating strategic access." Both CF and SOF provide unique capabilities and the interdependence of the two forces maximizes the probability for success. Foreign security environment includes key leaders, audiences, and institutions in foreign environments as well as relevant physical and social aspects. In the CF, this concept is represented by the contemporary operating environment. The Special Operations Center of Excellence continues to study how the Army can best prepare to assess, shape, and influence foreign security environments. MC CoE and CAC are a logical start for the socialization of these concepts; discussions between MC CoE and USAJFKSWCS senior leaders should pave the way for future discussion throughout the Army.

Other issues for further analysis.

1. Cultural bias. CF to SOF and SOF to CF.
2. Independent versus decentralized operations.
3. Command and support relationships.
4. Skills, knowledge, and mindsets.

Recommendations.

1. Conduct a combined MCCoE-SWCS DOTMLPF analysis to determine how to maximize and integrate capabilities of CF and SOF.
2. Designate a tiger team to provide recommendations on how to implement Special Operations as an Army Functional Concept to enable Army capacity to assess, shape and influence foreign security environments and ensure CF-SOF interdependence. (LTG Walker has already requested a White Paper from USASOC/SWCS on SOF as a WfF)
3. MCCoE participates in the CSA directed CTC rotation integrating CF-SOF in response to CSA Huddle #8
4. MCCoE initiates discussion with SWCS on CF-SOF interdependence solutions.
5. Utilize next IWGOSC to discuss the way ahead prior to socialization of this paper.

This paper was produced by a working group consisting of members from CAC SOF Cell, MC CoE, AIWFC, AWG, PKSOI, the USASFAPO, and the US Army Counterinsurgency Center.

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