



# NEWSLETTER



11-20

MAR 11



## JIIM Training

(Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational)



*Observations, Insights, and Lessons*

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## Introduction

The nature of recent challenges and the types of missions the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has undertaken highlight the need for the DOD to examine how the military prepares to work in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) environment. The interoperability and success of these forces will be predicated on how well they plan, prepare, and train together.

As interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational considerations continue to play a key role in joint operations there becomes an increasing need to incorporate JIIM at all levels of mission rehearsals, exercises, and other joint training. This newsletter is a collection of recently published JIIM training articles that provide leaders with information on current trends, initiatives, and opportunities to stimulate thought and facilitate the integration of JIIM into every level of training.

The first chapter focuses on the challenges commanders face in today's joint environment and the capabilities today's full-spectrum warrior must possess to be effective. The first article, by C. Spencer Abbot, discusses how the education and training of DOD personnel should reflect the vastly different threat environment that has arisen since the end of the Cold War and should be tailored to the missions and tasks that DOD will be asked to perform over the coming decades. Today, a joint warrior requires much more than the traditional kinetic or support skills that supported the Air, Land, Sea doctrine. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands training, as described in the third article, is just one example of a program that provides the intense language and cultural skills needed to be successful in a counterinsurgency environment.

In the second chapter the focus shifts to operating with other governmental agencies as demonstrated by today's provincial reconstruction teams. The last two articles in the chapter provide examples of innovative methods used to integrate training with other agencies.

The building of a successful coalition often hinges on interpersonal relationships. The chapter on intergovernmental and multinational considerations takes a look at training opportunities the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other organizations offer to prepare U.S. forces to better integrate with our coalition partners.

The last chapter contains two articles that cut across the JIIM community and provide ideas on shaping the education and training to prepare leaders for the challenges of diverse global operations of the future. Today's Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines require further insight beyond the conventional expertise that today's military training provides. In this increasingly complex world, training for JIIM operations becomes ever more important to prepare for full-spectrum operations.



## **Educate to Cooperate: Leveraging the New Definition of “Joint” to Build Partnering Capacity**

**C. Spencer Abbot**

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On January 22, 2009, in his first major address on foreign policy following his inauguration, President Barack Obama stated that “[d]ifficult days lie ahead. As we ask more of ourselves, we will seek new partnerships and ask more of our friends and more of people around the globe, because security in the 21st century is shared.” Confronting shared security challenges in coming years will test the capacity of the Department of Defense (DOD) to effectively partner with its allies, other governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and at times even the private sector. The last comprehensive legislation enacted to improve partnering capacity within DOD was the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

Goldwater-Nichols was designed to facilitate more effective cooperation among the military Services within DOD and was suited to the Cold War strategic environment in which it was enacted. The education and training of DOD personnel for the multifaceted security challenges of the coming century should reflect the vastly different threat environment that has arisen since the end of the Cold War and should be tailored to the missions and tasks that DOD will be asked to perform over the coming decades. This article recommends several changes to officer education programs, personnel assignment policies, and DOD’s security cooperation programs in order to advance its ability to effectively partner with external actors.

One key step needed to increase DOD partnering capacity has already occurred. Substantial legislative changes were made in 2007 to the definition of joint matters under the Goldwater-Nichols construct, broadening the aegis of the term and better reflecting the modern demands of cooperation by DOD with varied external partners. As a continuance of this process under the revised definition, additional expansion of the types of assignments and educational experiences considered “joint,” to include liaison officer positions and exchange tours, would help prepare personnel more fully for the demands of working with external actors in the 21st century strategic environment.

To ensure that its efforts to work with allies to build cultural and operational familiarity correspond with the demands of coming years, DOD’s extensive and important security cooperation with foreign partners should incorporate reciprocal exchanges whenever possible to reflect a mindset of mutual respect and shared responsibility. To correspond with the broadened definition of joint matters in the 2007 legislation, joint professional military education (JPME) credit should be considered for a broader range of educational experiences. “Off-ramps” and “on-ramps” for departing and reentering military Service should be more readily available to DOD personnel, contributing to a more responsive system for shaping human capital. Given that it takes more than 30 years to educate and train the military’s most senior leaders, a less static strategic environment necessarily demands a more flexible, adaptive system for educating military officers and preparing them for the complexities of modern joint operations.

### **The New Definition of Joint**

Since the passage of Goldwater-Nichols in 1986, *joint duty* has implied a job typically held by a field grade or senior officer, working on a staff with representatives from the other Services.

In the ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, a substantial requirement for expertise in working with external actors has arisen at the tactical level. Junior officers find themselves interacting directly with a host of external actors, from foreign coalition partners to other governmental agencies and NGOs to local citizens in a variety of roles. The extraordinary complexity of these activities, both with respect to irregular warfare and stability operations, as well as more conventional kinetic operations occurring within the modern post-Cold War milieu, necessitates much broader skill sets at much earlier points in officers' careers.

The personnel system set up by Goldwater-Nichols was enacted at a time when massive kinetic operations were the primary capability necessitated by the Army's AirLand Battle doctrine and the Navy's Maritime Strategy, which focused on the Soviet bluewater threat. Goldwater-Nichols made major contributions regarding the interoperability of the Services themselves and focused on the operational and strategic levels of war. Some efforts have already been made to improve partnering capacity with external actors, and further work is needed to improve DOD's capacity in this sphere, especially at the tactical level.

Prompted by shortcomings in inter-Service coordination during both the *Desert One* debacle in Iran in 1980 and the 1983 invasion of Grenada, Goldwater-Nichols made great strides in addressing shortcomings in the ability of the Services to effectively partner in planning and executing joint operations. Especially in light of the profound difficulties encountered within the U.S. interagency process in planning for the post-conflict phase four of U.S. operations in Iraq, numerous calls have been made for a "Goldwater-Nichols for the interagency community."<sup>1</sup> Yet any broad reorganization of the U.S. national security apparatus should reflect the importance that effective partnering, not only with other U.S. Government actors but also with other state and nonstate actors, has across nearly the full spectrum of U.S. military missions. The Goldwater-Nichols legislation made sweeping changes to the authorities of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and combatant commanders, diminishing the role of the Services, whose outsize influence was seen by Congress to have been a substantial impediment to the effective planning and conduct of joint operations.

A critical function of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation was its impact on military personnel management policies, and the effect of those policies on the career paths of officers and the distribution of human capital within DOD. The legislation created a staff-centric model for the determination of joint duty assignments, and the Services were thus statutorily required to assign top officers to the Joint Staff, at combatant command staffs, and other multi-Service staffs. The January 2009 DOD *Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review Report* states that "[s]ince our Nation's future security depends equally on interagency cooperation, coordination, and integration efforts, building unity of effort requires us to expand the concept of jointness beyond the Department of Defense."<sup>2</sup> In 2007, Congress made an important legislative change to the Title 10 definition of joint matters established under Goldwater-Nichols. Under this change, joint matters now include "matters related to the achievement of unified action by multiple military forces." Importantly, the definition of *multiple military forces* has been expanded to encompass forces that involve "participants from the armed forces" and one or more of the following: "other departments and agencies of the United States; the military forces or agencies of other countries; and non-governmental persons or entities."

This change was made in large part as an adaptation to on-the-ground reality in Afghanistan and Iraq. Members of Provincial Reconstruction Teams and multinational training units, who engage and coordinate with many disparate organizations at the tactical level, had not previously received joint credit because their billets had not been designated joint under the prior system.

Reserve officers, who have borne a substantial portion of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, were also made eligible for joint credit under the 2007 legislation. The legislation has been implemented by DOD under a new framework called the Joint Qualification System. Under the previous system, only specific billets listed on a document called the Joint Duty Assignment List (JDAL) were authorized joint credit. The Office of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Staff's Manpower Directorate have worked diligently to develop and implement a new system through which military officers can self-nominate their experiences on a publicly available Web site, and those experiences are then assessed by the Joint Staff J1 Manpower and Personnel Directorate for validity under the new definition for joint matters.

These efforts have begun to reshape the nature of the idea of joint duty in the military lexicon, and over time will influence and alter decisions about career trajectory by officers. But a more comprehensive assessment is needed of the nature of a joint assignment and the experiences that will best equip the future military for partnering activities not only within DOD itself, but also with governmental and NGOs external to DOD. Assignments that lie within a grey area under the new current definition for joint matters are liaison officer and exchange billets. Unless personnel serving in these positions are detailed from a joint command under a previously existing JDAL billet, they often are not seen to meet the requirement for achieving unified action, even under the new definition for joint matters. Thus, Service prioritization for joint duty assignments will continue to reflect the staff-centric model for joint assignments created by the original Goldwater-Nichols legislation.

Duty on a joint staff benefits a Service member in many ways, both substantively and with respect to the military promotion process. Officers in joint tours become familiar with their fellow Services and experience first-hand the process through which joint forces are requested and then utilized by combatant commanders to fight the country's battles and to support national security objectives more broadly. The staff-centric nature of the Goldwater-Nichols model has greatly enhanced the power and depth of the combatant commands as well as the Joint Staff.

Other types of assignments not currently considered joint serve to embed participants directly within a partner organization and thus expose them to the core skill sets and culture of that organization. These assignments are deemphasized by Service assignment policies because of the nature of the Goldwater-Nichols model and the types of assignments eligible for joint credit. For instance, the Air Force assigns air liaison officers to Army units, where they serve within and alongside those units to facilitate and coordinate close air support training and execution in conjunction with aviation units. This approximately 300-officer commitment is one that the Air Force struggles to meet, in part because those officers do not receive joint credit despite their complete immersion in an Army organization.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, one of the more effective cooperative endeavors between the Army and Navy has been the incorporation of Army Ground Liaison Officers (GLOs) who deploy aboard aircraft carriers in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. GLOs have served with Air Force units for many years, but their incorporation aboard aircraft carriers is a recent development, born of a need for closer coordination between Navy aircraft providing close air support and ground component elements. Shipboard GLOs brief flight crews before each combat mission and debrief them on their return, coordinating with ground units to optimize the air support the carrier air wing provides. Despite being some of the most knowledgeable officers in the Army with respect to naval aviation procedures and Service culture, GLOs typically do not receive joint credit.

Numerous Personnel Exchange Program (PEP) partnerships exist through which military personnel serve or exchange with other U.S. Services as well as foreign militaries. A Navy pilot,

for instance, who serves and deploys with an Air Force unit through the program will likely possess substantially greater familiarity with Air Force operations and structure than would be gleaned from the typical joint duty assignment on a multi-Service staff, and thus be all the more qualified to serve in a billet that requires oversight of coordination and interoperability between both Services. Officers, who serve as Legislative Fellows attached to Member offices or committee staffs on Capitol Hill, or in think tanks under the Federal Executive Fellows program, also do not receive joint experiential or educational credit under the current construct for determining joint duty assignments, despite receiving substantial exposure to national security and interagency process issues.

Because many direct exchanges between partner organizations already exist, the broadening of joint credit to “partnering credit,” or an addition of partnering credit as a formal qualification under the military personnel system, could continue to build the military’s capacity to partner with external organizations without undoing the important structures and processes that have developed under the Goldwater-Nichols construct. In the case of personnel exchanges, familiarity rarely breeds contempt. With few exceptions, participants typically return to their organization of origin with newfound respect and appreciation for their host agency or organization, and a vastly improved knowledge of its procedures and organizational culture. Greater emphasis on exchanges, with a close eye on preservation of key core warfighting skill sets, will result in a military, and a national security community more broadly, that is more interoperable, more joint, and less parochial.

### **Foreign Language Training**

A useful analogy for building partnering capacity in an individual and an organization more broadly can be taken from one of the most important educational components of DOD’s current partnering strategy: foreign language training. Two broad, differing approaches to studying foreign language could be taken, just as two general approaches to defining joint assignments are possible. An individual could study a wide array of most or all languages that might be of utility, learning basic phrases and briefly immersing in the culture of each one. A second strategy would be to focus on only one or two languages, despite the fact that one may eventually work in a job requiring engagement with other countries and cultures than those studied. Longer term immersion in a foreign culture, with exposure to its language and lexicon, is useful not only to better understand that specific country and its people, but also to learn strategies for integrating into a different environment. This exposure prepares officers to effectively incorporate the contributions of external actors upon return to their organization of origin. Both approaches provide benefits, and an ideal exposure to foreign cultures and foreign organizational cultures more broadly would probably incorporate a combination of both techniques.

DOD has already made substantial efforts to prioritize and allocate additional resources to language training in recognition of the utility of foreign language capacity in meeting its current and foreseen mission requirements. The 2005 DOD Defense Language Transformation Roadmap (DLTR) suggests that “[l]anguage skill and regional expertise are not valued as Defense core competencies yet they are as important as critical weapons systems.”<sup>4</sup> An important element of the DLTR is the extension of foreign language training beyond its traditional place in the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) and cryptologic communities. The foreign language training policies that the DLTR has initiated are similar in some respects to those utilized by many North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) militaries and other allies, for whom speaking a foreign language, especially English, is often seen as an unquestionably mission-critical core competency. Most NATO militaries offer language training not only to specialized personnel dealing with

foreign relations issues, but also more widely to all officers who serve in combat arms units. Furthermore, periodic refresher and immersion courses are offered for officers who have received language training. The DLTR seeks to leverage existing language capabilities within the U.S. military and to reach out to “heritage” speakers of second languages in the United States for recruitment, especially in strategic languages for which DOD has “current and projected requirements.”<sup>5</sup>

In finance, *portfolio theory* refers to the idea that diversification should be utilized to lower aggregate risk.<sup>6</sup> A version of this same logic has led the military to broaden its language training portfolio, ensuring that foreign language capabilities are both more prevalent in the force and more diverse, focused on but not limited to identified languages of particular strategic importance.

In future years, the military may be able to leverage its organic foreign language capabilities by training more of its existing second language speakers, along with personnel who have received formal DOD language training and completed language-utilization tours, to serve as teachers. This idea of training the trainers was the genesis of the Navy’s original strategy in creating the Fighter Weapons School, “Top Gun,” to create tactics instructors who then taught those tactics to personnel at their units of origin. The result was a substantial increase in the overall tactical proficiency of the organization. Because of the importance of allowing for diversity and individual choice in language study, such a process might best be managed at the mid-echelon command level rather than the unit level.

More broadly, because of the diverse array of capabilities required of the modern full spectrum warrior, no single individual can specialize in all relevant areas. Instead, a wider range of organizational and educational experience could be leveraged through a more formalized system through which each officer exposed to a relevant discipline is then expected and encouraged to communicate and teach those skill sets to others upon returning to his or her operational unit. Just as we ask ourselves whether we could be training our own personnel more effectively for 21st-century missions, we should also examine the concomitant processes used by DOD for training allied and partner militaries.

### **Foreign Military Assistance Programs**

Substantial resources are devoted, by DOD and other agencies such as the Department of State, both to train foreign military personnel and to build the capacity of those militaries to partner and operate with our own. In a report highlighting the growing importance of security assistance and advocating the creation of a permanent Army Advisor Corps, John Nagl cites the Counterinsurgency Field Manual, which states that “while [foreign internal defense] has been traditionally the primary responsibility of the special operating forces . . . *training foreign forces is now a core competency of regular and reserve units of all services.*”<sup>7</sup> How well does our current system for educating and training our own military personnel prepare them for this teaching mission? Additionally, given that poorly conceived or executed training programs that strike foreign participants as excessively condescending or didactic can engender long-term animosity while teaching short-term skills, how do we best develop capacity and interoperability of our foreign partners while simultaneously increasing our own? Such questions regarding efforts to build integrative and partnering capacity within DOD should be considered with a view to the message communicated by the aggregate perception of our nation’s many efforts in this arena.

The United States devotes substantial resources to training and education programs for foreign military officers, and these programs have proven critically important to U.S. ability to operate with foreign allies. In fiscal year (FY) 2008, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program was funded at approximately \$80 million to train nearly 8,000 foreign military officers and related civilian personnel in programs both within the United States and abroad. The Foreign Military Financing Program, which like the IMET program is funded by the State Department but administered by DOD, was funded at approximately \$4.5 billion in FY 2008, and supports foreign purchase of both “defense articles and services (to include training).”<sup>8</sup> Section 1206 of the 2006 National Defense Authorization Act provides DOD authority to train and equip foreign forces for capacity-building purposes. It was funded at \$293 million for FY 2008, and its authority has been extended through FY 2011. The training supported by these programs, which are but three of a wide range of security cooperation initiatives, is critical to building capacity within our foreign partners.

Some programs also exist to provide U.S. military personnel with language instruction and cultural immersion abroad, many of which are tailored to the military’s FAO programs. Although many U.S. forces are stationed abroad, opportunities for dedicated immersion training in foreign cultures, especially in regions of strategic interest, are much more limited. Many of the IMET-funded programs offer short-term immersion opportunities in the United States to foreign officers, who typically are sent because they are perceived to have the highest command potential within their cohort of officers in their own service. By expanding opportunities for reciprocal short term exchanges, U.S. combat arms officers can improve their knowledge of foreign militaries and cultures or refresh foreign language skills on a timeline that allows maintenance of warfighting skills in their core specialty. The Marine Corps has recently begun an experimental Short-Term Exchange Program as a complement to its longer running PEP, which has expanded from 31 to 36 Active-duty billets in the past 5 years.<sup>9</sup>

Return on investment in building capacity in foreign partners is notoriously difficult to enumerate and calculate, especially for nonreciprocal programs. Exchange-based security cooperation programs offer a twofold benefit. First, because of the reciprocity of these programs, calculations of return on investment are somewhat less complex, as both participating organizations simultaneously build their own partnering capacity. Second, this desire for reciprocity communicates a key message to our foreign partners. In an excellent study by the late sociologist Charles Moskos (which should be mandatory reading for anyone working on military security cooperation or partnering issues), the author and his team interviewed a range of foreign military officers to examine the effect of their training on perceptions of the United States.<sup>10</sup> He quotes a Canadian officer who stated that “the American attitude is you need us, we don’t need you.”<sup>11</sup> Reciprocal exchanges have the advantage of implicitly communicating the message that the United States equally values the exposure of its own personnel to other countries and cultures. Because we are more geographically isolated than many of our allies, developing knowledge of other cultures and languages is in some ways an uphill battle, and this is a perception among foreign officers that Moskos additionally notes.

The range of organizational familiarity and partnering skills required of modern officers is simply too great for any one individual to possess in-depth awareness in all relevant fields, especially given the critical importance of maintaining warfighting skills in combat arms officers’ areas of core competency. A train-the-trainers portfolio theory approach to building these capacities would be facilitated by a further expansion of the definition of *joint*, or a revised interpretation of the 2007 legislation, to include all liaison and exchange assignments

that occur outside an officer's area of core competency. A restriction on consideration of intra-Service assignments was lifted by the 2007 changes to Title 10. For instance, a Navy surface warfare officer, submariner, or pilot serving as a liaison with a SEAL team might be eligible for joint credit if the nature of his assignment were deemed suitable to afford the officer significant experience with joint matters. The 2007 legislative changes allow joint credit to be accrued "via duties with DOD, interagency, non-governmental, or international organizations and include long-term assignments or brief periods of intense joint operations."<sup>12</sup> Many such assignments are not currently eligible for joint credit, however, because of the interpretation of the legislation's requirement that these assignments be "related to the achievement of unified action." "Forging a New Shield," the report of the Project on National Security Reform (PNSR), argues that "the system is grossly imbalanced. It supports strong departmental capabilities at the expense of integrating mechanisms."<sup>13</sup> Expanded use of interdepartmental and foreign exchanges would serve as a useful integrating mechanism, breaking down cultural barriers and improving interoperability.

The 2007 legislative changes to Goldwater-Nichols also set the stage for a greater role for organizations that might serve as interagency planning fora, as suggested in the PNSR report. Both U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) and U.S. Africa Command have structured their organizations to improve capacity for interagency and multinational partnering. Both organizations have moved beyond the traditional model of a State Department Political Advisor to incorporate a State Department civilian deputy to the combatant commander who, alongside a military deputy, exercises the full responsibility and authority commensurate with that position. Liaisons from numerous governmental agencies that are stakeholders in the region are incorporated seamlessly within the organizations' partnering directorates. The traditional Goldwater-Nichols model caused resources and human capital to accrue at the combatant commands. Because of the requirement, until recently, to serve in a designated JDAL billet to accumulate joint credit, top performing officers have typically been required to serve within Joint Staff structures to remain viable for promotion, and the resultant improvement in coordinative capacity of the regional and functional combatant commands has been crucial to the U.S. ability to execute joint operations in the post-Cold War era.

When passed by Congress, the Goldwater-Nichols model was tailored to the realities of the Cold War environment. Since then, national security leaders have been recommending changes that reflect the greater need for integrative mechanisms in the post-Cold War era. Admiral James Stavridis, while USSOUTHCOM commander, made efforts to offer the resources and expertise of the command's headquarters as a "velcro cube" for representatives from other agencies, as collaborative interagency planning and coordination are key to U.S. Government implementation of its strategy in that theater. Through the establishment of a partnering directorate headed by a Senior Executive Service-level DOD civilian, and the creation of a public-private cooperation program that seeks to coordinate with NGOs and private sector stakeholders, USSOUTHCOM seeks to incorporate consideration of the three contributors to a sustainable security strategy—defense, diplomacy, and development—in an integrative forum. The expansion of the definition of joint matters in the 2007 legislation, however, potentially set the stage for the establishment of integrative mechanisms and organizations outside of the DOD structure specifically, within which military officers plan and coordinate alongside other stakeholders from both within and outside the government to implement the National Security Strategy.

## Challenges of the Modern Era

Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair cited the risks posed by the present economic crisis as the primary security risk currently facing the United States. These threats include “regime-threatening instability,” testing the ability of the United States, in conjunction with partner nations, to meet challenges posed by failing or failed states, and multinationally shared threats such as piracy and cyber attacks that originate or become manifest in the global commons. The conduct of stability operations, codified as a core mission of DOD in Directive 3000.05, is especially dependent on effective partnering with external agencies, countries, and organizations in confronting these risks. Among other measures, DOD Directive 3000.05 calls on the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to:

*5.3.4. Develop opportunities for DOD personnel to contribute or develop stability operations skills by:*

*5.3.4.1. Undertaking tours of duty in other U.S. Departments and Agencies, International Organizations, and NGOs;*

*5.3.4.2. Participating in non-DOD education and training programs relevant to stability operations; and*

*5.3.4.3. Learning languages and studying foreign cultures, including long-term immersion in foreign societies.<sup>14</sup>*

DOD’s guidance on stability operations reflects the fact that the demands of modern conflict and security cooperation are causing skill sets that have traditionally been required primarily of the military’s FAOs to become more relevant to combat arms officers. In a spring 2009 article in the *Naval War College Review*, Admiral Stavridis and Captain Mark Hagerott argue that because of the increased requirement for officers who are familiar with joint, interagency, and international operations, the Navy must develop three broad fields for officers, each of which would have opportunities for command of operational units, thus preserving the Navy’s “culture of ‘command at sea.’”<sup>15</sup> The three tracks they propose are joint/interagency, technical, and general operations. They suggest that officers serving in the general operations community would ideally serve in more than one platform community within the Navy—for instance, a tour on a surface ship prior to attending flight school or nuclear power school. Technical track officers would receive specialized scientific and technical educational opportunities and would be well positioned for command of large functional combatant commands, such as U.S. Transportation Command or U.S. Strategic Command. The joint/interagency track would incorporate educational aspects found in FAO programs such as in-depth language training and graduate education in regional or related issues, coupled with tours in at-sea command assignments. The implementation of such a plan would likely necessitate reevaluation of the FAO programs as well, and the manner through which the military utilizes and integrates officers who excel in those communities. Avenues for reintegration of FAOs into their communities of origin would allow these officers to continue beyond the terminal colonel/captain rank to which most FAOs are limited, and permit DOD to utilize some of the military’s most experienced officers in joint and interagency issues in positions of increased responsibility.

As our world has become more globalized and interdependent, so too have agencies of the U.S. Government become more dependent on each others’ expertise and that of their allies, thus

testing the traditional model for educating DOD’s military officer corps. Some other recent innovations within the military’s personnel system offer promise with respect to efforts to further develop integrative capacity by preparing officers for the challenges of coming years. The Navy’s recent “Career Intermission Pilot Program” allows 20 officers and 20 enlisted personnel to depart Active duty for 1 to 3 years, and return with an adjustment made to their date of rank such that they could continue to compete for promotion on equal terms with their new peers.<sup>16</sup> The primary rationale for this type of program, providing an off-ramp and on-ramp for service, was to make military duty more compatible with the requirements of parenthood, especially for female officers.



**Figure 1-1. Iraqi supervisors and PRT members oversee construction of engineering college in Kut, Iraq. Photo by U.S. Air Force (Thomas A. Coney)**

Yet substantial interest in the program has been noted from other groups—for instance, Navy SEALs, whose high operations tempo and interest in relevant language and educational experiences serve as key incentives. One of many advantages of broadening such a program would be the creation of a means for individual Service members to choose their own educational opportunities that they believe will best assist them in effectively contributing within their career path upon their return to the military. Andrew Exum, a former Army Ranger and Fellow at the Center for a New American Security, noted that “to acquire the skills that would make me an effective counterinsurgent, I had to leave the Army.” After combat tours in Afghanistan and Iraq, he left the military and completed a Master’s degree in Middle Eastern studies at the American University in Beirut along with Arabic language study in Cairo. Exum, who founded the counterinsurgency blog *Abu Muqawama*, is completing a Ph.D. through King’s College London, and notes that if an on-ramp existed for a return to the Army, he would consider returning for the chance to apply his recent educational experience to the tactical environment. Such methods for providing a more flexible and market-based means for military officers to develop in areas they perceive would help them better contribute to the military would result in a more agile, responsive system for building human capital at minimal additional cost.

The development of “Human Terrain Teams” in Afghanistan and Iraq represents an effort to incorporate individuals with rigorous academic backgrounds, particularly in anthropology, to assist units in the field at the tactical level in achieving counterinsurgency goals, and demonstrates the recognized utility of nontraditional fields of study for the accomplishment of tactical military objectives. Graduate education in these fields is often not offered through the military’s own institutions for postgraduate education, and must be pursued through civilian institutions. Service academies currently limit the number of officers permitted to pursue civilian graduate education following graduation. The Navy’s Scholarship Program allows approximately 20 graduating Midshipmen to participate in civilian programs that afford a full or partial scholarship, and the other Service academies have similar programs facilitating civilian graduate school for a small number of officers. Participating Midshipmen incur a service obligation of 3 years for every year of school, served concurrently with other obligations. By limiting this number to 20, the Navy reduces the return on investment of its expenditure on the university education of its officer candidates. Allowing graduating officers and midgrade officers to accept scholarships for graduate education increases the human capital of the officer corps at limited cost to the Navy and better prepares them for the complex national security challenges of the modern era.

The 2007 legislative changes that altered the definition of joint matters have begun to diversify the types of experiences considered joint and contribute to the military’s integrative capacity. No accompanying change was made to the JPME system, however. Other educational experiences that contribute to an officer’s ability to integrate with external stakeholders to best achieve unified action should be considered for JPME credit. Right now, the military’s war college system is the only source for the credit generally required for selection to unit command and that serves as a component of a Joint Qualified Officer designation, now a requirement for promotion to flag rank. DOD’s implementation of the 2007 legislation has created a Joint Qualification System that seeks to better categorize and differentiate levels of joint experience and qualification, with four separate levels replacing the previous binary “yes or no” of designation as a Joint Qualified Officer. Similarly, a broader range of educational experiences that prepare officers to effectively operate with “other departments and agencies of the United States . . . the military forces or agencies of other countries . . . and non-governmental persons or entities” should be evaluated and categorized under revised JPME criteria. Civilian graduate school programs in relevant disciplines, and especially graduate school experience that takes place abroad (such as the military’s Olmsted Scholarship program), should be considered for joint credit under a revised JPME framework to better capture how aggregate educational experience prepares an officer to effectively collaborate with external stakeholders in the newly redefined broader joint environment.

### **Organizational Reform**

A reflection of the utility of enhanced educational opportunities for military officers can be perceived in the role of a number of Army warrior-scholars in reviving the historical lessons of counterinsurgency in recent years and helping to turn the tide of America’s efforts in Iraq. In his analysis of the “surge” in Iraq in his recent book *The Gamble*, Tom Ricks notes that officers who had taken substantial time in their careers to study and reflect on the lessons of the past, among them General David Petraeus, Brigadier General H.R. McMaster, Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl, and numerous others, many of whom have taught in West Point’s Social Sciences Department, were crucial to innovating and engineering a change in the 2007 Iraq strategy that reversed a deteriorating cycle of violence and insurgency.<sup>17</sup> The core document that distills these

rediscovered lessons relevant to the war efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, draws on the writings of T.E. Lawrence and notes a number of “Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency Operations.” Among these are cautions that “sometimes, the more force is used, the less effective it is,” “many important decisions are not made by generals,” and “some of the best weapons for counterinsurgents do not shoot.”<sup>18</sup> Another classic paradox in international relations theory more broadly is the “security dilemma.”<sup>19</sup> As a state builds its defenses to enhance its own security, it is perceived to threaten the security of others, causing them to build their defenses, resulting in arms races and diminished collective security. Thus, attempts made by states to increase their own security can in fact diminish it.

International relations theorists suggest that such destructive loops can only be mitigated through efforts to improve communication and to signal nonhostile intent in manners that can be interpreted by other states as such. Efforts to improve the U.S. military’s capacity to partner with foreign actors in confronting mutual threats to security posed by failing states and other shared threats arising in the global commons, while at the same time preserving core warfighting skill sets, will have the additional effect of encouraging similar efforts in allies and potential allies. If we are unable to do so, a failure to prepare to collaborate effectively with other states and confront mutual threats may prove not a paradox, but instead a self fulfilling prophecy.

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## **Joint and Combined Fires University Concept a Year Later: Providing Leaders and Experts in the Art and Science of Fires**

**Alvin Peterson and Sharon McBride**

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Recognizing the need for a transformation in training and education, the Fires Center of Excellence (FCoE) began to develop a concept for the Joint and Combined Fires University in 2008. Although, the university's concept pre-dates the November 2009 release of *A Leader Development Strategy for a 21st Century Army*, and the May 2010 release of *The United States Army Learning Concept for 2015*, the FCoE is on target and ahead of schedule in providing a path to achieving TRADOC's number one priority of developing leaders and providing Fires professionals a variety of avenues for learning.

The concept of the JCFU is that of an innovative learning organization, and it will provide training and education through a mix of delivery methods as outlined by both of these critical concepts, as well as a blend of institutional, operational, and self-development domains. Access to JCFU is located behind the AKO firewall on the Fires Knowledge Network; logon to <<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/586282>>. JCFU is scheduled to be at initial operational capability by summer 2011.

On the JCFU website is a multitude of online courses, distance learning classes, virtual reality learning opportunities, and links to obtaining traditional classroom instruction, most of which are available upon request now.

Students can also currently access JCFU resources from the Field Artillery or Air Defense Artillery branch schoolhouses as a part of the FCoE, through civilian universities that have partnerships with JCFU, other sister service schoolhouses, or from their home station. JCFU will provide blended learning and the highest quality training, education, and development opportunities for Army, joint, interagency, and coalition partners in the art and science of lethal and non-lethal Fires.

### **JCFU was born out of necessity**

Critical decision making is no longer exclusive to senior leaders in the operational environment. Junior officers, junior NCOs and Soldiers – all must make critical decisions on today's battlefield. MG David Halverson's *Fires Functional Concept*, which is nested with the *Army Operating Concept* and the *Army Capstone Concept*, describes a future characterized by uncertainty, complexity, rapid change, and persistent conflict.

These concepts also dictate the necessity of developing leaders who understand the context of factors influencing the military situation, who can act within that understanding, continually access and adopt those actions based on the interactions and circumstance of the enemy and environment, consolidate tactical and operational opportunities into strategic aims, and be able to effectively transition from one form of operations to another.

These Army leaders also must have the knowledge and skills necessary to train and employ modular force units, be culturally aware and astute, be capable of executing mission-type orders and the commander's intent, and finally, be leaders of character.

So, how do we make sure all these knowledge requirements are met, knowing Soldiers and leaders typically do not have enough time between deployments and missions to attend traditional Army schools? The FCoE answered this challenge by standing up the JCFU to deliver vital knowledge directly to those who need it the most and in formats that are easily understood.

From a Fires perspective, through developing the JCFU concept, Soldiers, Marines, Airmen, Sailors, allied nations, coalition partners, and interagency personnel are being trained with the necessary skills it takes to be a leader on the battlefield today. The JCFU concept provides the individual learner a “one-stop portal” in which they will be able to manage and access their career progression and operational training and education needs.

The JCFU concept is quickly becoming the model for all of TRADOC to follow to facilitate life-long learning with a 24-hours, seven-days-a-week, reach-back capability. Since 2008, the JCFU concept has been continuously evolving and expanding to add more courses, instructors, and resources for Fires professionals.

### **Technology at your fingertips**

The JCFU concept is on the cutting edge of leveraging emerging technology to bring live, virtual, and constructive training and education to the Fires professional. Several gaming and simulation applications are currently in development or are now in use which enables students to immerse themselves in true-to-life scenarios in order to broaden their experience base and intuitive decision making abilities at the touch of a keystroke.

For example, currently in use by the FCoE Noncommissioned Officer Academy is a virtual interactive training experience called “Danger Close.” The Senior Leader Course and Advanced Leader Course for both Field Artillery and Air Defense Artillery at Fort Sill have included “Danger Close” in a 10-hour and four-hour blocks of instruction. The platform uses state-of-the-art graphics and scenes using Soldiers filmed on location at Fort Sill. Students in the classroom experience the action through the eyes of an avatar, in this case they can choose between an officer or an NCO, in order to explore NCO and officer interaction in a variety of situations from garrison to a deployment.

Through lessons learned and experiencing consequences from decision making, the role-players make life-and-death decisions and learn the outcome of those decisions – it is personalized training at its best. Currently, small group leaders use it as a tool for developing young leaders and as a refresher for seasoned Soldiers.

Another example, although still in the development stage, is “Virtual Platoon.” This interactive game concept focuses more on the role of officer. This game exercises a lieutenant’s decision-making abilities and overall knowledge of Army programs and support systems by immersing him in a variety of complex scenarios from pre-deployment to post deployment, in garrison as well as during deployment. The officer receives feedback about his decisions from avatar mentors or JCFU instructors. In many cases, the young officer will be forced to deal with the consequences of his decisions and reflect how he could have done better.

Yet another example of how the JCFU concept is setting the example by embracing technology and scenario based curriculum is the newly developed “Collateral Damage Decision-making Tool” or CDDT. The platform uses graphics comparable to those seen in the science fiction video game “Halo.”

“Development for CDDT has been completed, and it is going through the validation process now,” said Christin Pena, an instructional systems specialist with the FCoE Education Technology Branch.

With the constantly changing operational environment, the JCFU required a responsive capability to deliver immersive, virtual decision games and simulations, Pena said.

So, the FCoE responded by developing a semi-immersive, student-centered, virtual decision gaming capability, she said. The capability utilizes Virtual Battlespace2 or VBS2 to develop realistic, virtual scenarios that are deliverable outside of the actual game to provide facilitated or distributed instruction. The capability will be integrated into the JCFU’s institutional, self-development and operational domains by delivering training, education, and experience anywhere at any time.

“Leveraging this gaming technology has allowed the FCoE to create a scenario-based game immersing the Soldier in a simulated operational environment where they can safely observe the outcomes of their decisions,” Pena said. “The focus of this training is to minimize or eliminate collateral damage. The Soldier observes a virtual scenario and then determines his/her course of action.

“After the decision is made, the Soldier can observe how that decision impacts not only the current situation but also second and third-order effects. CDDT will be delivered on CDs, facilitated in classrooms, as well as posted online through FKN,” she said.

## **Cultural immersion**

*The Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy* released in 2009 highlighted operational experiences in Somalia, the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq with having critical gaps in the Army’s capability to influence and operate effectively within different cultures for extended periods of time. Battlefield lessons learned have demonstrated that language proficiency and understanding of foreign cultures are vital enablers for full-spectrum operations.

Optimal leaders must be “culturally astute and able to use this awareness and understanding to achieve an in [sic] cultural edge ... with great language capabilities and capacities.” In a nutshell, leaders must understand how culture affects military operations.

With a growing awareness that U.S. military forces operating in other countries must be as knowledgeable and respectful as possible of that nation’s customs and languages, once again the FCoE’s JCFU concept is leading the way by hiring a cultural advisor, who has totally revamped the traditional teaching approach for Soldiers to learn culture and foreign language.

Dr. Mahir Ibrahimov, who is fluent in five languages and versed in many cultures, is currently on board as the FCoE’s cultural advisor and is the head of the JCFU Cultural & Foreign Language Program.

Ibrahimov has created an innovative, multipronged approach toward learning that is geared for each level of leader to prepare them for living and working in a new country, preventing culture shock, easing the transition and creating awareness of different cultural and individual styles to maximize operations.

When deployed in a foreign land and among a foreign culture, sometimes the smallest things are important and can lead to success or failure. For example, some Soldiers may not know that the hand signal for 'OK' is perfectly fine in the Western world, but such a gesture might cause offense in some areas of the Middle East. Beyond migrating unintentional insults, cultural interpretation, competence, and adaptation are prerequisites for achieving a win-win relationship in any military operation.

A commander from 3rd Infantry Division observed in an after-action review, "I had perfect situational awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness. I knew where every enemy tank was dug in on the outskirts of Tallil. Only problem was, my Soldiers had to fight fanatics charging on foot or in pickups and firing AK47s and RPGs. Great technical intelligence ... wrong enemy."

Operational commanders who do not consider the role of culture during mission planning and execution invite unintended and unforeseen consequences, and even mission failure.

"I'm sharing my expertise with the troops. I'm providing our troops with the most current and broadest possible understanding of the various cultures that our troops are liable to encounter during potential future deployments," Ibrahimov said.

Items in the FCoE Cultural & Foreign Language Program's arsenal include a "Cultural Awareness and Language Training Package" developed by Ibrahimov, which is a portable training option for Soldiers that includes several foreign language CDs, a cultural awareness scenario-based game called "Army 360," language flashcards, and field-expedient language smart books allocated from the Defense Language Institute for our troops' use.

Ibrahimov also established a Culture and Foreign Language Resource Center in the Morris Swett Technical library, where students have access to computers for self-paced training, various cultural awareness books, and numerous other applicable digital and traditional learning resources.

He also worked tirelessly to establish formal partnerships with civilian universities and other subject-matter experts from across the nation to conduct culture and foreign language seminars here at Fort Sill.

Ibrahimov also made available on the FKN website (<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/21617522>) a dedicated FCoE Cultural & Foreign Language Program resource page, which contains cultural awareness and foreign language knowledge, information on past seminars, information on the program, media coverage of the events, foreign languages guides, links to the Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center resources, as well as the CIA Fact Book – the list and site are constantly being updated.

### **No more death by PowerPoint**

Beyond revamping training, the JCFU concept has also overhauled the way its instructors teach. Rather than using old standard Army techniques of lecture peppered with PowerPoint slides, adult learning theories are now being incorporated into all the JCFU's curriculum at both the FA and ADA schoolhouses.

Research shows that those who learn best are those who take responsibility for their own learning and who are given the opportunity to reflect and dialogue during the training and education process.

With the help of the Internet, and a variety of communication, visualization, and simulation technologies, the old Army's standard of "70 percent and go" is no longer an appropriate standard where the achievement of learning outcomes are directly tied to meeting the needs of the Army for values based, culturally astute, critically thinking Soldiers and leaders.

The process of developing cadre steeped in the art of facilitated learning through reflection has already begun through the JCFU concept. Staff and faculty at Fort Sill are currently being trained to use Outcome-Based Training and Education as well as other Socratic teaching methods, developed from Plato's Socratic Dialogues. The Socratic method of teaching is a student-centered approach that challenges learners to develop their critical thinking skills and engage in analytic discussion. Ultimately, JCFU instructors will use cutting edge instructional methods coupled with technical and tactical expertise to raise the understanding of all students.

### **The future is now**

When the *Leader Development Strategy for a 21st Century Army* was released, it articulated the characteristics the Army desires in its leaders as they progress through their careers. Even though this doctrine is new, some of the factors that make a great leader haven't really changed. For example, the ability to be innovative, execute, and be a strong role model for Soldiers is always essential, but in addition to these qualities, a new leadership style is emerging, with skills uniquely tailored for success in today's battlefield environment.

The JCFU concept is at the heart of these changes and is quickly setting the standard for the rest of the Army to follow. The JCFU concept is serving as the catalyst for the transformation of training and education not only here at Fort Sill but for the rest of the Army. The JCFU concept is a learning organization that will, through the process of reflection and analysis, continuously strive to determine the training and education needs of today and tomorrow's Soldiers and leaders.

*Fit to Fight! Fires Strong!*



## Teaching the Ropes

Admiral James G. Stavridis

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U.S. Naval Institute/www.usni.org.

Sailors have always mentored new hands and helped them “learn the ropes.” This tradition stretches back to the earliest days of sail, when each new Sailor meant a ready pair of hands to haul a sheet, work a halyard, and reef a sail. To learn the ropes was to memorize a ship from stem to stern. It meant learning the language of the sea. This ancient tradition still works, both at sea and on shore. In today’s turbulent security environment, we must consider how the old hands who know the ropes can apply their experience to foster stability in the coming decades.

American novelist and sailor Herman Melville wrote, “We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow-men; and among those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects.”

For decades, the United States military has sought to strengthen those tough threads connecting our nation with the rest of the world. Frankly, these efforts have yielded, at best, mixed results. At present, two of our most important relationships are with Afghanistan and Pakistan. Our three countries are now inextricably linked.

Our activities there have been both bellicose and peaceful and have involved clandestine and overt operations, with varying degrees of success. While Americans must be committed to learning the languages and cultures of many nations, this is most urgent in the cases of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

To this end, old hands in that region have instituted the Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands Program, or Afpak Hands. The program is designed to deepen our understanding of the regional culture, language, and history, including the complicated relationships among tribes and the Afghan and Pakistan governments, and to be sensitive to the nuances that define those relationships.

### Changing Tack

For the better part of the past decade our focus has been to capture or kill our enemies, namely al Qaeda, the Taliban, and associated extremist movements. As a result, we have missed opportunities to build relationships with the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan. In fact, in many cases we have instead alienated those we intended to protect. This is a strategic blunder that we have recognized at the highest levels of our chain of command and one we must reverse.

In setting forth his goals to defeat al Qaeda and its extremist allies in Afghanistan and Pakistan, prevent their capacity to threaten our nation and our allies in the future, and better balance and coordinate our military and civilian efforts in the region, President Obama charted a clear course.<sup>1</sup>

Following suit, we have decided to “come about.” Over the past year we have broadened our focus from simply killing the enemy to protecting and strengthening the Afghan people. Although pursuing al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other regional extremists remains vital, U.S., Afghan and allied forces and government agencies are operating with the overarching objective

of protecting the Afghan people from the violence and ravages of war and facilitating their long-term stability, security, and prosperity. These efforts are central to U.S. national-security goals, and we are making steady progress toward our objectives.

Strong links connect our war efforts in Afghanistan and the extremist safe havens in Pakistan. The President's shift in focus for Afghanistan recognized these connections and asserted that the future of Afghanistan is inextricably linked to the future of its neighbor, Pakistan; a sentiment echoed by Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, this past March, when he referred to Afghanistan and Pakistan as "conjoined twins."

### **Not Using a Gun, but a Lens**

Afpak Hands was established to support the President's shift in strategic focus. It was launched by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen in August 2009 and reflects the notion that peace in Central Asia will not likely be achieved down the barrel of a gun, but rather through the lens of understanding.

The late American multilingual Soldier and diplomat Vernon Walters once remarked that, "To learn a second language is to live a second life."<sup>2</sup> Language is the roadmap and compass to a people and its culture. Afpak Hands requires intensive language training and a month of personal security training, followed by deployments to the region to learn the cultural ropes.

Afpak Hands is intended to introduce a cadre of DOD experts to positions of strategic influence in Afghanistan and Pakistan. There they will engage in direct, day-to-day contact with their Afghan and Pakistani counterparts, bringing cohesiveness to our efforts in the region and ultimately instructing the next generation. The first class of Afpak Hands graduated in November 2009 and deployed in late April 2010. By the end of May, more than 100 will be deployed, working alongside, teaching, mentoring, and most important, learning from their Afghan and Pakistani counterparts. It's expected that 30 to 40 more new hands will come on board every two months.

Ultimately, the goal is to train and maintain a cadre of 800 hands, including 357 Soldiers, 135 Sailors, 171 Airmen, 63 Marines, and 90 civilians to develop proficiencies in counterinsurgency doctrine, regional languages, and culture.<sup>3</sup> They will remain engaged in this region for the bulk of their mid-careers.

### **A Call to Serve . . . and a Good Career Move**

To date, the services and service members have responded favorably to the new program. Because of its demands, only the very best will be offered the chance to serve. Ideally, they will have had experience with Operation Enduring Freedom, be familiar with counterinsurgency principles, be physically fit, intellectually curious, culturally adaptable, and highly motivated.

Afpak Hands has generally been accepted as a high-priority military program that will accelerate rather than inhibit career progression.<sup>4</sup> Not surprisingly, the program has had no difficulties finding the right people for the job. Navy and Marine Corps personnel in particular have been successfully deploying to distant places around the world for centuries, have earned their stripes in Operation Enduring Freedom, are increasingly skilled in the application of counterinsurgency principles and are thus ideally suited for the program. They are manning the rails enthusiastically.

The program will be centrally managed by the Joint Staff. Its personnel will rotate among positions in the continental United States, Europe, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and will be carefully monitored to ensure they are at the very least promoted at the same rates as their non-Afpak Hands counterparts. Its personnel also will have the opportunity to participate in curricula at senior service colleges, Johns Hopkins University, and the National Defense Intelligence College. Families of Afpak Hands personnel will benefit from the increased stability of being located in out-of-theater geographic hubs in Washington, DC; Virginia; North and South Carolina; Kansas; Pennsylvania; Florida; and overseas in The Netherlands and Belgium.

### **Extending the Model**

While it is not intended to be an extension of the services' Foreign Area Officer programs, Afpak Hands has the potential to support the capabilities of military and civilian government agencies, private and public enterprises, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) around the world. The model can be duplicated in other regions such as Latin America, the Caribbean, East and West Africa, East Asia, Eastern Europe and even the Arctic, which can benefit from intensely focused expertise.

We must also examine what maritime services have accomplished recently to fulfill the Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower and the missions and visions of our combatant commands. For example, in 2009 U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. Fourth Fleet, the U.S. Marine Corps, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the U.S. Military Sealift Command deployed the Southern Partnership Station to strengthen regional partnerships and maritime security through training and cooperation activities.

Since 2007 Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet has been deploying the Africa Partnership Station to Africa's shores. These are venues for the shared efforts of agencies and NGOs from Africa, the United States, and Europe. Initially focused on enabling African nations bordering the Gulf of Guinea to improve maritime security, Africa Partnership Station has expanded to include Africa's eastern shores, where for the first time an international staff of members from Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Tanzania, and the United States is executing the mission.<sup>5</sup>

Likewise, U.S. Marines from Marine Forces Europe are training Republic of Georgia units for regular deployments to Afghanistan to support the International Security Assistance Force under the Georgia Deployment Program, a two-year stint consisting of four six-month rotations. At its conclusion, not only will Georgian infantry battalions be "Marine-trained," but we will have a cadre of U.S. Marines as old hands in Georgia with the experience that can only be achieved through direct interaction with our Georgian partners.

U.S. Coast Guardsmen are just as broadly engaged and are world-renowned old hands in the fields of maritime security, safety, the conservation of natural resources, mobility and national defense. Throughout their history they have been active in enforcing maritime law, conducting maritime interdiction operations, thwarting illegal immigration, and protecting our exclusive economic zone and living marine resources. In recent history, they have also trained foreign maritime security forces such as the Iraqi military and those of nations supported by the Africa Partnership Station, to secure their vital maritime economic resources through specialized training programs designed according to partner countries' needs and abilities. Training typically focuses on maritime law enforcement, port security, and institutional strengthening and may be

offered as part of training programs involving many U.S. agencies. We should consider them valued resources and consider how their expertise can be applied globally.

Our challenges are as diverse as they are widespread. Broad global-focus programs such as Afpak Hands can help the United States face those challenges by encouraging:

- Interagency integration, both at the grassroots tactical level and at the long-term strategic level.
- Teamwork between the U.S. State Department and the DOD on the ground in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- International partnerships between the United States and other countries, both in military and civilian enterprises. This includes NGOs, private charities, and international organizations.
- A speedier staffing process, because being Joint Staff-sponsored, these programs are conduits of valuable, current information.
- “Less tail at home, more tooth forward”-in other words, by sending our best and brightest Service members and civilians into programs such as Afpak, we move the brainpower to the field.
- A culture of both war and peace. While it is vital that we retain our global combat capabilities, the most powerful and influential means of attaining regional security will come from understanding its people.
- Excellent strategic communications. “The ultimate good desired,” wrote former Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., “is better reached by free trade in ideas, and the best test of truth is the power of the thought to be accepted in the competition of the market.” The United States competes in a geopolitical marketplace of ideas. We cannot assume we hold the competitive advantage in that market. In fact, our position is volatile and uncertain, given the relentless 24-hour news cycle. Thus, everything we do depends on our strategic communication efforts. It is the main battery for launching ideas to compete in that market. Our “hands” can help us accomplish this.

### **An Adaptive Future**

Admiral Mullen wisely said during his March lecture at Kansas State University, “Each era has something to teach, for there is no single defining American way of war. It changes over time . . . adapting appropriately to the most relevant threats to our national security, and the means by which that security is best preserved.”<sup>6</sup>

If the past decade of persistent conflict has taught us anything, it is that ignorance and lies are the greatest enemies and the most relevant threats to our national security and to the security and prosperity of the world. These threats loom largest today not on the fields of battle or in hostile territory, as enemies did in wars past, but in the human mind. We must become deft warriors in a volatile intellectual market. In the present climate we must influence, not control; convince, not coerce; inspire, not rebuke; and we must launch better ideas than those promulgated by our foes.

The Afpak Hands Program should be considered a possible model for other such programs elsewhere in the world. The Sea Services should embrace the notion that old hands who know the ropes of the international, interagency, and public and private sectors can teach and mentor the new and ensure the security of our nation, partners, and allies as the uncertain 21st century unfolds.

### Endnotes

1. Remarks by President Barack Obama in his Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan, 1 December 2009, U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-way-forward-afghanistan-and-pakistan>> (accessed 10 Mar 2010).
2. Ambassador Vernon Walters, remarks at U.S. Military Academy, 1999. In addition to English, Walters spoke eight languages fluently: French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, German, Dutch, Chinese, and Russian. He achieved the rank of lieutenant general in the U.S. Army and was appointed by President Ronald Reagan as the Permanent U.S. Representative to the United Nations. <<http://www.archive.usun.state.gov/ambassadors/history/walters.html>> (accessed 26 Mar 2010).
3. CNO general administrative message, Afghanistan Pakistan Hands Program, DTG R242337ZSEP09.
4. Memorandum from CJCS, Admiral Mike Mullen to Service Chiefs, 14 December 2009.
5. Chief Petty Officer Jason Morris, Deputy Undersecretary of the Navy visits Africa Partnership Station East, <<http://www.africom.mil/getArticle.asp?art=3869>> (accessed 26 March 2010).
6. Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Landon Lecture Series, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, Wednesday, 3 March 2010.

**Note:** This article was originally published in the May 2010 issue of *Proceedings*.



## **The Interagency Future: Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Task Force Marne**

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Reprinted with permission from the September–October 2009 issue of *Military Review*.

In his foreword to U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, General William Wallace emphasizes that victory in modern conflict will be achieved “only by conducting military operations in concert with diplomatic, informational, and economic efforts. Battlefield success is no longer enough; final victory requires concurrent stability operations to lay the foundation for lasting peace.”<sup>1</sup>

Combat operations thus require further insight largely beyond the conventional canon of military training and expertise. In response to this emergent reality, the Army ushered in a new element to traditional arsenal of war: embedded provincial reconstruction teams (ePRTs). These teams consist of a small civil-military cadre drawn from government agencies and experts at the brigade level. Task Force Marne was one of the first to host these groups, serving as home to four teams.<sup>2</sup> Based on the Marne experience, I will examine the origins and definition of embedded provincial reconstruction teams. In challenging some basic assumptions, I will discuss the difficulties encountered as these teams formed and integrated into their brigade-level counterparts. Finally, I will offer recommendations to increase team effectiveness.

### **Into the Surge**

By the spring of 2007, U.S. forces in Iraq began receiving the first influx of additional combatants in what came to be known as the “surge.” Simultaneous to this influx was a less publicized discussion about how, beyond military prowess, the United States could directly leverage the full complement of its national power to support the “on-the-ground” efforts of the warfighters. The answer, first articulated in the January 2007 “New Way Forward” speech by President George W. Bush, was to expand the provincial reconstruction team concept to create embedded teams.<sup>3</sup> The embedded teams were a joint and interagency construct that “represents the civilian contribution to the military surge.”<sup>4</sup> Department of State Foreign Service officers joined with experts from the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Justice, and contracted specialists from various backgrounds to form a collaborative cell of civilian experts. This cell, augmented with a mid-level military officer as deputy, became a direct component of the maneuver brigades.

Task Force Marne is the element that commanded the Multi-National Division-Center from March 2007 until June 2008. The unit’s operational environment covered an area of 23,190 square miles stretching from the Saudi Arabian border in the West to the Iranian border in the East, encompassing four full provinces (Babil, Karbala, Najaf, and Wasit) and the two largest qadas (counties) of Baghdad Province, Mada’in and Mahmudiyah.

Provincial reconstruction teams in Iraq divide into two primary categories: “paired” and “embedded.” Paired provincial reconstruction teams are largely stand-alone entities, with robust manning structures and dedicated movement security teams. Their mandate includes government engagement at the provincial level.<sup>5</sup>

Embedded teams, on the other hand, are fully entrenched at the brigade combat team level, sharing the space, resources, and hardships of the units with which they partner. These embedded teams have a capacity-building mandate to engage the Iraqi government and population at the local level and support the brigade's counterinsurgency effort. Theoretically, these embedded teams have a four-person core element: a team leader, deputy team leader, United States Agency for International Development representative, and bilingual-bicultural advisor. A bilingual-bicultural advisor is a subject matter expert who is native to the region and provides insight to the cultural dimension. Around this core, additional specialized personnel are added based on their availability and the specific mission requirements. A baseline team of 7 to 11 personnel is normal.<sup>6</sup>

In the spring of 2008, Task Force Marne had five paired provincial reconstruction teams and four embedded provincial reconstruction teams operating in its "battlespace." The Baghdad provincial reconstruction team, whose mandate extended to all of Baghdad Province, shared an overlapping relationship that included Multi-National Division-Baghdad. The Babil team, along with the nominal operations of the Karbala and Najaf teams, operated from the Regional Embassy Office in Hillah. The other provincial reconstruction team was in Wasit Province, near the provincial center of Al Kut. Marne's four embedded teams were known as "Baghdad 4," "Baghdad 7," "Baghdad 8," and "North Babil." This served as the crucible which tested the embedded provincial reconstruction team concept and revealed areas of weakness and strength.

### **Embedded Team Pedigree and the Afghan Catalyst**

The success of the TORCH operation is critically dependent upon the reactions of the authorities, inhabitants and troops of North Africa. With this in mind, General Eisenhower has on his staff a Civil Administrative Section to coordinate the civil and political matters in immediate relation to the operation. He urgently requests that men from the State Department be released to serve on this body... [T]he War Department should undertake to carry out this operation in all respects, but the political and civil phase of the plan could be facilitated by the aid of the State Department.

— Memo, General George C. Marshall for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, 3 September 1942<sup>7</sup>

Embedded provincial reconstruction teams call upon a varied pedigree. Although new, they did not emerge suddenly. The embedded teams are the third evolution of the broader provincial reconstruction team concept, which further traces its civil-military lineage at least to World War II. Battlefield commanders through the centuries have had little cause to consider an official role for civilians among their combat units. This view changed considerably during World War II, and it has been developing ever since. From brevet promotions and the implementation of the Marshall Plan, to codifying pacification efforts through the Civil Operations and Revolutionary (later Rural) Development Support (called "CORDS") program in Vietnam, and to the shared operational space of the Balkan conflicts, the direct role of civilians representing other instruments of national power on the battlefield has continued to evolve.<sup>8</sup>

The Army's counterinsurgency principles, formalized in FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, call upon the Army to expand from its singular reliance on the standard sword and shield tools of war. This holistic approach leverages critical elements of society to look beyond a defeated enemy and achieve a more comprehensive victory.<sup>9</sup> A clear example, and an early application

of these principles, came when the provincial reconstruction team concept emerged in 2003 in Afghanistan as a precursor to the embedded teams.

The irregular environment of Afghanistan proved appropriate for examining the direct integration of nonlethal military activities using civilians. As FM 3-24 states, “Military forces can perform civilian tasks but often not as well as the civilian agencies with people trained in those skills. Further, military forces performing civilian tasks are not performing military tasks.”<sup>10</sup> Development is not an art in which the military is trained, nor does it seek to be an agency for the delivery of such a service. The military seeks to set the conditions for development, first establishing security and then providing a platform for the delivery of the immediate needs of the populace. Beyond this a gap occurs.

In Operation Enduring Freedom, something was missing between the immediate tactical application of military activity and the eventual concerted international community development effort. The U.S. government response in Afghanistan created the first provincial reconstruction team for this need. This effort initially was a stand-alone construct, physically apart from the primary military presence and imbued with a distinct nonlethal mandate. Components of this group were civilians, but it was a military organization with military leadership. The Afghanistan environment accorded a large degree of autonomy and the military hierarchy facilitated a degree of natural integration with overall military activities. As a group of combined experts, it largely bridged the development gap and opened the door for the insertion and expansion of the broader international community. Based on this modest success, the military exported the combined civilian-military approach of the provincial reconstruction team to the Iraq conflict.

In Iraq, the provincial reconstruction team program was restructured with a civilian emphasis. The teams now possessed Department of State leadership and a focus on civilian skill sets. The exception was the deputy team leader, usually a lieutenant colonel. By 2006, counterinsurgency principles began to take prominence in coalition force operations, leading to the surge and a devolved, community-centric focus. Expertise in areas such as local governance, business development, and agriculture was now a requirement. This course adjustment precipitated the evolution of the fundamental provincial reconstruction team concept into the embedded team concept.

### **Truth in Advertising**

Embedded provincial reconstruction teams must affect the environment quickly. They must establish bona fides with the combatant commander, stake a claim to legitimacy in the eyes of the populace, and prove they are trustworthy interlocutors to the Iraqi leadership. However, team personnel usually arrive at a disadvantage when compared to their combatant counterparts. The combatant commander leads a robust and highly trained team, has experienced more time on the ground, owns comparatively vast resources, and exhibits a disdain for patience.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, scant training, an unpredictable manning process, and an unfortunate misunderstanding of their mandate often undermine embedded teams. Despite tremendous promise, these groups often experience costly delays in establishing legitimacy and achieving effectiveness due to these largely foreseeable and correctable problems.

### **Erroneous Expectations**

In Task Force Marne, embedded provincial reconstruction teams, as marketed, were more myth and shadow than realities. This judgment is not to say that they were ineffectual but does suggest

that their mission was made more difficult due to the way they were assembled and packaged. The mythology begins with the name “embedded provincial reconstruction team.” The title of a nonfiction book generally describes some truth about what the reader may expect to discover in its pages. A military commander, a host-nation-government official, or an average Iraqi citizen is likely to make some reasonable assumptions when beginning interactions with an organization that calls itself an embedded provincial reconstruction team. That the team provides a cohesive organized unit tasked with addressing reconstruction issues at the provincial level is certainly a reasonable expectation. However, this expectation, though reasonable, would be in error. Not because these groups do not fulfill their mandate, but because their mandate does not match their name, these differences are more than merely splitting hairs or semantics. The name carries ramifications for managing expectations and providing both guidance and structure to the group’s operations.

Three claims make up the label: provincial, reconstruction, and team. Taken individually it is clear how this label creates inherent difficulties in clarifying roles and establishing bona fides.

- **Provincial.** The mandate for embedded teams does not extend to the province. Their realm of interaction is sub-provincial. Aligned as they are with task-organized brigades, they cede provincial level interactions to provincial reconstruction teams, just as brigades defer to the division level. Therefore, they develop a sphere of influence that focuses on local level interactions, not provincial ones.<sup>12</sup>
- **Reconstruction.** As a term of art, “reconstruction” may be interpreted as the full spectrum of activities necessary to provide a framework for social, economic, political, and military stability. However, to an Iraqi citizen or company commander, this word conjures an image of hard “brick and mortar” infrastructure projects. Thus, collaborators with the embedded teams inaccurately expect that construction contracts for schools, clinics, and the like will soon follow. While the actual mandate may only touch on infrastructure reconstruction, the expectations of others make actual mission accomplishment more difficult. Thus, the teams’ viability suffers.
- **Team.** The concept of “team” is critical and fundamental to the success of a civil-military group in a counterinsurgency environment. The embedded provincial reconstruction team does achieve the limited standard of the definition for “team” as “a number of persons associated together in work or activity.”<sup>13</sup> However, a true team, an effective collaboration of individual skills directed toward a shared vision, requires a higher standard. When thinking of successful teams, one imagines sports teams, a group of lawyers in a complex legal case, or perhaps a military unit. In these cases, people prepare and train together in advance of the endeavor they will undertake. They link their individual skills and actions in direct concert with those of their teammates to produce a coordinated outcome. This result presupposes teammate cooperation; individuals who have specific, appropriate skills; and sufficient numbers to fill the requisite positions of the team. Task Force Marne teams’ inaugural year was fraught with difficulty in these aspects of preparation and appropriate staffing. Thus, the claim of establishing a true team is elusive.

Recognizing that embedded provincial reconstruction teams are not quite what they appear does not delegitimize them. Rather, in breaking down the myth, we create the foundation for understanding what the concept aspires to: a uniquely contributing part of the counterinsurgency effort.

## Manning the Ship

The true value of the embedded provincial reconstruction team is in its personnel. In Task Force Marne, talented experts made magnificent contributions. For example, the United States Agency for International Development's representative and member of the North Babil team, Dr. Louis Tatem, collaboratively participated in the revitalization of Jurf as Sukhr. His work was key to transforming this blighted area, and it illustrates the high potential of partnerships between teams and units.<sup>14</sup> However, this and other similar successes largely hinged on individual effort and personal relationships, not on an institutionalized standard. As noted in a Brookings Institute report, "Perhaps the most important area of improvement is in how well the new embedded provincial reconstruction teams are working...Unfortunately, State and other civilian agencies have done a poor job providing the needed manpower for the [teams]."<sup>15</sup> This lack of cohesion owes to two primary factors: staffing and preparation.

**Staffing.** "In somewhat typical State Department fashion, the mandate to staff provincial reconstruction teams came down from above and the Foreign Service had to respond—without an influx of sufficient funding, training, or personnel."<sup>16</sup> This quotation from former Foreign Service officer Shawn Dorman refers to the broader process as initially implemented in Iraq, but it applies to the embedded provincial reconstruction team situation as well, with the additional caveat that many individuals comprising the teams come from sources outside of the Department of State. Although the process is somewhat mysterious, and its uneven flow undoubtedly owes to many factors, there is apparently no cohesive staffing plan.

Due to the absence of such a plan, a number of detrimental conditions have emerged. At various stages, the embedded provincial reconstruction teams at Baghdad 7 and Baghdad 8 have been reduced to a fraction of the baseline group, merely 29 to 43 percent required strength.<sup>17</sup> Brigade combat teams and embedded provincial reconstruction teams are seldom able to identify when a replacement may arrive to fill an open vacancy or replace redeploying personnel. In some instances, embedded provincial reconstruction team personnel arrive with impressive credentials in a particular field, expecting to apply those skills in a position matched with their experience, but they soon find themselves in a position that requires them to serve as the subject matter expert for something foreign to their background and qualifications. At Baghdad 4, acute vacancies identified as critical remain unfilled while other positions receive duplicate candidates.

Team positions require a robust vigor due to the rigorous combat environment and extreme climate temperatures encountered. This raises concerns when individuals of significantly advanced age or poor physical fitness present themselves for service.<sup>18</sup> Once assigned to and faced with the austerity of an embedded provincial reconstruction team, some individuals have sought and received reassignment to the relative luxury of Baghdad's International Zone. Complaints about a general lack of individual comforts such as televisions, DVD players, and refrigerators have been common.

Although anecdotal, these instances articulate two requirements for the embedded provincial reconstruction team positions. Personnel must possess both the requisite expertise of the position and the ability to thrive in a demanding physical environment. A codified and standardized approach to the identification and preparation of personnel is necessary. While many positions fill appropriately, the examples above reinforce the concerns voiced by many. In an informal discussion regarding the criticality of specific skill requirements and the less-than-ideal efforts to match those skills to actual need, one team leader emphasized the "consistent underestimation of how hard the job [really] is" displayed when filling "expert" positions.

**Preparation.** In the military, you axiomatically train as you fight. In many cases, incoming embedded provincial reconstruction team members have never worked with the military and some have never even worked abroad. The work environment for team members is certainly austere and can be intimidating. Team members arrive as individuals having never met, much less worked with, fellow teammates or their military counterparts. Newcomers are not systematically prepared for the circumstances they encounter. Instead they must rely on the happenstance of previous personal experiences. The team itself is not systemically prepared to orient, train, and incorporate the newcomer. The brigade, comprehensively engaged in myriad tasks, expects the newcomer to quickly provide insight and deliver value. In short, embedded provincial reconstruction teams and the individuals who comprise them are setup for failure. The simple fact that teams generally *do not fail* speaks to the quality of the individuals who are involved and the willingness of the broader team to work together to overcome the institutional hurdles.

The in-country oversight responsibility for administration and human resources issues lies with the Department of State's Office of Provincial Affairs. Thus, it absorbs the brunt of criticism for this ad hoc manning process. However, their task is challenging, involving a selection process that occurs beyond their auspices. It involves coordination of a number of interagency partners and individual contractors over which it has limited authority. The Office of Provincial Affairs is a nascent body, striving to grasp the reins as it works through a chaotic milieu that includes its own manning shortfalls.



**Figure 4-1. Bruce Bailey (white shirt), ePRT deputy chief, and John Smith, ePRT chief, walk the streets of Arab Jabour with security from 2-3d Brigade Troops Battalion Soldiers on 14 November 2007. Photo by U.S. Army.**

In some cases, the staffing difficulties result in an absence of critical expertise to accomplish the civil-military mission. Baghdad 7 endured significant personnel fluctuation and uncertainty in its brief tenure. Recognizing the limitations, team leader John Smith, a veteran with decades of experience developing teams in tricky situations, worked hand-in-hand with 2/3 Brigade Combat Team to secure the staffing support of talented officers from within the unit itself. While this arrangement worked, it is another example of success in spite of the lack of established support

systems. As the security situation improves and the demand for true subject matter expertise rises, military officers can shore up the dam only to a certain point. The lasting effort needs to be less on point-of-impact creativity and more on influencing systemic change in identifying, preparing, and deploying embedded provincial reconstruction team personnel.

### **Achieving Unity of Effort**

The fundamental issues are not new. What is new in the current context is the nature of the conflict, the conditions of service, and the delivery method of the required skills. The vehicle for delivery in the modern environment is the embedded provincial reconstruction team, a viable and valuable asset and an integral component of a brigade combat team's available tools. As noted in a report from the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, "with few exceptions, we observed good civil-military integration and cooperation, and brigade combat team leaders seemed convinced that embedded provincial reconstruction team members provided valuable advice and expertise and constitute a tangible benefit to their battle."<sup>19</sup> However positive the experience thus far, the teams have only scratched the surface of their potential. A comprehensive and longer term approach to the development of these teams can achieve the full measure of their promise. This optimization process can occur by directing institutional resources toward a three-fold approach:

- Forecast needs and identify individual team members.
- Provide individual preparation and develop the small team dynamics of the embedded provincial reconstruction team.
- Integrate team training with the sophisticated predeployment training of brigade combat teams.

### **Beginning at the Beginning**

Any initiative must have a starting point. The embedded provincial reconstruction team deployment process should start when a brigade receives its deployment warning orders. Warning orders provide military units with a notice to begin preparations for an action. In the case of Operation Iraqi Freedom, brigade combat teams have significant time in advance of their deployments. By now, embedded provincial reconstruction teams are ingrained in brigade leadership, and the planning to fully incorporate the team should take place as a matter of course. However, there are other pieces to the puzzle. The interagency partners providing assets to the embedded provincial reconstruction team must receive notice similar to the brigade's warning order from their national-level leaders so that they too may develop their support plans. The organizations contributing personnel should appoint a team coordinator for the provincial reconstruction team program who will identify the individuals for selection and coordinate with both the departments of State and Defense to support these personnel with the full preparation process.

### **The Individual**

There are three opportunities to influence the incoming team member: prior to deployment, throughout the deployment process, and during the deployment itself. There is no effort currently made prior to deployment. Once the deployment process begins, incoming members attend a two-week training course in the Washington D.C. area followed by a two-day orientation at the

U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. A benefit of these courses is that new members form relationships with others en route to their assignments, and this contributes to a viable support network. The training itself is limited in duration and scope, notably without any real military integration component. Upon completion of the two-day orientation, individuals leave the embassy to join their teams and the team-building process begins. Unfortunately, this is very late in the game to begin team integration. To be effective, the preparation pipeline must—

- Expand to begin at the beginning prior to deployment.
- Provide deeper insight into the nature of the mission.
- Broaden its focus to include critical team elements, especially military interaction.

### **The Near Team**

The concept of embedded teams in the Task Force Marne context exists on two levels. At one level is the larger comprehensive team, embodied by the brigade combat team, but comprised of the full spectrum of actors directing their energies toward influencing the same territory, service sector, or population segment assigned to the embedded provincial reconstruction team.<sup>20</sup> But before the larger team is established, there is the embedded provincial reconstruction team itself, the “near team.” Its internal composition, interpersonal dynamics, and ability to produce a cohesive and relevant product or service is the near team. Efforts to build this team should be ongoing and must begin early in the process. To synchronize the team, Department of State should collaborate with coordinators from the partner agencies and with Office of Provincial Affairs to identify the specific requirements. They should develop embedded provincial reconstruction team templates for the projected brigade locations. These agencies should then identify the personnel they intend to assign to the projected vacancies. In this fashion, the team will begin to take shape, removing much uncertainty. Each location will be different and the environment retains its fluid nature. However, this method identifies team members and tailors them to a template of specific requirements early in the process. Once identified, these team members can communicate among themselves and establish crucial internal relationships with their currently serving counterparts.

### **The Full Team**

As author Shawn Dorman wrote, “Joining military and civilian personnel together for a joint mission is a tall order requiring, among other things, the bridging of cultural divides.”<sup>21</sup> Building this bridge should not begin at the point of arrival. Even if the embedded provincial reconstruction team manages to achieve a degree of internal harmony and function, acceptance among their military counterparts (and their eventual integration into all brigade operations) is a necessity. Historically, individuals have discovered ways to accelerate this process. One case in point is the “Dog-face Diplomat,” Howard Van Vranken, who clearly demonstrated his desire to be part of the team and thus made the integration process much smoother.<sup>22</sup> However, more can be done to institutionalize this integration and set conditions for immediate, on-the-ground impact. Early contact by at least the key members or even just the team leader can help reduce the uncertainties and delays that characterize the beginning of any integration process. Brigade combat teams must gain confidence in the embedded provincial reconstruction team’s collective counsel, even if its insight reveals that development and other improvements will occur at a seemingly glacial pace.<sup>23</sup> Those in the embedded provincial reconstruction team must learn to

appreciate the military's unique organizational culture. After all, as one team member put it, "You'll not be living alongside a military culture; you'll be living in the military."<sup>24</sup>

Military units embark upon impressively elaborate training exercises prior to deployment. At complexes erected to simulate Iraqi streetscapes, actors role-play local populations and key personalities. Simulated munitions replicate the noise and chaos of battle to create a truly realistic training environment. Just as the brigade strives to ensure that their troops are as prepared as they can possibly be when they encounter the enemy, the embedded provincial reconstruction team should be represented at all of these significant exercises. Beyond the individual training value of these events, one cannot overstate the trust, understanding, and general team-building opportunities of these exercises. Commanders rightfully protest when they must train without even secondary weapons systems. Most acknowledge the importance of stability operations and the role embedded provincial reconstruction teams play in this operational effort. Commanders should insist on team participation at these training events, and embedded personnel should insist on this opportunity to prepare their team for its role.



**Figure 4-2. Howard Van Vranken, a representative from the Babil Provincial Reconstruction Team, talks to Iraqi children outside the General Cultural Center in Iskandariyah, Iraq, 3 December 2008.  
Photo by U.S. Navy, Petty Officer 2d Class James Wagner**

This early collaboration is not without precedent. Training iterations prior to Bosnia deployments brought together military elements and a training cadre of civilians playing the role of positions they held during previous deployments. In addition, the Pentagon is currently employing a program that pairs members of a "human terrain team" with the units they will support on deployment.<sup>25</sup> These cultural experts join their units well in advance of the deployment and participate throughout the train-up period to shape the unit's combat preparation and carry on into actual operations once deployed.

While unable to immediately affect those currently on the ground, these recommendations are all within reach for the next rotation of war fighters and their civilian teammates. If the embedded

provincial reconstruction teams are to achieve their full potential as pivotal components in the rising importance of stability operations, bureaucratic hurdles inherent in this progress must be minimized.

### Effectiveness

The embedded provincial reconstruction team finds its niche as an accepted member of the brigade combat team. When a battlefield's rubble is freshly formed, the embedded team is best positioned to deliver its expertise: picking up and bolstering worthy leaders, increasing the capacity of local institutions, and mentoring all sides. Coalition forces, men-on-the-street, and local leaders all need mentoring on the structures, formalities, and mechanisms that have proven successful in other strife-torn countries.

Through an interagency process that identifies embedded provincial reconstruction team personnel (and codifies the team-building, preparation, and integration processes), there is potential to make the teams much more effective. Through early integration, the team will serve as a lens to view the operational environment in its many facets, including those perspectives that are beyond the scope of traditional military strengths. Team integration of military and civilian talent, resources, and expertise can better enable "winning the Nation's wars by fighting within an interdependent joint team."<sup>26</sup>

Embedded provincial reconstruction teams have borne the burden of interagency hopes and fears in the most unforgiving of environments. War and political scrutiny have forged the civil-military construct into a rough tool for U.S. foreign policy at the focal point of the War on Terrorism. In the Task Force Marne operational environment of Iraq, this trial by fire has exposed imperfections, and there is clearly room for significant refinement. However, a unique capacity is also clear. The embedded teams demonstrated potential, and successes point to an enduring value in making these teams a permanent fixture in force structure.

### Endnotes

1. FM 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office [GPO], 27 February 2008), foreword.
2. A provincial reconstruction team is a unit consisting of military officers, diplomats, and reconstruction subject matter experts that work to support reconstruction efforts. An embedded provincial reconstruction team (ePRT) works locally with a brigade combat team (BCT).
3. While the speech itself does refer to doubling the number of provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), the ePRT concept is not directly mentioned. However, the accompanying fact sheet distributed by the White House explicitly states as a key element: "Establish PRT-capability within maneuver brigade combat teams (BCTs)." <[www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-3.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-3.html)> ( 23 April 2009).
4. *Provincial Reconstruction Team Playbook* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, September 2007), 69.
5. "...paired PRTs—so named because of their specific alignment with geographic provinces and whose principle focus is the provincial government," COL Ralph Baker, statement before the House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations on Provincial Reconstruction Team Programs, 4 October 2007.
6. Early descriptions of Multi-National Division-Center's ePRTs called for no less than 7 personnel as a starting point, by late 2007 briefings cited requirements for 11 personnel at Baghdad 4; and 7 personnel each at North Babil, Baghdad 7, and Baghdad 8.
7. Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors*, United States Army in World War II Special Studies (Washington DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1964), 31-32.

8. At the close of World War II, the United States provided brevet promotions to civilians with certain expertise, allowing them to integrate into the post-conflict environment as uniformed members of the overall reconstruction effort. This included the formation of the “Military Government” specialty, the precursor to today’s Civil Affairs branch and military occupational specialty. “The effectiveness of CORDS [Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support] was a function of integrated civilian and military teams at every level of society in Vietnam. From district to province to national level, U.S. advisors and interagency partners worked closely with their Vietnamese counterparts . . . and ensured that military and civilian agencies worked closely together . . . Success in meeting basic needs of the populace led, in turn, to improved intelligence . . .” FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 15 December 2006), 2-12.

9. Ibid., 1-27. “While security is essential to setting the stage for overall progress, lasting victory comes from a vibrant economy, political participation, and restored hope.”

10. FM 3-24, 2-9.

11. When walking through Task Force Marne Headquarters, it is difficult to miss the large banners that proclaim “No Patience!” or signs fashioned like street warnings depicting the word “Patience” with a red line through it.

12. The United States Agency for International Development’s *Republic of Iraq District Government Field Manual*, vol. I, July 2007, vers. 1; addresses “local-level authorities” as those below Provincial or Governorate level, specifically identifying qadas (counties) and nahias (neighborhoods), 14.

13. *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MS: Merriam-Webster Inc., 2003), 1282.

14. The transformation of Jurf as Sukr. Decimated by political strife and the recent ravages of combat, the town of Jurf as Sukr was seemingly more a candidate for demolition than development. Its abandoned business stalls and the town center stood vacant. However, a vigilant military presence allowed for the seeds of a considered and deliberate revitalization program to take root. The collaborative efforts of ePRT expertise and military resources produced a noteworthy outcome. In the fall of 2007, Dr. Louis Tatem was the United States Agency for International Development representative with the North Babil ePRT that supported in turn both the 4/25 and 4/3 brigade combat teams. Drawing upon his numerous years in post-conflict and developing environments throughout East Asia and Europe, he developed a multi-faceted micro-grant program that served as the cornerstone of the revitalization effort. Counseling against a less nuanced approach employed by military units elsewhere, Dr. Tatem and the ePRT capitalized on strong social pressures at play within Iraqi culture to provide small grants to Iraqis. The intent of these programs is to provide scarce venture capital to allow an economic base to take root. With funding in the form of the Commander’s Emergency Response Program, and dollars and security from the BCT in place, Dr. Tatem first employed a market survey to understand where the populace obtained their goods and why there would be change. Then, he planned the market expansion in deliberate stages to ensure the populace was sincere and to filter individuals as well as businesses and markets. After screening applicants for proven social standing and reasoned proposals, those initially selected for grants then received basic bookkeeping training. The initial grant recipients felt both the collective pressure and the support of the community, as their results would determine the continuation of the program. This group dynamic served as a far more effective check against fraud or abuse than could any other mechanism. Micro-grant initiatives elsewhere have run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars and have focused on speed of distribution above thoroughness of process, resulting in limited success. By contrast, at a cost of well under \$20,000, Jurf as Sukr is now a social center with more than 40 operational shops. This infused vitality was instrumental in securing funding from the Shi’a dominated provincial government to pave the main thoroughfare of this Sunni community. The resurrection of this now vibrant community owes its existence to the combined efforts of the BCT and the experience and knowledge of ePRT personnel.

15. Michael Hanlon and Kenneth Pollack, “Iraq Trip Report,” Brookings Institute (August 2007), 10.

16. Shawn Dorman, “Iraq PRTs: Pins on a Map,” *Foreign Service Journal* (March 2007), 24.

17. A recurrent joke about Baghdad 7 ePRT is “How many people are on the ePRT? Two, and one of them is on leave.” This underscores the pervasiveness of the manning problem but overstates the reality, as this specific PRT has strong military staff support.

18. This refers to actual extreme individual instances; aged in their middle 70s, and a gross body size that limited their capacity to wear Personal Protective Equipment (body armor) or to travel in the confined spaces of military vehicles

19. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, “Review of the Effectiveness of the Provincial Reconstruction Team Program in Iraq,” 18 October 2007, Arlington, VA, 17.

20. This includes, certainly, the many manifestations of civilian actors in the area, to include nongovernment organizations, independent initiatives of U.S. government agencies and their implementing partners. However, this also differentiates the separate layers of military presence as well. As CPT Jeremiah Fritz, ePRT Baghdad 7 Governance Lead puts it, “The ePRTs must work with the bde staff, but each battalion has ownership of the physical space and is of course then divided into companies and sometimes into platoons. Therefore we have to negotiate our way through myriad different approaches to non-lethal operations. All these personalities collide in ‘support’ of a single piece of ground.”

21. Dorman, 27.

22. Dog-face diplomat. The military is an organization that promotes the team concept and esprit de corps through a phalanx of traditions and ritual. The main element comprising Task Force Marne is the Third Infantry Division, whose members are respectfully referred to as “Dog-Face” Soldiers, a tradition stemming from World War II. Each morning at division headquarters, Soldiers stand and sing the Dog-Face Soldier song. Howard Van Vranken, ePRT team leader, presented a section of the daily battle-update-brief to the Third Infantry Division commanding general MG Rick Lynch, as well as the brigade’s commanders and assorted leadership of Multi-National Division-Center gathered there. He began with, “Good evening, Sir. It’s another great day to be a Dog-Face Diplomat.”

23. “The main point of divergence is in the time horizon,” says foreign service officer Chuck Hunter, team leader for Provincial Reconstruction Team Babil, “with the military focused on short-term effects and State/USAID concerned more with long term outcomes.” Dorman, 29.

24. Horacio Ureta, “Bidding Advice from PRT Anbar,” *Foreign Service Journal* (March 2007), 24.

25. John Vandiver, “Cultural Advisors to Join 1AD for Next Iraq Tour,” *Star and Stripes* European Edition (26 March 2008), <[www.stripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=53600](http://www.stripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=53600)> (23 April 2009).

26. FM 3-0, viii.

## **BGE Accomplishments: Training and Education Work Group**

**Dr. Troy Messer**

Reprinted with permission from the January–April 2009 issue of *Engineer*.

The United States Army Engineer School, Directorate of Training and Leader Development (DOTLD) and Department of Instruction (DOI) are leaning hard into the flywheel. Here at the School, the DOTLD team is employing and empowering the right people to develop and deliver *Building Great Engineers* (BGE) initiatives. Recent actions include expanding the engineering body of knowledge with academia and partners using joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) training events; integrating gaming and technology into the classroom; and expanding leader development and education (LDE) initiatives that include degree program opportunities and joint engineer training partnerships with other Services.

### **Body of Knowledge**

DOI invited Dr. Brock Barry, who will soon be a faculty member of the United States Military Academy (USMA) and Professor in the Department of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, to the Engineer School in February 2009 for an in-depth orientation of the engineer enlisted training program. The briefings highlighted vertical, horizontal, general, and combat engineering at Brown Hall and the Million Dollar Hole training sites. Dr. Barry's expertise in engineering education was turned toward assessing engineer officer education, covering the Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) III, the 210A Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC), and the Engineer Captains Career Course (ECCC). On the surface, this may not seem to have a high payoff for training and education, but when you consider that Dr. Barry is one of the country's first doctors of philosophy in engineering education, this takes on a whole new meaning. He will serve as a direct link between USMA and the Engineer School in improving the cradle-to-grave education lifecycle of engineers. DOTLD is participating with USMA's Master Teacher Certification program and looking for opportunities to partner with the USMA Engineering Department, starting with Dr. Barry speaking at the 2009 ENFORCE training and education workshop.

### **JIIM Training Events**

We are seeking every opportunity to expand engineer officer curriculums into the JIIM context. Guest speakers from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and State Emergency Management Agency provide program overviews to ECCC students in their general engineering module. And recently, selected ECCC small group instructors (SGIs) and ECCC students were given the opportunity to attend the Joint Engineer Operations Course (JEOC).

Mr. Andrew Bell, military delegate of the ICRC, visited Fort Leonard Wood to address the 01-09 ECCC class on 24 February 2009. The subject was the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in conflict zones. He placed the ICRC in context with the thousands of other NGOs operating worldwide and further defined the mission, objectives, and activities in current conflict locations (such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa). His defining the role of ICRC, the American Red Cross, and Red Crescent Societies engendered a high level of interest and interaction from the students.

The ECCC hosted Structural Assessment Visual Evaluation (SAVE) training on 12 February 2009 to increase technical competency and partner with academia (Missouri University of Science and Technology) and federal, state, and local governments. The training, sponsored by the Fort Leonard Wood Chapter, Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), brought the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) SAVE coalition to Fort Leonard Wood. The training taught 64 ECCC students, 2 ECCC cadre, a Directorate of Contracting employee from Fort Leonard Wood, and 6 state and local emergency management personnel in preparation for assessing building structures affected by earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, or natural disasters that cause structural damages for both domestic and theater applications. The student comments were best reflected in this one comment: “It was an awesome experience, and I can speak for many of my peers when I say that the information we’ve drawn from just this one event will pay huge dividends in our future deployments. The application to our work in Iraq and Afghanistan is obvious. Thanks so much!” All students were offered the opportunity to obtain certification along with their completion-of-training certificate.

DOI is integrating as many curriculum advances as it can. Some of the advances include sending ECCC students and SGIs to JEOC and piloting contracting officer’s representative (COR) training and environmental training and education. Two ECCC SGIs and three students will have the opportunity to attend the JEOC hosted at Fort Leonard Wood on 13–17 April 2009. The JEOC is just one training opportunity that ECCC and BOLC students can take advantage of if they test out of certain modules in general engineering and basic demolitions.

The United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC); Human Resources Command (HRC); and the Department of the Army Operations and Plans (G3), Civil Affairs (G5), and Information Operations Staff Officer (G7) approved DOI to pilot three days of COR training for the ECCC, Engineer BOLC, WOBC, 21H Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC) and Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC), and 21N BNCOC and ANCOC. The 20 hours include the minimum essential training requirement to become a COR according to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and TRADOC Regulation 5-14, *Acquisition Management and Oversight*, dated January 2009. DOI has trained a total of 328 students since June 2008 (86 BOLC, 35 WOBC, 204 ECCC, 57 21H BNCOC and ANCOC, and 11 21N ANCOC students) in the following subject areas (located at <http://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/aitas>):

- CLC 106 – Contracting Officer Representative With a Mission Focus (minimum 8-hour requirement)
- CLC 011 – Contracting for the Rest of Us
- CLM 024 – Contracting Overview
- CLM 003 – Ethics Training for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (AT&L) Workforce

DOI and the Directorate of Environmental Integration (DEI), in response to surveys of 125 ECCC students and field commander comments, assessed environmental compliance in the curriculums. As a result of the assessment, DOI and DEI are partnering to gain approval for a pilot, three days of environmental training and education for the Engineer BOLC and four days for the ECCC and WOBC. In order for U.S. troops to be out of Iraq by 2012, Multinational Corps–Iraq (MNC–I) C7 (senior staff engineer in Iraq) indicates this training gap must be

addressed. Current environmental understanding needed to support the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) process is inadequate. The pilots will address training and education in designing, building, and maintaining solid waste and wastewater systems and conducting environmental baseline surveys.

### **Gaming and Technology**

Gaming and technology in the classroom are becoming the new enablers to overcome instructor personnel shortages and the constraint to grow engineer courses. DOI has implemented several new technology initiatives in the following BOLC areas:

- General Engineering Division – Use of the Turning Point Classroom Response System (CRS)
- Combat Engineering Division – DARWARS Ambush! and Virtual Battle Space 2 (VBS2)<sup>TM</sup> Route Clearance Gaming Software
- Officer Training Development Division (OTDD) – Implementing Gameshow Pro for classroom learning

DOTLD is also seeking funding for laptop computers in the classroom. The integration of these technologies will create challenging student-centered learning and collaboration. Current technology trends in civilian and military academia, such as USMA, Fort Knox Armor School Maneuver Captains Career Course, Armor BOLC, and Virginia Technical College of Engineering have all adopted the same or equal classroom technologies (to include laptops) as learning multipliers, a best practice by any standard.

### **Degree Program Opportunities**

Currently the Engineer School participates with several universities with branches at Fort Leonard Wood to provide cooperative credit, master's degree programs such as engineering management, civil engineering, geological engineering, and public and business administration. From 1995 until the present, 427 students have graduated with a degree in engineering management, 319 in civil engineering, and 189 in geological engineering. Currently, 15 students are enrolled in a degree program in engineering management, 1 in civil engineering, and 29 in geological engineering. While the opportunity is now only provided to ECCC graduates, Engineer School cadre and the Fort Leonard Wood Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy are forming an exploration committee to conduct a limited pilot of this program with NCOs and junior officers (BOLC, WOES, 21B BNCOC and ANCOC, 21H BNCOC and ANCOC, and 21N BNCOC and ANCOC graduates).

### **Joint Engineer Training Partnerships**

DOI is actively collaborating with the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) to conduct a pilot exchange of program material and course seats. It has been discussed as an initial way ahead that two to five ECCC students each quarter could attend AFIT's WMGT 585, Contingency Engineer Command Course, depending on AFIT course fill, and continue to discuss the possibility of seats in WMGT 570, Civil Engineer Superintendent Course, and WMGT 436, Operations Course, in order to gain a joint context between the two Service engineer schools. Additionally, DOI would provide Army engineer lesson(s) at a 101 level to various AFIT

leader courses focusing on types of operations orders, fragmentary orders, and warning orders; mobility; countermobility; assured mobility; and counterinsurgency. This partnership would allow AFIT to attend video teleconferences (VTCs) to gain awareness of current Army engineer theater operation events through monthly and quarterly secure VTCs, such as Multinational Coalition Forces–Iraq, Fusion Cell, Worldwide Engineer VTC, and the Engineer Training Support Network (ETSN).

### **Summary**

DOI, in support of the *Building Great Engineers* Campaign Plan, is making deliberate and positive progress. We continue to engage in new initiatives such as the body of knowledge, technology in the classrooms, and JIIM partnerships. We encourage positive and negative constructive feedback from the field so that we can gauge our true progress.

## Law-Enforcement Professionals and the Army

CPT Timothy K. Hsia

Reprinted with permission from the July 2008 issue of *ARMY*.

The current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have greatly tested the Army's manpower and equipment. The Army has responded to the constantly changing threat environment by researching new technologies and by better equipping soldiers with the latest gear in order to increase the survivability and lethality of deployed units.

But the emphasis in adapting to new threats posed by the enemy is not strictly limited to technological advances or equipment. The military has augmented units with additional enablers, such as specialized nonmilitary teams. One example is the much publicized and controversial human terrain team. Other enablers in Iraq, however, such as law-enforcement professionals (LEPs), have embedded with units and are currently influencing the operational picture within Army units. These contracted former law-enforcement individuals have assisted military units in numerous capacities, from instructing soldiers to hone their tactical questioning techniques to aiding platoons with sensitive sight exploitation (SSE) after raids.



**Figure 6-1. Law-enforcement professionals (LEPs) embedded with 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, collect evidence at the scene of a house-borne improvised explosive device in the Diyala River Valley, Iraq. Contracted civilians, LEPs provide soldiers expertise and training in collecting, refining and extrapolating intelligence. Photographs by the author.**

The LEP program resulted from the Army's awareness that too much actionable and incriminating evidence was being lost because of soldiers' lack of police skills. Soldiers inadvertently committed several basic law enforcement mistakes while on patrols. These mistakes ranged from failing to gather up properly all available evidence from a scene and soldiers inadvertently placing their fingertips on captured equipment, to failing to follow a logical course of questioning when interrogating a suspect. In essence, the Army realized that in counterinsurgency, soldiers on the ground needed additional assistance with collecting, refining, data mining and extrapolating intelligence as the result of a raid or from a cache. This collected intelligence, which might have otherwise been lost because of hastiness, could then potentially lead to the capture and defeat of remaining insurgent cell leaders. The solution to the Army's

predicament of how to better equip units with the skill sets necessary to capture insurgents and criminals was to hire former law-enforcement professionals. These LEPs would assist military units in further reducing the loop between actionable intelligence and operations.



**Figure 6-2. LEP Donnie Young with an Afghan narcotics police officer. The LED program was conceived by the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization.**

The LEP program is the brainchild of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO). The LEP objective is to provide “the capability to conduct criminal-enterprise analysis in order to facilitate methods to identify, monitor, penetrate, interdict and suppress criminal networks in support of the C-IED [counter-improvised explosive device] mission.” According to the JIEDDO web site, LEPs’ “insights into the techniques and patterns of gangs and organized crime have significantly improved commanders’ efforts to target IED networks.”

LEPs are contracted civilians, all of whom have at least secret-level security clearances. There are currently around 95 LEPs in Iraq and 30 in Afghanistan. The LEP program is divided into those who serve at the brigade level (LEP 1) and those embedded to battalions (LEP 2). LEP 1 individuals focus on criminal analysis, including targeting and tracking insurgents. The majority of these individuals have backgrounds in federal law enforcement and include FBI agents, Drug Enforcement Agency agents, Secret Service agents and even retired border-patrol agents. LEP 2 individuals are seasoned law-enforcement policemen who have worked with various urban police departments across the United States, including New York City, Chicago, St. Louis and Los Angeles. Many LEP 2 individuals have worked as undercover operatives, have expertise in cases relating to street gangs and large-scale criminal enterprises, and have often been involved in federal task forces.



**Figure 6-3. A LEP and soldiers of 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, sift through debris to collect evidence. LEPs are often more patient and attuned to details than the uninitiated soldier, whose mission has traditionally been capturing detainees rather than cataloguing evidence.**

Before deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan, LEPs train in Virginia for roughly two months, focusing on IED defeat in terms of targeting and researching common enemy tactics, techniques and procedures that deployed soldiers encounter. LEPs have an initial one-year contract but can opt to extend it. The LEP program initially had LEPs embedded with a unit six months prior to deployment, but this was found to be too time-consuming for LEPs who would end up being separated from their families for up to 18 months at a time.

Some soldiers are guarded when first introduced to LEPs. Soldiers occasionally incorrectly assess LEPs as possible criminal-investigative detectives who are sent in by superiors to analyze and question soldiers' actions while on patrols. This wariness quickly dissolves after LEPs join the soldiers in numerous combat patrols.

When LEPs approach a site, they are often more circumspect, patient and attuned to the details than the average soldier. For the soldier, the capture of the detainee has typically been viewed as the end of the tactical operation. After a raid, a soldier's adrenaline subsides, fatigue begins to creep in and subordinates are anxious to head back to base for a warm meal. Although tactical victory has been achieved with the capture of a detainee, victory can be fleeting if soldiers on the ground do not properly catalogue evidence and ask probing tactical questions. Only when a detainee and a site are properly exploited can the tactical victory translate to operations of strategic value. LEPs, in sharp contrast to soldiers, view the capture of the detainee as the beginning of the operation. To LEPs, this is when work must be done immediately in order to collect additional intelligence, refine detainee packets or conduct link analysis between previous sites and current operations.

Military units now use the number of captured detainees as a rubric for success. What body counts were to the Vietnam era, detainee numbers are to today's Soldiers. What separates good military units from average ones is their ability to see that captured insurgents are tracked after

the point of detention. A detainee released immediately after being captured essentially nulls the unit's actions in detaining the individual in the first place. Detainees are often released by higher headquarters several days after being captured because of weak detainee packets. Roughly more than one out of 10 detainees captured is eventually released. In certain units, one out of five Iraqis detained is eventually released for multiple reasons including poor evidence handling and lack of incriminating information.

Compounding the military's problem of capturing and detaining violent insurgents is the fact that many insurgents have become immunized to American military police methods and interrogation techniques. After five years of American presence, many hard-core insurgents have become schooled in the U.S. military's operating procedures concerning detainees. Insurgents simply clam up, or worse, they spread dissension and lies in order to further obfuscate our intelligence. Captured Iraqis have sown further confusion into U.S. military intelligence by seeding spurious reports. It is often impossible to comprehend what exactly is happening in a specific locale by simply reading intelligence summaries. Different detainees will spout different stories concerning who is working against Coalition forces. In essence, in some areas of Iraq and Afghanistan, the war has devolved into a pseudo-gangland setting where each sect or cell competes against the other by seeking to portray the other sect or group as guilty.

LEPs have assisted military units by cutting through this fog of insurgency. They heavily scrutinize detainee packets before packets are passed on to higher commands. Military units have found LEPs to be most effective as intermediaries between their intelligence section and their staff judge advocate section. LEPs are best positioned to review detainee packets because they understand exactly what information is needed in order to put away a detainee, while also providing a link to intelligence sections by highlighting certain trends that could possibly be analyzed to facilitate operations and intelligence briefs.

The success of LEPs is also unit driven. Certain units have had success with LEPs because they acknowledge inherent weaknesses within their intelligence sections and tactical human intelligence teams. On the other hand, some units still see LEPs as merely an encumbrance, with little to contribute.

The skills that LEPs possess are not beyond the means of the typical infantry soldier. Nonetheless, these are skills that must be learned through continual practice. SSE requires rigorous discipline and a calm, analytical mental state. Such attributes are difficult to achieve immediately after a direct-fire engagement or while a detainee's wife or children are crying in the courtyard. Still, soldiers with the aid of LEPs have greatly improved their police and investigative skills. Today's soldiers are versatile and understand the importance of biometrics, fingerprints, tactical questioning, and detailed descriptions concerning raids and captured insurgents. These skills, complemented by cultural understanding, are greatly contributing to the success of the American military at the ground level.

Embedded LEPs have also served as instructors in the units to which they are assigned. They have heightened the awareness of both leaders and soldiers of the detective-like approach the military must use when approaching sensitive areas such as an IED blast site, discovered cache or mass gravesite. Traditionally, combat infantry units have developed internal standard operating procedures that have emplaced organic enemy prisoner of war (EPW) teams within each platoon. The EPW team is modeled and best designed for conventional wars. Infantry platoons need to go further than having EPW teams—they also need to develop organic SSE teams. Units preparing to deploy to Iraq should emphasize the need to develop these teams at the

platoon level in order to incorporate skills relating to law-enforcement personnel that are used on a daily basis in the Army's present conflicts.



**Figure 6-4. LEP Young trains Afghan police and soldiers in marksmanship. Embedded LEPs serve as instructors, and the success of the program is evident in the careful way soldiers gather available evidence, handle captured weapons, and avoid mixing their fingerprints with those on insurgents' equipment.**

The current LEP program has succeeded in accomplishing its stated mission. As a result, the program managers are escalating the program so that more LEPs are introduced and embedded into military units. The success of the LEPs is evident on a daily basis. Soldiers no longer carelessly handle captured weapons; instead, they carry captured weapons only by the tip of the barrel and the buttstock. Soldiers are careful not to mix their fingerprints with those on captured insurgent equipment so that further fingerprint analysis can be done on it. Another added component LEPs have provided is the mental approach and the paradigm of having a longer time horizon. LEPs temper the soldierly instinct to desire instant results. Instead, soldiers now understand that sometimes catching criminals and insurgents requires a longer time horizon. The conflicts today in Iraq and Afghanistan require soldiers to have a Dick Tracy skill set. Infantry soldiers must not only close with and destroy the enemy—they also need to ensure that evidence collection and detainee packets are thorough and detailed.



## **NATO: Education and Training**

### **NATO Website**

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NATO conducts education and training to ensure its forces are effective and interoperable, as part of its cooperation with non-member countries, and as part of NATO-led operations.

Historically, NATO education and training has been focused on ensuring that military forces from member countries can work together effectively in operations and missions. Today, NATO education and training functions have expanded significantly. NATO has a network of training schools and institutions, conducts regular exercises and runs training programs as far away as Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa.

The three main purposes are to enhance the interoperability and effectiveness of NATO-led multinational forces, assist Partner countries in their reform efforts, and help bring peace and stability to crisis-hit areas.

- Purpose and practical implementation
- The training bodies and institutions
- Education and training: a key activity since 1949

### **Purpose and Practical Implementation**

#### **Enhancing interoperability**

Troops for NATO operations are drawn from the forces of NATO member and Partner countries, as well as non-NATO and non-Partner countries such as New Zealand and Australia.

Ensuring that these multinational forces can work together effectively despite differences in tactics, doctrine, training, structures, and language is a priority for NATO. This “interoperability” is built in a number of ways.

#### **Courses and seminars**

NATO’s network of training institutions offers a broad range of courses on both strategic and operational issues. While courses differ, they tend to focus on knowledge and skills required by individuals who will occupy senior or specialized positions within the structure of the Alliance, or who hold NATO-related posts in their own countries.

For instance, the NATO Defense College in Rome, Italy, is NATO’s primary strategic-level educational facility and includes areas of study such as trends in the international security environment and their potential effects on NATO countries. It provides training for senior commanders whereas the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, is the primary operational-level training centre for students. Operational-level training focuses on joint planning of NATO operations, logistics, communications, civil emergency planning, or civil-military cooperation.

Courses can last anywhere from a day to several months depending on the type of activity. The Senior Course at the NATO Defense College, for instance, is a six-month course for senior commanders, whereas the civil-military cooperation course at the NATO School lasts a week and is tailored to mid-level operators.

As well as being open to personnel from NATO member countries, many courses and seminars are available to personnel from countries participating in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, Mediterranean Dialogue and Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, as well as selected "contact countries" (non-member and non-Partner countries). Some are also open to civilian participants.

### **Exercises**

Exercises provide opportunities to test and validate all aspects of NATO operations, including procedures, concepts, systems, and tactics. They also build and reinforce interoperability by focusing on practical training for personnel from NATO countries and countries with which the Alliance cooperates.

During an exercise, forces will typically be asked to respond to a fictional scenario that approximates what might occur in real life. This allows them to employ their previous training and experience in a practical way, and increases their level of readiness should they be deployed in a crisis.

Exercises cover the full range of military operations, from combat to humanitarian relief to stabilization and reconstruction. They can vary in length and scope, from a few senior officers working on an isolated problem to full-scale combat scenarios involving aircraft, ships, artillery pieces, armored vehicles and thousands of troops. NATO also exercises its strategic-level political and military arrangements. This ensures that its consultation and decision-making architecture is refined and that key players are kept aware of how the Alliance works.

NATO partners are heavily involved in exercises as participants and hosts through the Military Training and Education Program.

### **Experimentation and development**

NATO is constantly trying to improve the way its forces operate. In line with its transformation agenda, the Alliance is continuing to focus on development of new concepts and capabilities to ensure future NATO forces are trained and equipped to the highest possible standard.

NATO countries conduct their own experimentation. The Alliance — through Allied Command Transformation and its subordinate bodies — provides a forum for members to engage in knowledge-sharing regarding concepts and capabilities.

NATO also develops new concepts and capabilities to benefit NATO forces. For instance, the NATO Undersea Research Centre in La Spezia, Italy, has developed technologies and training for underwater reconnaissance and port protection. A separate initiative called the "NATO Friendly Force Tracker" helps to promote interoperability and is being employed in Afghanistan to help NATO-led forces better coordinate their actions and reduce the possibility of casualties.

## **Working with NATO Partners on defense reform**

NATO members have reduced levels of military personnel, equipment and bases from Cold War levels, and transformed their forces to meet today's needs. Many Partner countries are still going through this process, often with scarce resources and limited expertise.

The Alliance's education and training programs — initially focused on increasing interoperability between NATO and Partner forces — have been expanded to provide a means for members and Partners to collaborate on education and training for defense reform. These include courses and seminars, a training network, tailor-made assistance and access to NATO experts.

Furthermore, in 2005, NATO began development of an "Education and Training for Defense Reform" initiative that provides a framework for cooperation for both military and civilian personnel.

### **Courses, seminars and exercises**

Countries which work with NATO through its various cooperation frameworks, as well as personnel from so-called "contact countries," are able to participate in an array of NATO education and training activities — courses, roundtables, seminars, and workshops.

### **Partnership education and training network**

In addition to NATO-funded institutions such as the NATO Defense College and NATO School, member and Partner countries have established a specialized network of institutions that support enhanced education and training. See the section "The training bodies and institutions" for detailed information on this network.

### **Tailor-made education and training**

Each country participating in defense reform, in consultation with NATO, agrees on an individualized program which varies in depth and breadth, depending on its interests and level of commitment and cooperation. This can include — in addition to participation in courses, seminars, and exercises — tailor-made education and training programs such as on-the-job training, language training, and resettlement and retaining of redundant military personnel.

For instance, in Ukraine NATO has financed and implemented language and management courses in cooperation with Ukraine's National Coordination Centre, which is in charge of the social adaptation of redundant military servicemen.

"Mobile education and training teams" (METTs) are another example of the tools the Alliance employs in response to Partners' defense reform needs. METTs are small groups of trainers who travel to the interested countries to deliver training tailored to the local context.

### **Advice and expertise**

NATO countries are among the most advanced in the world in terms of defense capabilities. Countries cooperating with the Alliance on defense reform are able take advantage of this expertise. For most countries, this is done through the Partnership for Peace Planning and Review Process (PARP).

Countries with special relationships with NATO can have additional mechanisms for exchanging advice and expertise. For instance, the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defense Reform provides a forum through which consultation can take place on initiatives as diverse as civil-military relations, democratic oversight and civilian management of the armed forces and other security sector agencies, defense planning, policy, strategy, and national security concepts.

### **Training initiative for Mediterranean and Middle East**

A dedicated Middle East faculty has been established at the NATO Defense College in Rome as part of the NATO Regional Cooperation Course.

### **Education and training in NATO-led operations**

NATO's efforts to bring stability to crisis areas go beyond deploying troops. Through training and education programs, NATO is helping countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq develop their own security institutions and provide for their own security.

### **Afghanistan**

An important aspect of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan is assisting the country in developing its security structures and forces. While the United States is the lead country for training the Afghan National Army (ANA), NATO is assisting and supporting this process. This includes special courses to train Afghan soldiers in specific skills and to prepare them to work in tandem with NATO forces. The Alliance has also deployed Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams to Afghan National Army units at various levels of command. These are small groups of experienced officers and non-commissioned officers (NCO) that coach and mentor the ANA units to which they are attached.

In 2006, NATO signed a declaration with Afghanistan, establishing a substantial program of long-term co-operation. The Afghan Cooperation Program provides for further training assistance, including opening NATO courses and partnership activities to Afghan participation, providing advice and expertise on defense reform and the development of security institutions, as well as specific assistance such as language training.

NATO and Russia also are collaborating through the NATO-Russia Council on a counter-narcotics training pilot project tailored to Afghan and Central Asian personnel.

### **The African Union**

At the request of the African Union (AU), NATO assisted the AU (June 2005–end December 2007) in strengthening its peacekeeping force in Darfur in a bid to halt the continuing violence. Initially, NATO's support consisted in training AU troops in strategic-level planning and operational procedures. It provided support to a UN-led map exercise and later, in summer 2006, also provided training assistance in the fields of pre-deployment certification and "lessons learned," as well as information management.

### **Iraq**

Since 2004, NATO has been helping Iraq provide for its own security by training Iraqi personnel and supporting the development of the country's security institutions.

NATO is training and mentoring middle and senior level personnel from the Iraqi security forces in Iraq and outside of Iraq, at NATO schools and training centers. The Alliance also plays a role in coordinating offers of equipment and training from individual NATO and Partner countries.

### **The Training Bodies and Institutions**

There are a number of main bodies through which training is organized and run. Some operate under the direction of the Alliance and others are external, but complementary to Alliance structures.

#### **Allied Command Operations**

Allied Command Operations was created as part of the reorganization of NATO's command structure in 2002. It has the main responsibility for collective training, exercises, and evaluating headquarters and formations.

#### **Allied Command Transformation**

Allied Command Transformation (AC-T) is located in Norfolk, Virginia, and as its name indicates, leads NATO transformation. To help realize this objective, AC-T holds lead responsibility for NATO and PfP joint education, individual training, and associated policy and doctrine development as well as for directing NATO schools. It also works closely with Allied Command Operations to support the planning, execution, and assessment of exercises.

### **NATO's Principal and Ancillary Educational Facilities**

#### **The principal educational facilities**

The NATO Defense College – At the strategic level, the NATO Defense College in Rome is NATO's foremost academic institution. It contributes to Alliance objectives by developing its role as a major centre of education, study and research on transatlantic security issues. Founded in 1951, several thousand senior officers, diplomats, and officials have since passed through its doors.

Its main tasks are to help prepare both civilian and military leaders for senior appointments within NATO; conduct outreach activities directed at PfP and Mediterranean Dialogue countries; and provide fresh perspectives to NATO decision-makers. It also provides an annual venue, through the Conference of Commandants of EAPC Defense Academies, for an exchange of views on how they conduct business. The 2009 Conference will more specifically be dedicated to the Comprehensive Approach, Partnerships and Education.

The NATO School – The NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, operates under the auspices of AC-T, but also supplies training support to operations. It is NATO's key operational-level training facility, providing short-term, multidisciplinary training tailored to military and civilian personnel from NATO, PfP, Mediterranean Dialogue and "contact countries". As part of its support for NATO operations, the NATO School has also hosted personnel from countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, it serves as a facilitator for the harmonization of programs with 15 PfP Training and Education Centers.

The NATO Communications and Information Systems School – Located in Latina, Italy, the NATO Communications and Information Systems School (NCISS) is one of the Alliance’s key training institutions. It provides advanced training for civilian and military personnel from NATO and non-NATO countries in the operation and maintenance of the Alliance’s communications and information systems. Like the NATO School, NCISS falls under the direction of Allied Command Transformation but provides support to NATO-led operations.

### **The ancillary facilities**

Joint Analysis & Lessons Learned Centre – This is NATO’s centre for performing joint analysis of operations, training, exercises and experiments. Part of its responsibilities includes establishing and maintaining an interactive Lessons Learned Database.

Joint Force Training Centre – JFTC conducts training to improve interoperability at the tactical level. It also helps in NATO doctrine development by cooperating with Centers of Excellence.

Joint Warfare Centre – The Joint Warfare Centre and its subordinate body, the Joint Lessons Learned Centre, conduct experimentation, analysis, doctrine development, and exercise evaluation with a particular focus on joint and combined staffs.

NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre – This Centre leads efforts to improve the Alliance’s capability to conduct interdiction operations at sea.

NATO Undersea Research Centre – This institution conducts research and testing to address NATO’s maritime requirements. Activities are carried out to support NATO’s current operational requirements and to support its transformation agenda.

### **Additional training institutions and organizations**

The following training institutions and organizations have a relationship with NATO but are not related to the Alliance in the same way as the NATO Defense College or the NATO School. They are typically administered by sponsor countries, national authorities or civil organizations, but are open to participation by personnel from NATO member and partner countries.

Centres of Excellence – These are training centers that have been recognized by AC-T as providers of high-quality education and training to the Euro-Atlantic community. They span NATO member and Partner countries and provide a broad network of support for NATO education and training activities.

They are funded nationally or multi-nationally and their relationship with NATO is formalized through memoranda of understanding. The first Centers of Excellence to be fully accredited by NATO were the Joint Air Power Competence Centre in Germany, and the Defense Against Terrorism Centre of Excellence in Turkey. Since, then more have been established:

- the Command & Control Centre and the Civilian Military Cooperation Centre in The Netherlands;
- the Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Centre in the United States;
- the Cold Weather Operations Centre in Norway;

- the Joint Air Power Competence Centre, the Confined and Shallow Water Centre and the Military Engineering Centre in Germany;
- the Naval Mine Warfare Centre in Belgium;
- the Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear Defense Centre in the Czech Republic;
- the Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre in Estonia; and
- the Centre for Analysis & Simulation for the Preparation of Air Operations in France.

NATO/Partnership for Peace Education and Training Network – The NATO/Partnership for Peace Education and Training Network was established by AC-T in 2004. It is a structure where military education and training institutions can meet to facilitate the exchange of information and experience, and harmonize activities. This helps avoid duplication of effort.

Partnership for Peace Education and Training Centers – PfP Education and Training Centers focus on the operational and tactical levels. Each one has a different area of expertise and provides enhanced training and facilities for personnel from all PfP countries. There are currently fifteen PfP Training Centers:

- Centre for Operations Preparation (Austria)
- Peace Support Operations Training Centre (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Defense Forces International Centre (Finland)
- UN Training Centre (Germany)
- Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Centre (Greece)
- Regional Training Centre for Defense Resources Management (Romania)
- Crisis Management and Multinational Operations College (Romania)
- National Defense Academy (Slovakia)
- Language Training Centre (Slovenia)
- Armed Forces International Training Centre (Sweden)
- Centre for Security Policy (Switzerland)
- Training Centre (Turkey)
- Training Centre (Ukraine)
- United Kingdom Defense Academy (United Kingdom)
- Naval Postgraduate School (United States)

The NATO School chairs the annual conference of the Commandants of the PfP Education and Training Centers. This program has been opened to the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and to the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI).

Partnership for Peace Simulation Network – The PfP Simulation Network links remote sites via satellite, providing senior commanders and staff officers the means to put into practice various aspects of command and control in realistic scenarios. This initiative supports PfP training by promoting greater interoperability.

Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes – The PfP Consortium was established in 1999 to help promote education in topics related to security. It does this by facilitating cooperation between both civilian and military institutions in NATO and PfP countries in support of NATO priorities. These priorities include programs and initiatives such as the Partnership Action Plan for Defense Institution Building (PAP-DIB) or Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAPs), the Training and Education Enhancement Program (TEEP) and the Education and Training for Defense Reform Initiative. Participating organizations include universities, research institutions and training centers.

The PfP Consortium operates by establishing working groups that bring together experts, policy-makers, and defense and security practitioners to pool information and develop products (such as educational tools or scholarly publications).

Recently the PfP Consortium has produced what is called a reference curriculum on PAP-DIB. This document aims to provide Partner countries with in-depth learning objectives and curriculum support for academic courses focused on reforming or building defense institutions. The PfP Consortium is also running an Educator's Program to familiarize Partners with modern teaching methodologies and is supporting Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan in education-related aspects of their IPAPs.

The George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies forms the Secretariat.

### **Education and training: a key activity since 1949**

Collective education and training has been ongoing since the inception of the Alliance in 1949. Over time, it has expanded dramatically and has become an integral aspect of the Alliance's ability to provide security.

### **Interoperability**

In the early years of the Alliance, NATO forces conducted joint training to strengthen their ability to practice collective defense. In other words, education and training was conducted to ensure that forces were prepared in the case of an attack.

An integrated force under centralized command – An integrated force under centralized command was called for in September 1950. The first Supreme Commander Europe, US General Dwight D. Eisenhower, was appointed in December 1950. Following this appointment, national forces were put under centralized command.

The Alliance's first exercises – The Alliance's first exercises were held in the autumn of 1951. During 1953, there were approximately 100 exercises of various kinds conducted by NATO.

From this point on, NATO forces began to gain cohesion.

Education for individuals – Individual education soon followed. The need for a specialized setting to explore issues unique to the Alliance was first recognized by General Eisenhower in April 1951. The NATO Defense College was inaugurated later that year, on 19 November and was transferred to Rome in 1966, where it is still located.

The NATO Communications and Information Systems School in Latina, Italy was established in 1959, when a civil contractor began to train a small number of NATO personnel on what would become NATO's 'ACE HIGH Communications System.' And on 2 May of the same year, the NATO Undersea Research Centre in La Spezia, Italy was commissioned.

In 1971, the Military Committee established the NATO Training Group. The NATO Training Group met for many years in joint session with the Euro-training sub-group, which was set up to improve multinational training arrangements between European states.

In 1975 the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany, received its charter and present name. For almost twenty five years, its principal focus was on issues relating to NATO collective defense.

### **NATO training opens to partners**

Since the end of the Cold War, the Alliance has increased its political engagement with non-member countries and opened its education and training to these countries.

PfP countries – When NATO invited former Warsaw Pact countries, former Soviet Republics and non-member Western European countries to join the PfP program in 1994, participating countries committed to increase interoperability with NATO forces. This opened the way for joint training and marked the beginning of NATO's support for defense reform.

NATO training institutions soon followed suit. The first officers' course for Partner countries was conducted in October 1994 at the NATO Communications and Information Systems School. Similarly, the NATO Defense College integrated PfP issues into its Senior Course.

Mediterranean Dialogue countries – The Mediterranean Dialogue was likewise created in 1994, initially as a forum for political dialogue. In 1997, at a meeting in Sintra, Portugal, the Alliance decided to open selected military training activities to countries participating in this initiative (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia).

Increasing cooperation with all partners – In 1998, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council approved the creation of the Partnership for Peace Consortium, which included PfP Training Centers and the PfP Simulation Network.

At the 1999 Washington Summit, NATO leaders approved plans for an Enhanced and More Operational Partnership. This enhanced military cooperation through the creation of sub-initiatives such as the Training and Education Enhancement Program (TEEP). In addition, with the revision of the NATO Strategic Concept in 1999, the role of the NATO School was fundamentally altered to include cooperation and dialogue with civilian personnel from non-NATO countries.

In May 2002, the Joint Analysis & Lessons Learned Centre in Monsanto, Portugal was established. This facility's mission is to perform joint analysis and experimentation of operations, training and exercises, also with Partners.

In February 2005, the North Atlantic Council noted the Education and Training for Defense Reform (EfR). EfR helps EAPC educators incorporate principles linked to defense institution building into their curricula. Since the courses are aimed at civil servants and other persons participating in defense institution building, they contribute indirectly to improving defense reform.

### **Transformation through training**

With the creation of the two new strategic commands in 2002, the coordination and coherence of NATO education and training activities was greatly increased. This led to the creation of additional training institutions and initiatives.

New training centers – A Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger, Norway was inaugurated on 23 October 2003.

The Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz, Poland, inaugurated on 31 March 2004, supports training for both NATO and Partner forces to improve joint and combined tactical interoperability. AC-T also developed a NATO/Partnership for Peace Education and Training Network in 2004.

Stepping up training and partnerships – At the 2004 Istanbul Summit, Alliance leaders elevated the Mediterranean Dialogue initiative to a genuine partnership, to include increased participation in exercises and individual training at NATO institutions. Provision was also made for cooperation on defense reform. At the same time, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) was introduced, which paved the way for cooperation between NATO and countries from the broader Middle East in areas such as education and training.

This summit also made provision for Partners to engage in joint training for terrorism and to train jointly with the NATO Response Force.

NATO's efforts on defense reform gained added momentum with the creation of the Partnership Action Plan on Defense Institution Building, which outlines what NATO and Partners want to achieve in this area. Increased emphasis on defense reform meant that the 1999 Training and Education Enhancement Program took on a defense reform role.

The assistance of NATO-led EAPC teams of experts – One concrete element of assistance in education and training is the visits to Partner countries by multinational teams of experts. These NATO-led visits aim to address the various education and training requirements listed in the Action Plans. The South Caucasus countries and Moldova have been targets of such visits; the most recent one took place in March 2009 in Georgia.

**Note:** This article was originally extracted from the NATO website on 13 July 2010. Latest updates can be accessed at <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_49206.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49206.htm?selectedLocale=en)>.

## **Educating the Strategic Corporal: A Paradigm Shift**

**Kevin D. Stringer, Ph.D.**

Reprinted with permission from the September–October 2009 issue of *Military Review*.

In an increasingly complex interagency, joint, and multinational world that oscillates between conventional and nonconventional military missions, transforming noncommissioned officer (NCO) education and leadership development is of paramount importance. The U.S. military assumes that commissioned officers, based upon their level of education and hierarchical roles, will bear the main weight of interagency and intercultural interactions in current and future stability and counterinsurgency operations. That hypothesis is wrong because the era of the “strategic corporal” is upon us. This operative term comes from the article, “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War,” by U.S. Marine Corps General Charles C. Krulak.<sup>1</sup> In it he refers to the inescapable lessons of Somalia and other more recent humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, and traditional operations, where outcomes hinged on decisions made by small-unit leaders. In these situations the individual NCO was the most conspicuous symbol of American foreign policy and influenced not only the immediate tactical situation but also the operational and strategic levels as well. His actions directly affected the outcome of the larger operation. Today’s NCOs fulfill front-line, nonstandard roles by serving as town mayors in Iraq, negotiating with tribal leaders in Afghanistan, and training indigenous forces worldwide. They are strategic assets.

To address these advanced leadership requirements, U.S. Army educational development should expand to include language training, cultural education, and interagency exchange opportunities at the appropriate levels of the noncommissioned officer education system (NCOES). This expansion will prepare strategic corporals for the complex operations confronting the U.S. Army now and in the future. With existing NCO schooling shifting from training to education as NCOs move up the hierarchical ladder in both rank and position, the first steps of change are taking place.<sup>2</sup> This shifting paradigm provides a window of opportunity to add essential language training, cultural education, and interagency exchange opportunities to the NCO educational portfolio. These three areas provide focus for prescriptive recommendations using best practices from other U.S. services for adapting the noncommissioned officer education system.

### **The Need for Military Expertise**

A recent U.S. Joint Forces Command study on the future of warfare suggests high potential for instability around the globe due to demographic, energy, and climate trends. This *Joint Operating Environment 2008* report stated:

The next quarter century will challenge U.S. joint forces with threats and opportunities ranging from regular and irregular wars in remote lands, to relief and reconstruction in crisis zones, to sustained engagement in the global commons.<sup>3</sup>

The analysis implies that U.S. military forces will be engaged in persistent conflict over the next quarter century. This environment will be one where the Army faces adversaries that may be nonstate actors, insurgents, criminals, or dispersed networks of ideological extremists. Distinguishing between combatants and noncombatants will become more and more complex and chaotic since they will be culturally and socially foreign.

Critically, the U.S. Army rarely possesses the language skills or cultural expertise for operating in these regions—the Horn of Africa, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Afghanistan. Language, cultural understanding, and regional knowledge all mesh in different yet complementary ways to produce better intelligence, more credible civil-military operations, and greater insight into the enemy. As noted in the U.S. Joint Forces Command study, “The conduct of war demands a deep understanding of the enemy—his culture, history, geography, religious and ideological motivations, and particularly the huge differences in his perceptions of the external world.”<sup>4</sup> This understanding can only occur with organic language, cultural, and regional competencies starting at the small unit level—the NCO foundation. As one prominent French expert on complex operations said, “Effective leaders of small combat units must think like human intelligence collectors, counterpropaganda operators, nongovernmental organization workers, and negotiators.”<sup>5</sup>

Doctrinally, the Army’s landmark manual on counterinsurgency, Field Manual 3-24, provides valuable insights into what skills and competencies are required for success in the described environment:

It requires Soldiers and Marines to employ a mix of familiar combat tasks and skills more often associated with nonmilitary agencies... It requires leaders at all levels to adjust their approach constantly. ... Soldiers and Marines are expected to be nation builders as well as warriors. They must be prepared to help re-establish institutions and local security forces and assist in rebuilding infrastructure and basic services. ... The list of such tasks is long; performing them involves extensive coordination and cooperation with many intergovernmental, host nation, and international agencies.<sup>6</sup>

Post-Cold War military operations are highly decentralized, requiring men and women at all levels throughout the force to exercise complex leadership and management tasks. In the new world disorder, everybody—NCO, officer, and Soldier—not just the best and the brightest destined for generalship—requires a crucial degree of professional military competence.<sup>7</sup> These trends require the Army to foster a military culture that is aimed at preparing noncommissioned officers to become strategic corporals. As aforementioned, this term refers to the devolution of command responsibility to individuals at lower rank levels in an era of instant communications and pervasive media images.<sup>8</sup> Developing the strategic corporal includes supplementing his traditional military proficiency with cultural and foreign language knowledge and opportunities to work with civilian government and nongovernmental organizations.<sup>9</sup>

### **Education Redesign**

The first steps of change are taking place with the redesign of the Army’s noncommissioned officer education system to meet the needs of the global war on terror. The noncommissioned officer education system is the keystone for NCO development. It provides leader and military occupational skill training in an integrated system of resident education at four levels—primary, basic, advanced, and senior. The updated courses will better prepare Soldiers for the greater decision-making and leadership responsibilities required in the global war on terror. In the words of Command Sergeant Major Ray Chandler at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, “We’ve got a better-educated NCO corps than ever before, so we’ve had to update the curriculum to take advantage of that higher education level, to support the full spectrum of operations in this era of persistent conflict.” He said the new curriculum will focus more on the kind of critical thinking

and problem-solving skills formerly reserved for officer-level instruction.<sup>10</sup> Colonel Don Gentry, commandant of the academy, stated:

They [NCOs] have to be educated . . . they have to understand how to solve complex problems. They have to be critical and creative thinkers, because the situations they are presented with in combat are much more complex than they have been in the past. We are talking evaluation and synthesis, versus just understanding and knowledge.<sup>11</sup>

This educational approach would mirror one view of education for NCOs defined as those activities that aim at developing the knowledge, skills, moral values, and understanding required in all aspects of life, rather than isolated skills and knowledge relating to only a limited field of activity. The essential function of academic education, whether civilian or military, is to develop an individual's intellectual capacity.<sup>12</sup>

Concurrently, this redesign will align the system's content with the curriculum at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The goal is to unify the material to create a more seamless team that speaks the same language and solidifies the relationship between officers and NCOs: "one is the planner, [and] one is the executor at the most fundamental level."<sup>13</sup> According to CGSC deputy director Marvin L. Nickels, "CGSC has made its entire curriculum available to [the] United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, which is in the process of adapting our curriculum to meet their needs." The goal is to have Army field-grade leaders and senior noncommissioned officers share a common frame of reference, so that the single skill set acquired by both types of leaders better supports the commander.<sup>14</sup>

This redesign and curriculum alignment is an ideal opportunity to add relevant "soft skills" education to the Army NCO educational portfolio. Soft skills are those abilities that fall into the range of human dynamics, interpersonal communications and personal relations categories rather than combat skills associated with engaging the adversary by fire and maneuver or other kinetic means. Soft skills facilitate direct engagement of the population through social interaction. The soft skill of foreign language proficiency has a tremendous impact on success in counterinsurgency. Another skill is cross-cultural awareness, and a third is the ability to operate and cooperate within an interagency context.<sup>15</sup>

While there is no doubt that foreign language skills and cultural expertise are critical capabilities needed by today's military to face current challenges, only a small portion of today's Soldiers and leaders possess language skills. Until just recently there was no comprehensive, systematic approach to developing cultural expertise.<sup>16</sup> Today's military should be trained and ready to engage the world with an appreciation of diverse cultures and communicate directly with local citizens. These skills save lives. Whether performing traditional combat missions, or irregular warfare missions, they are critical skills.<sup>17</sup> Verbal communications skills, such as social interaction, negotiation, and critical and creative thinking, are essential tools for leaders at all levels—from NCOs in the squad to colonels at the multi-national force.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, since nonconventional operations are essentially a holistic mix of capabilities drawn from the Army and a host of other federal agencies, interagency exposure and experience is essential, especially for senior NCOs. Thus, language training, cultural education, and interagency exchange opportunities for the NCO represent essential requirements.

## Language Education

As one field grade officer stated:

If all our soldiers spoke Arabic we could have resolved Iraq in two years . . . [The] point is that language is obviously an obstacle to our success, much more so than [culture]. Even a fundamental understanding of the language would have had a significant impact on our ability to operate.<sup>19</sup>

Clifford F. Porter, Command Historian for the Defense Language Institute, noted that—

Truly knowing our enemy requires understanding the culture, politics, and religion of the terrorists, which in turn requires experts in their language. Two early lessons learned from Afghanistan are that foreign language skills were absolutely critical for overthrowing the Taliban regime so quickly and that the military does not have enough foreign language capability. . . . Furthermore, foreign language capability is not only important for intelligence gathering and special operations, it is essential for understanding how the enemy thinks from the strategic to the tactical level of war.<sup>20</sup>

Language affects the intelligence war too. As evidenced by the Russian experience in Chechnya fighting clan and tribal based terrorists, intelligence is a critical factor in counterinsurgencies. Not surprisingly, intelligence success in such a war remains the province of determined human beings, not machines.<sup>21</sup> Given that America's global interests and responsibilities still far exceed its human intelligence capabilities, this lack of language capability has led to a predictable gap in intelligence capability.<sup>22</sup> Limited foreign language capability in intelligence and special operations—as well as other sectors of the government—has already cost lives. Two lessons learned from previous conflicts are that the United States never has enough foreign language capability, and it pays for this deficit in blood.<sup>23</sup>

For the past two years, the Department of Defense has received quarterly foreign language requirements reports from the combatant commands, services, and defense agencies. The reports have shown a marked increase in requirements from 80,000 to 141,000.<sup>24</sup> Interestingly, more than half of the requirements are for basic, low-level skills, reflecting demand for them in the general purpose force.<sup>25</sup> Practical language education should be integrated early in the NCO curriculum to ameliorate effects of the shortage. The goal at this level is basic understanding and communication of the language, not fluency and mastery. Required “tactical” languages like Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Turkish, and Pashto should be the focus. The de facto goal is language basic training, with the further expectation that students are motivated to continue learning the language on their own volition.<sup>26</sup>

For example, upon returning from the initial invasion of Iraq as the commanding general of the 1st Marine Division, General John Mattis prepared for the division's next rotation with predeployment language training. He provided four weeks of basic Arabic language and cultural instruction for 200 Marines, about one per platoon.<sup>27</sup> Mattis recognized that language and cultural ability are force multipliers.<sup>28</sup> His view was that “having someone who can speak Arabic is like having another infantry battalion.”<sup>29</sup> The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services questioned why these lessons had not been institutionalized, providing models for the future.

Integrating such language education into the four levels of Army NCO education (Warrior Leader Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course, U.S. Army Sergeants Major Course) would address this deficiency. Career tracking of Soldiers' language proficiency (and commensurate levels of instruction according to their ability and progression) is one way to achieve this end state while providing the Army NCO with an essential tool for managing complex operational situations.

## **Cultural Knowledge**

While language is important, one should not underestimate how critical cultural understanding is.<sup>30</sup> As the highly respected British strategist Colin S. Gray noted, the American way of war has 12 specific characteristics—one of which is cultural ignorance. He wrote that Americans are not inclined “to be respectful of the belief, habits, and behaviors of other cultures . . . The American way of war has suffered from the self-inflicted damage caused by a failure to understand the enemy of the day.”<sup>31</sup> Retired Israeli General Arie Amit reinforced this view when he told a Washington audience in March 2002 that the United States would not prevail against terrorists unless we understand “their language, their literature, and their poetry,” in short—their culture.<sup>32</sup>

Interaction with the Iraqi people demonstrates the problem. For example, during routine peacekeeping patrols, Iraqi citizens who were upset and angry confronted U.S. forces. The Soldiers' had no means to communicate in Arabic—a helpless, volatile, and extremely dangerous position. They were unable to explain their nonhostile intent or understand the Iraqis' reasons for their angst. An explosive situation for U.S. forces ensued. Fortunately, the commanding officer resorted to communicating through sign language by rendering a passive act of kindness and demonstrating no intent of aggression; the Iraqis responded in kind. This situation was extremely dangerous, escalated quickly, and could have gone terribly wrong. The officer was resourceful and made a good judgment call, but he admitted, “Nobody had prepared him for an angry crowd in an Arab country.”<sup>33</sup> This statement also holds true for all NCOs at the small-unit level in these circumstances. The local population is the center of gravity at the sergeant level. Adequate knowledge about the local culture is paramount for Soldiers' personal safety.<sup>34</sup>

The U.S. Marine Corps provides a best practice educational approach with its clear definition of the “culture learning end state” it wants to achieve. Simply stated:

[It] is not cultural education for the sake of culture, but a reasonable amount of operationally focused training and education to ensure Marines and leaders make informed decisions and understand the cultural impacts of tactical and operational decisions.<sup>35</sup>

To do this, the Marines established the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning to infuse cultural awareness throughout the Corps' training and educational continuum.<sup>36</sup>

For instance, a team of deploying NCOs and enlisted Marines trained for three days at the center. During the first day, there were classes on the history of Afghanistan. Other courses taught the basics of Afghanistan:

- Ethnic groups.
- Languages.

- Geography.
- Climate.
- Tactical considerations of training the Afghanistan National Army.

On the second training day, the instructors gave classes on techniques for communicating with indigenous personnel. They taught how to pass information to the Afghans through cultural barriers and what mistakes to avoid when speaking to them. The teams were also taught the culture of the Taliban and Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, Hekmatyar's fighters—a terrorist group operating in Afghanistan.

When Marine units engage with tribal leaders, the intent is for Marines to use the culture of the enemy to advantage. The purpose is to work effectively with the Afghanistan National Army and civilians and to understand the mind-set of the enemy. On each day of training, the Marines receive instruction on Dari and Pashto, the two languages that they will use.<sup>37</sup> Language training is an essential and complementary component to cultural education. Such a three-day course on language and culture can serve as one model for a “starter” module in the four-week Army Warrior Leader Course.



**Figure 8-1. U.S. Army SGM Matthew Mullins, assigned to the Nangarhar Agri-Business Development Team at Forward Operating Base Finley-Sheilds, Afghanistan, inspects wheat seed, 28 May 2009. Photo by U.S. Air Force SSG Shawn Weismiller.**

When thinking about the fields of cultural awareness and language proficiency, some speculate that future junior Army NCOs may need to possess attributes that traditionally have been the province of the Special Forces. However, an enhanced educational regime designed to produce a strategic corporal does not necessarily require wholesale Special Forces training. A systematic program to master a range of additional proficiencies would suffice. Most skills are currently being taught within the Army, but on an ad hoc basis.<sup>38</sup> The institutionalization of enhanced cultural awareness education for Army NCOs would have an immense payoff.

## Working with Agencies

According to one analyst, the U.S. armed forces largely eschew integrated joint, interagency, and coalition operations, as well as ignore the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Most operations lack cohesion, flexibility, and responsiveness.<sup>39</sup> To remedy this deficit, educational and experiential cross-fertilization between the military and other government agencies would enhance effective interagency command and unity of effort. The military has invested substantial amounts of educational resources to develop a “joint” culture. A true interagency culture that links the U.S. military to its civilian agency counterparts will require a similar effort.<sup>40</sup>

Such an endeavor to link agency counterparts together is especially pertinent for Army NCOs since many civilian government agencies do not have an equivalent leadership function to the NCO ranks; thus, this role is not well understood by most civil servants. This becomes more important as senior NCOs begin to work on equal terms with members of the Department of State, members of foreign governments, and nongovernmental organizations.<sup>41</sup> As the commandant of the Sergeants Major Academy said:

Training for NCOs is not what we need. Education is what we need so the Army can build their intellectual capacity for full spectrum ops . . . NCOs already are talking with the State Department [and] NGOs. They are mayors of towns.<sup>42</sup>

For instance, Soldiers and NCOs of the 3d Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, were assigned a comprehensive assessment mission on revitalizing Iraq’s aquaculture industry—an interagency task well beyond the boundaries of classical NCO responsibilities.<sup>43</sup>

Given these situations, military leaders need to encourage coordination at the operational and tactical levels. Educating military and civilian agency leaders to work together would be a key step, but no one has put a substantial teaching program into place.<sup>44</sup> Affording senior NCOs a 6 to 12 month fellowship with another agency will increase the cross-governmental ties necessary to accomplish the missions that confront the force.

NCOs do not require deep academic education in military history, diplomacy, or international relations. They do require a basic applied knowledge of these subjects; a “lessons learned” approach that assists Soldiers with their decision making and judgment.<sup>45</sup> Career-tracking adjustments need to ensure that the added interagency education or experience provides benefits in future assignments and promotions.<sup>46</sup>

Equally important for counterinsurgencies or stability operations is the ability to deal with NGOs.<sup>47</sup> There are several thousand NGOs of many different types whose organizing charters govern their activities and members’ motivation.<sup>48</sup> NGOs often play an important role at the local level in operations. Thus, NCOs must be prepared to deal with these sometimes prickly establishments.

Many such agencies resist being overtly involved with military forces because they need to preserve their perceived neutrality; however, establishing some kind of liaison is necessary. Cooperation involves a shared analysis of the problem and building a consensus that allows for the synchronization of military and interagency efforts. The military’s role is to—

- Provide protection.
- Identify needs.

- Facilitate civil-military operations.
- Use improvements in social conditions as leverage to build networks and mobilize the populace.<sup>49</sup>

These connections ensure that, as much as possible, the military forces and civilian agencies share objectives and synchronize actions and messages. Achieving this synergy is essential.<sup>50</sup>

There is also a “Catch-22” with the military-NGO interface that affects the security equation. NGOs need a secure environment within which to conduct their job. Without it, they cannot do their work. If NGOs cannot do their work, the U.S. military has to tackle more civic action projects to win hearts and minds. Less troops for security makes it even harder to get NGOs in the field.<sup>51</sup>

Given the position of the NCO at this important nexus, a 6 to 12 month internship with an NGO may be useful after the Advanced NCO Course. The experience would expose the rising Army sergeant first class to humanitarian organizations and their work culture and world outlook. His presence could build a bridge between the military and NGO worlds. It could also assuage or correct preconceived notions about the military in the humanitarian world. The NGO, in turn, would gain an individual with strong leadership, administrative, organizational, and logistical abilities.

### **Recommendations and Cross-Service Best-Practices**

To prepare NCOs to carry out nonconventional missions effectively, they need to receive standardized, relevant instruction throughout the professional military education system. Given the ongoing changes from training to education, now is the time to add language instruction, cultural education, and interagency exchange programs to the portfolio. The primary issue will be implementing language and cultural programs in NCO schools whose course length is too short to permit adding instruction to an already full curriculum. One solution for the NCO force would entail offering increased opportunities for language learning through the Defense Language Institute or other organizations.<sup>52</sup>

The following outline is one proposal on how to implement these changes within the existing educational structure. An important prerequisite would be for the U.S. Army to designate the top five or six languages of strategic importance for the force.

- *Warrior Leader Course*. Add a three-day introductory language and cultural education block to identify future NCOs with language capabilities, begin basic language orientation of needed languages, and expose the students to operational cultural constructs. This module includes taking the Defense Language Aptitude Battery Test and also, vetting and earmarking NCOs who are both willing and able to become career-long language learners in one of the strategically important languages.<sup>53</sup>
- *Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course*. Provide both refresher and basic language and cultural education to an extended common core (currently one week), which supplements the leadership training received at the Warrior Leader Course.

- *Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course.* Offer both refresher and basic language and cultural education within the current eight-week, two-day course. Add a short and practical block of education on interagency and joint relationships to the curriculum taught at this level.
- *Interagency Fellowship or NGO Internship.* Offer a 6 to 12 month assignment for selected NCOs in the rank of sergeant first class and above.
- *U.S. Army Sergeants Major Course.* Develop enhanced cultural knowledge, refresh acquired language skills, and provide further exposure to the interagency environment through additional curriculum offerings.

Instructional supplements could complement cultural-awareness education via distance learning for the periods between formal courses. Also, NCOs could be assigned a specific language while in the Warrior Leadership Course; a foreign language that they will maintain throughout their careers.

Again, the goal is to develop an adequate level of basic language and cultural capability among leaders in the general-purpose force. While not considered language professionals, special operations personnel must attain at least some level of foreign language proficiency. Special Forces—whose members do not include junior enlisted personnel—focus their language training by attaining at least rudimentary conversational speaking skills that enable them to interact with local populations.<sup>54</sup>

The Army can seek other organizations who are developing these types of educational offerings for NCO leadership development, and adapt for Army-specific requirements. In language, for example, the Marine Corps is reserving 40 seats annually at the Defense Language Institute as part of a critical language reenlistment incentive program. The program is open for enlisted Marines of any specialty, including those who would not normally require language proficiency as part of their duties.<sup>55</sup> The Corps' Center for Advanced Operational Cultural Learning has a tuition assistance program for all non-first-term Marines to acquire training in language, culture, and the economic aspects of an assigned region.<sup>56</sup>

For culture, the U.S. Air Force Air University is growing its cultural awareness initiatives for Airmen by incorporating culture and language education into the Air Force NCO Academy curriculum.<sup>57</sup> In December 2007, the Air Force created the Air Force Culture and Language Center at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. This Air Force–level organization now has the responsibility for defining, coordinating, and implementing cultural, regional, and foreign language education and training programs to satisfy the U.S. Air Force requirements.<sup>58</sup> Even earlier in February 2006, Air University began language instruction at the Senior NCO Academy in four “strategic” languages: Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese, and Arabic.<sup>59</sup>

Lastly, foreign armies are also looking at developing their noncommissioned officer corps through enhanced education. The Australian Army provides language training for NCOs prior to deployment for service in East Timor.<sup>60</sup> The French Army even integrates operational and anthropological cultural education at the battalion, platoon, and squad level.<sup>61</sup>

## 21st-Century Ideals

NCOs will have to engage in the struggle against terrorism and other ideologies that may emerge in the 21st century.<sup>62</sup> They will be called upon to deal with local populations, other government agencies, and humanitarian organizations. Counterinsurgency and policing operations demand foreign language skills, cross cultural understanding, and historical knowledge.<sup>63</sup>

To meet these challenges the Army should invest in the education of its junior and senior NCOs by adapting the current educational framework to incorporate language instruction, cultural education, and interagency exchange opportunities at the appropriate levels of the NCO educational system. Concurrently, this investment establishes the institutional commitment to lifelong NCO professional leadership development, thus building the strategic corporals needed for current and future complex operations.

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## Multinational (Europe) Training Opportunities for Military Police

MAJ Donald R. Meeks Jr.

Reprinted with permission from the Spring 2009 issue of *Military Police*.

*Pentathlete, broad, and multidimensional* are buzz words recently developed to describe highly valued military police officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs). A common thread among the programs designed to develop such leaders is the multinationality of training and experience. In fact, continuing guidance from senior military police leadership involves finding, building, and emphasizing opportunities to better prepare military police officers and NCOs for multinational deployments and assignments. There are many opportunities for military police leaders to train with soldiers from other nations around the world. For example, there are abundant opportunities to train in European nations, thanks to the United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and European Union.

There are a variety of multinational (European) military police courses available. The frequency, duration, cost, and student population of the courses are extremely diverse. There is a course offered during any given season of the year, and specific courses are usually conducted once a year. For example, the annual NATO Military Police Officer Planning Course is always conducted during the second week of September. Most courses are two weeks in duration and generally accommodate about forty students. All it takes is a little research to find the right course to attend.

The **NATO School** (<<http://www.natoschool.nato.int>>) in Oberammergau, Germany, hosts a variety of courses designed to prepare students from NATO and Partnership for Peace nations for NATO operations. The NATO Military Police Officer Planning Course prepares students for military police missions as part of a multinational brigade, mainly through the use of syndicate (small group) work. At the conclusion of the course, each syndicate presents its week-long project, which is analyzed by peers and group leaders.

The **NATO Military Police Officer Orientation Course** (conducted at the Feldjäger [German military police] School, [<<http://www.feldjaeger-stabsdienstschule.bundeswehr.de/portal/a/sfjgstdstbw>>], Sonthofen, Germany, near the end of October each year) is designed to expose students to a European view of NATO military police work. The Feldjäger School staff feel as though the school is the centerpiece for all German military police training. The lectures and practical exercises are German-based, and the Polizei (German civilian police) present a briefing. Students are exposed to their fair share of German culture over the week-long class.

The **Swedish Armed Forces International Centre** (<<http://www.swedint.mil.se>>), Kungsängen, Sweden, conducts individual training and education for military and police personnel in support of peace support operations by the UN, NATO, and other organizations. Through a partnership with the Swedish National Criminal Police, the Swedish Armed Forces International Centre offers numerous courses suited for military police students across several levels and disciplines. The following courses, which must be arranged well in advance, vary in length and duration:

- UN Police Commander Course.
- International Police Development Course.

- UN Police Officers Course.
- European Union Police Officer Course.
- UN Prison and Probation Officers Course (in association with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service).

The **UN Training School Ireland** (<<http://www.military.ie>>) at the Military College, Curragh Camp, Ireland, offers several courses in peacekeeping. Specifically, the International Military Police Course is designed to prepare military police officers and NCOs for duty with a multinational military police unit serving with a UN or other multinational force engaged in peace support operations. The two-week course takes place in September each year. Several techniques are used to facilitate the International Military Police Course learning process; lectures, demonstrations, group meetings, student exercises, and discussions enhance the student learning experience.

Each April and August, the **Danish Army Logistics School**, Aalborg Barracks, Noerresundby, Denmark, hosts a two-week Nordic UN Military Police Course (<[http://www.mil.no/multimedia/archive/00073/UNMILPOC\\_73427a.pdf](http://www.mil.no/multimedia/archive/00073/UNMILPOC_73427a.pdf)>). This course was established in 1969 as one of four Nordic UN courses; however, the course is more narrowly focused today to allow for greater specialization of graduates. Students in the course learn to perform military police officer and shift commander functions in a UN military police unit on a UN mission. The subjects discussed include general UN orientation, military police administration, military police service and duty, communications, and military English—all topics which are very common to U.S. Army military police.

The **Italian Carabinieri Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units** (<<http://www.carabinieri.it/internet/Coespu>>) at Lieutenant General A. Chinotto Barracks, Vicenza, Italy, also hosts a military police course. The aim of the annual, two-week International Police Course, which takes place at the end of October, is to train military police and gendarmerie officers and NCOs to be employed in international contexts. This is done through lectures and exercises. Due to Italy's involvement around the world, the participation of non-European students is common in this course.

All nations face the challenge of funding student attendance at these courses. At some schools, the tuition is waived, but due to national caveats on spending defense funds, fees for meals and accommodations must be set. At other schools, there are no costs except those incurred for the transportation of attendees. One technique that can be used to allow attendance at courses for which funding is an issue is to offer services as a lecturer or syndicate leader. For example, prospective students may submit a resume or curriculum vitae and receive an invitation to attend an entire course funded by the institution in exchange for serving as a speaker or assistant instructor. After deciding which course to attend, future students are encouraged to contact the appropriate school directly.

Multinational military police courses are professionally and personally rewarding. Professionally, the courses prepare students to work in multinational organizations (such as the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps) or multinational brigades. This is accomplished by a variety of means including themed lectures over a wide range of topics, practical exercises using the military decision-making process, and the analysis of lessons learned. The personal relationships formed during

the courses sometimes evolve into lifelong friendships. Personal relationships are fundamental to military police work and serve as cornerstones for the staff work of many officers and NCOs.

The courses mentioned here are just a few examples of those offered in Europe. Most military police professionals who have attended these courses have indicated that their time was well spent and that their experiences were priceless. The building of a successful coalition often hinges on interpersonal relationships; among the international military police community, the family is small. Military police who are interested in taking advantage of these training opportunities should pursue attendance as soon as possible . . . the earlier, the better.



**Exclusive Interview with Canadian Army Brigadier General Jean Collin on the Importance of Training with U.S. Military Forces at the National Training Center, March 2010**

**Kevin Gaddie, JFIIT, USJFCOM**



**Figure 10-1. Canadian Army Brig. Gen. Jean Collin, commander, Canada's Land Force Central Area and Joint Task Force Central, reviews the training plan for Task Force 1-10 during National Training Center (NTC) rotation 10-04 at Fort Irwin, CA. (Photo: Casey Bain, JFIIT, USJFCOM)**

**1. What advantages does training here at the NTC provide your unit that it may not receive at other training venues?**

Well, there's not three feet of snow here is the first thing that I would say. I think before we get into that specific question and just for background purposes, you should know that we have our own Canadian Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) in Wainwright, Alberta. It was actually built, quite frankly, on the NTC model. When we stood this place up, CMTC, four or five years ago, we had actually spent a lot of time down here seeing how NTC operates and leveraging the lessons learned from NTC when we created our maneuver training center. They look and feel quite a lot alike in terms of the observer controller networks, how the exercises are put together, etc., etc. Our CMTC, although it still needs to evolve, I personally believe is an outstanding organization. I would have been more than happy to take Task Force 1-10, the current Canadian unit that's here, and put them through CMTC. However, this task force needs to deploy in early April, and when you do the timeline, that means they have to do their main collective training in January and February.

Now back to my three feet of snow comment. It would make no sense to train someone for a spring deployment to Afghanistan in the cold weather conditions of Canada. As we've done on some occasions in the past, though on a much smaller scale, we went to U.S. Forces Command

(FORSCOM) and asked if they could help. They said absolutely they would love too; in fact, they were incredibly generous with their offer and gave us two back-to-back NTC rotations so that we got a solid six weeks of training for our task force before they deployed overseas.

It was an incredibly generous offer that we took advantage of. Although I'd say that I would have been more than happy to just use CMTC, clearly NTC does give us advantages that our CMTC cannot give us. NTC gives us a larger training area that has been significantly developed for counterinsurgency operations — the number of villages that have been established here is just one good example. The number of role-players that you have provides us with more capability than what we would have at our training center. We have villages, we have role-players, but nowhere near the same numbers or nowhere near the same vastness of terrain that you have at NTC from the far western edge to the far eastern edge that stresses all the communication challenges or logistical burdens that are exposed here.

One big part of coming here is being able to take advantage of the infrastructure that exists. The other key advantage of coming here is that nobody is the master of all good ideas, and although our observer controllers (OCs) and our exercise designers are quite good, simply by being involved with another nation and another nation like the United States of America and the U.S. military and all of their experiences, we've been able to leverage those experiences, those competencies and understandings of a counterinsurgency fight, and share ideas and exchange ideas. Truly, take advantage of those ideas and all that is associated with the melding of the minds.

That melding of the minds has been probably no more evident than in the OC teams where right now we have shared OC teams. We have Americans and Canadians working hand-in-hand. Therefore, the training audience has been able to benefit greatly from the various points of view that are offered despite the fact that we have different tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP). Just the sharing of those experiences has proved invaluable.

### **2. How did the NTC observer controllers/trainers and other U.S. partners enhance or impact your training here? Was it value added?**

Back to the OCs for a second. The approach that we took is that we just didn't want to have a U.S. organization or just the Canadians working with the training audience out there; then you don't get the full advantage of the melding of the minds. So what you will see throughout the training area or box are these shared OC teams with Canadian and American participation. The lead right now for this particular phase is Canadian, but go back to the previous phase and some of the leads were U.S. OCs.

One funny story that I would like to share with you was in about the second week that I was here, I was noticing that a number of my Canadian OCs were starting to use American terminology and I started to laugh at that because that's a good indication of the mind meld taking place, but then I was comforted about the very next day when I noticed an American OC using Canadian terminology, so that it was going both ways — that was a very positive sign indeed.

As for the joint fires and joint integration, what we've been able to do here, and it's been very beneficial, is the use of air support. We've had tremendous air support from U.S. forces primarily because of the U.S. Air Force training exercise that's also taking place here.

The NTC and Joint Forces Command's staff have worked very hard in coordinating with a number of U.S. Air Force assets to come and exercise over top of the box while we are here, so it's given us an opportunity to not only do air space coordination, but also call in fires from U.S. air assets like F-16s and other aircraft. So that has been tremendously beneficial. Most times when we do this in Canada, most calls for fire are with Canadian aircraft. The fact that we've been able to do this with coalition partners is huge.

Same thing holds true with U.S. air surveillance assets in terms of intelligence gathering. The use of U.S. assets, leveraged by NTC and Joint Forces Command and put over the box to be coordinated by the training audience, has also been value added.

Also, a U.S. Army Cavalry unit that's training here on their own separate exercise at the same time has been helpful. NTC and our planners working together were able to manage and create a rather joint scenario whereby we were able to take advantage of combined ground-based coalition operations. We've even had some long range surveillance patrols from the CAV unit actually observe targeted areas within the Canadian area of operations and vice versa.

We also have a U.S. Army Military Police Company here to replicate the Afghan national police and a number of other police linkages that we'd see in Kandahar city now. So that's another tremendous benefit in terms of combined operations.

**3. Did your unit gain much from working with U.S. joint intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms to help your targeting process during this training rotation?**

The beauty about this training was at the end of the day, I think our two nations work so well together since we all have the same procedures for calls for fire and air space coordination, etc., so that as a member of the training audience, it really didn't matter what flag was on the side of the airplane or the surveillance aircraft that was flying overhead. The procedures were the same, the calls for fire were the same, and you got the required effect on the target regardless of the nation that provided the effect, and that was truly beneficial.

**4. What was the most beneficial aspect of your training here?**

The support from NTC has been superb across the board, so I am almost hesitant to put my finger on one thing, because it doesn't matter whether you're talking about logistics support, observer controllers, exercise planners, command and control, integration of coalition assets — it's all been tremendous and value added. However, if I had to put my finger on one thing, it would probably be the shared experiences that we have gained from the U.S. observer controllers.

**5. What could be done to make it an even better training opportunity for future coalition rotational units?**

I'm not sure that I would focus on anything in the training realm. To be honest, coming here was a lot of work both for us and the NTC staff. We had to start by understanding each other's organizations — everything from contracting to cross boarder movement to getting ammunition from Canada to the NTC. So I would not say that the mounting and execution of this operation has been easy. It's been a lot of work behind the scenes to make this happen, so if I was to identify one thing to change for the future, because I'd love for us to be able to do this more

often, we need to build on our lessons learned from this one and find ways to better plan and execute future training events.

I want to be very clear with this — that it has nothing to do with the people involved because everyone has been incredibly supportive, friendly, and went the extra mile to get it done. It just seemed that everyone had to go the extra mile since everything was so complicated to make it happen.

### **6. As we move forward, how important is it for Canadian and U.S. forces to work and train together?**

It's essential. You only need to take a look at southern Afghanistan, where we are both working right now, and in Kandahar province in particular, where we are working hand-in-hand in combined operations. There are Canadian forces under the command of U.S. military leaders and vice versa. There are U.S. and Canadian forces working together all the time. We better get this right in training in order to get it right during the conduct of combined operations — we owe it to the men and women that serve in both our militaries. Although we fully recognize the strength of the U.S. forces, we know that you wish to have coalition partners, and we know that we want to be involved as a coalition partner, and that linkage between the U.S. and Canada is essential as we move forward, especially in a counterinsurgency fight. We can't do enough of this is the bottom line.

### **7. Any closing thoughts for your Canadian or our U.S. audience?**

Yes, my sincere appreciation to the National Training Center for everything that it has done both before we arrived and while we have been here to help prepare our next task force to conduct military operations in Afghanistan. Their support to us has been nothing short of exceptional, and though I focus in on the NTC, I also know there are people in other organizations like U.S. Forces Command, Joint Forces Command, etc., that have also played a pivotal role in this. The bottom line is the support that we have received in making this all happen has been superb. I am convinced that without that support at all levels, this exercise would not have been the success that it has been. On behalf of our entire task force, my sincere appreciation to NTC and all partners that are associated with it.

## Growing Strategic Leaders for Future Conflict

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Global operations since 2001 highlight certain characteristics of the US military's emerging operating environment. Future operations will likely take place "amongst the people" in a wide range of unpredictable environments.<sup>1</sup> Managing these conflicts will require extensive collaboration between military and civilian agencies representing a range of governments, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. Likewise, general-purpose forces (GPF) will make larger contributions to tasks previously reserved to special-operations forces (SOF). These two components will experience greater intermixing and burden sharing.<sup>2</sup>

In ongoing operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, effective senior leaders are those able to grapple successfully with the dynamic emerging environment and its functional implications. Along the way, leaders have developed important insight regarding the characteristics of successful commanders and the measures required to ensure future leaders possess these characteristics. As the Department of Defense seeks to develop a cadre of senior joint force leaders for operational and strategic command in "multi-modal conflicts," these views are worthy of serious consideration.<sup>3</sup>

To illuminate and begin to codify attitudes toward strategic-level leadership development, the authors selected a group of SOF and GPF leaders who have commanded at the colonel or Navy captain level and higher in recent irregular and hybrid warfare environments.<sup>4</sup> In extensive interviews, they reflected on the characteristics required for effective senior-level leadership and provided recommendations for leader development. Their responses highlighted the characteristics, educational experiences, and assignments this cohort considered relevant to success in the unpredictable operating environments of today and tomorrow.

### Characteristics of Strategic Leadership

The interviewees' reflections on necessary strategic leader characteristics fall into three broad categories: cognitive, interpersonal, and managerial styles. Each style comprises a cluster of qualities, skills, and cultivable traits that the officers associated with each other. With respect to the first style, interviewees focused on cognitive processes aiding in problem-solving. Most prominently, interviewees distinguished between "how-to-think" and "what-to-think" approaches, with the former embracing flexibility of mind and diverse intellectual disciplines. How-to-think approaches emphasize the importance of understanding the parts of a problem in relationship to each other, as well as the different perspectives and needs that problem-solving partners contribute. Such approaches entail developing problem-solving methodologies that serve to reconcile competing viewpoints while remaining focused on the goal. A how-to-think framework also accounts for consequences of decisions, over time and across multiple levels and lines of operations, while tolerating iterative problem-solving in the absence of perfect solutions.<sup>5</sup> As one GPF officer said, "It's being able to look at a problem, think about the influences associated with the problem, think about potential solutions to the problem, and go deeper into the second- and third-order effects."

Officers considered the how-to-think method essential for cultivating other important cognitive qualities, particularly the ability to think analogically from one case to another. Interviewees

spoke of stepping outside events and intellectual processes to observe in real time how they and others proceed and learn. One corps-level commander referred to this method as “going up onto the balcony,” with one SOF leader similarly emphasizing the ability to turn observations into course corrections in dynamic time. These comments suggest the need for leaders at this level to “see inside their own thought processes” through “meta-cognition,” or “thinking about thinking.”<sup>6</sup> Interviewees valued such approaches not solely because they helped officers make the switch to operational from tactical, and to strategic from operational. They praised the ability to harmonize tactical actions with operational objectives and strategic goals, beginning with recognizing a decision’s implications at each level. Harmonization requires coordinating actions in an attempt to reinforce one another and influence multiple target audiences, while maintaining the necessary strategic long view.

A second cluster of characteristics frequently referenced by interviewees focuses on interpersonal styles. Among them, sociability and a preference for relationship building are regarded as absolutely critical to every aspect of planning, leading, and managing complex operations. In fact, interviewees frequently associated terms such as “communicator,” “facilitator,” “consulter,” and “collaborative space maker” with the term “commander.”

In many cases, commanders in combat and other contexts also preferred to “command through influence.” In this respect, a fundamental responsibility of strategic leadership entails building bridges across institutional divides through cultivating sincere personal relationships. One senior Marine put it this way: “This is a people business. Success in this comes from relationships.”

Interviewees at every level reinforced the need for cross-cultural capabilities and affirmed the utility of language and foreign culture skills, with SOF leaders acknowledging critical shortfalls in this area.<sup>7</sup> Underlining the critical importance of multiculturalism, one interviewee having an immigrant background emphasized his equal comfort and competence in the “two worlds [and] two cultures” of his parents and the English-speaking United States. He felt that background primed him to be comfortable in operations with other services and branches of government, other countries’ security forces, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Indeed, while endorsing the need to work effectively in the cultures of foreign nations, many interviewees went on to affirm a much broader conception of multiculturalism: the capacity to work comfortably, seamlessly, and empathetically with interagency counterparts, members of other services, and NGOs, in spite of differences in institutional cultures and processes.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, the most senior SOF and GPF interviewees considered the ability to communicate across the SOF-GPF institutional and cultural divide as a key strategic leader characteristic.<sup>9</sup>

Enablers of multiculturalism and relationship focus include a fusion of confidence and humility, which produces openness to different ideas, even from other organizations or subordinates. Humility is also expressed through approachability and humor. Interviewees noted humor as a defining characteristic of their successful seniors, with one combatant commander seeing humor as helping leaders to embrace an “output orientation . . . through a spirit of collaboration” driven by “social energy.” According to a former Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) commander and senior service civil affairs leader, this social energy permits “staff guerrilla warfare” or, in the words of a GPF division-level commander, “maneuver warfare in the gaps and seams” of bureaucracies, based on personal relationships and the avoidance of explicit confrontation.

A final set of characteristics considered critical to irregular warfare leadership relates directly to a leader’s managerial style. Respondents noted three characteristics in particular: communication

skills, an understanding of organizations, and mentorship. Articulating thoughts logically and clearly was viewed as basic to successful leadership. “The number-one skill at the senior level, even at field-grade level, is to write.” SOF and GPF educators lamented the absence of this skill among many mid-level officers. Interviewees underscored the importance of tailoring communication to different audiences, inspiring the acceptance of ideas requiring collaboration among diverse partners. Interviewees considered communication a core function of highest-level leadership, involving the generation of a compelling idea; conveying it effectively and continually to stakeholders; ensuring it is appropriately communicated by subordinates to institutional implementers; and reinforcing the idea through action. As one senior GPF leader said, “True strategic leadership is about trying to get the big ideas right, and it is then about communicating those big ideas effectively to your subordinate leadership.”

Regarding organizational skills, officers at every level spoke of coordinating the activities of task-oriented staffs whose members represented multiple organizational interests. This task necessitated understanding organizational dynamics and cultures at the conceptual and applied levels. In fact, some interviewees pointed to a form of strategic leadership that was purely organizational in focus, distinct from but required for combat leadership. They regretted the absence in their professional military education (PME) of a focus on organizational theory.

Finally, interviewees perceived a strong relationship between leadership and mentorship. The majority considered a leader-teacher-mentor functional triad an inherent responsibility of commanders at every level. As such, today’s best leaders consciously guide and teach their juniors, through both explicit instruction and exemplary conduct. Mentors also exercise a tacit though compelling moral suasion; “He [my mentor] was someone you never wanted to disappoint” was a frequent theme in this regard. A significant minority felt that mentorship included guidance of junior leaders toward developmental assignments, and efforts to ensure the availability of opportunities for rising leaders to demonstrate their skills. More significant is the strong valuation placed on mentorship as part of a leader’s managerial style, as well as the oft-heard misgiving that neither individual branches nor services provide adequate channels for its development. Some respondents felt a mark of leadership was the rigorous pursuit of mentorship from senior colleagues: “Mentorship is a two-way street.”

Alongside these three elements of a strategic leader’s managerial style, several respondents, to include two combatant commanders, a theater-level commander, and a commander of global SOF elements, pointed to additional attributes as integral to credible leadership in an operational context. These attributes begin with baseline tactical excellence, partly as a matter of authenticity among juniors; equally, tactical prowess allowed senior leaders to understand implications at the unit level of operational decisions. The higher operational and strategic levels of leadership, however, require a fusion of physical, mental, and psychological endurance. As senior theater-level commanders put it, physical strength sustains “grinding” intellectual exertion: “You have to have the physical component . . . Soldiering is still an outdoor sport.”

Taken together, interviewees felt these cognitive, interpersonal, and managerial styles typified the best of today’s GPF and SOF senior leaders operating in hybrid environments. Of course, such leadership styles are also useful in conventional contexts. Not only did interviewees note these traits in leaders they had admired since the 1970s,<sup>10</sup> but existing military doctrine also calls for similar characteristics.<sup>11</sup> Yet, at least one theater commander felt these characteristics “highly important, particularly in preparation for being an irregular warfare leader” in environments characterized by kinetic limitations, diverse partners, and different kinds of conflict occurring simultaneously. Furthermore, most respondents felt it possible to cultivate

these styles throughout a career. Interviewees asserted it was the duty of individuals to develop these leadership characteristics throughout their career, with military organizations providing the appropriate opportunities and incentives.

### **Key Experiences**

In explaining the significance of the leadership characteristics they highlighted, interviewees made frequent reference to the paths their own careers had taken. Their collective experiences present a number of important commonalities in the domains of education and developmental assignments. First, a variety of broad educational experiences is found among most senior officers' careers, including early joint schooling as well as civilian education. Second, most interviewees served in joint billets, not simply once or as a senior field-grade officer, but at various career stages in operational and staff capacities. Third, many officers cited holding a senior-level staff, aide, or assistant position as being significant to the remainder of their career. Along with gaining perspective on organizational dynamics at the macro-level, interviewees felt that being a military secretary to a senior Department of Defense (DOD) civilian, or an aide to a service chief, provided insight into how senior leaders think, plan, and interact, as well as an opportunity for one-on-one mentorship. As one interviewee said, "Being an aide is an opportunity no one else gets to see the man behind the mask and the inner workings of the Army." Fourth, for many SOF interviewees, a position permitting GPF exposure was significant. One theater-level commander with a SOF background considered an assignment to conventional forces as "highly important" to his development. Finally, substantive international exposure through education or assignments is beneficial. Collectively, these experiences appeared crucial to cultivating characteristics that permit the joint force to counter hybrid and irregular threats.

#### *Broad Educational Experiences*

The range of education proving useful to interviewees featured service PME, out-of-service PME, and educational experiences beyond traditional military schooling, to include civilian education. While most officers believed service PME was valuable, many suggested a need for improvement. One SOF colonel spoke to deficiencies in the military education system, primarily at the senior leadership level, when he said, "We don't educate to be generals." While not all career tracks demonstrated extensive educational opportunities outside the military, specific types of PME were integral to leadership development, particularly when PME for majors or lieutenant commanders was either with another service or some other more flexible version of military schooling. These settings include the College of Naval Command and Staff, School of Advanced Military Studies, and Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). In these experiences, schooling reinforces jointness and how-to-think cognitively in a military context. According to one SOF commander:

At NPS, I learned not what to think, but how to think. When I was a commander [later], we would have discussions where leadership would try to figure out a solution. I would listen and think the solution was easy. But others couldn't figure it out because they didn't see the problem the way I did. It was because they hadn't been taught how to think.

Though commanders' courses, war colleges, and general officer capstone courses aid in this effort, many interviewees recommended that officers constantly seek ways to broaden horizons beyond the tactical and operational levels, so the services do not "start having generals who want to think like battalion commanders."

While not all interviewees experienced an education at civilian institutions, those who did found it of the greatest value in their evolution to strategic-level leadership. Presenting ideas to nonmilitary students—and learning to accommodate for civilian approaches to national security—contributed dramatically to thinking, communicating, and relationship-building skills. Civilian education permitted an understanding of the relationship between the legislative and executive branches in the formation of national security strategy and the authorization of military operations. One senior SOF leader felt his civilian experience “was massively valuable because I learned that the military is not the center of the universe. It showed me how much else was out there.”

### *Joint Billets and Interagency Exposure*

Exposure to joint and interagency environments throughout a career facilitated interpersonal and managerial growth for the interviewees and aided in the transition from the tactical to strategic. Referring to his own experiences with a special-mission unit, one officer articulated a consensus in saying that he would have preferred to understand better the interagency process prior to a combat deployment as a commander. That knowledge would have permitted greater leverage and synchronization. A recently deployed theater commander spoke of the value of interagency exposure: “You have to learn to interact with those who have totally different backgrounds and value sets, like [the Department of] State. They have a different value set that they celebrate. SOF should increase its interface in every part of the interagency, to include mid-grade leaders.”

Others spoke of joint billets as important to providing a perspective that embraces diverse military options of equal value. Rather than limitation to the minimum number of mandatory assignments for promotion to general officer, interviewees opined that joint exposure should be frequent. A senior SOF educator said, “You need to get joint as fast as you can. Get in to other units, other opportunities. You are at a disadvantage if you think there is only one way to do things.” While one combatant commander felt jointness should grow from a foundation of service and functional competency, other respondents considered joint exposure equal in importance to service competency, the former necessary for the latter:

Do you wait, and get service competency first? I disagree. Joint and service are part and parcel; how can you be competent in one without seeing the other? We are going to always fight joint at every level. It needs to be the whole career, [and] it strikes me as odd that there is anything but that. It’s all joint.

### *Senior Staff Roles*

A large portion of the interviewees agreed that Pentagon assignments or staff jobs at combatant commands are “essential to gain senior command perspective.” Nearly every three- and four-star interviewee advocated staff time at the Pentagon or a combatant command. Such tours are significant to giving a mid-career officer an understanding of how to coordinate and resource theater-level operations, leverage interagency capabilities, and harmonize the functions of a large organization’s disparate elements. As one former CJSOTF commander said, “It would have made me a better tactical leader if I had understood the strategic side better.”

### *GPF-SOF Intermixing*

For many SOF members, a GPF billet during their field-grade years was instrumental to understanding how large organizations function. Because SOF officers typically lead small,

elite teams, this exposure to a large organization is valuable for future leadership assignments. Special operations interviewees also felt increased intermixing and cross-socialization permit better GPF understanding of SOF. A former CJSOTF commander indicated, one “need[s] to be able to explain to GPF leaders . . . how what you are seeing and proposing helps them and their tactical, operational, and strategic goals . . . synching all of this with a theater-level strategy.” As they rise to the theater and global level, SOF leaders will need to coordinate with, and even command, GPF formations, while general-purpose leaders will find special-operations elements under their command or in their battlespace. One special-mission unit commander emphasized this point, noting that “there needs to be a hybrid military.” Individual SOF leaders should pursue GPF billets, and officers in both components should seek to work together in supporting and supported roles. A general-purpose force combatant commander and his special-operations force deputy concurred, “We absolutely recommend GPF billets for SOF and SOF billets for GPF.”<sup>12</sup>

### *International Exposure*

The majority of interviewees placed a special premium on acquiring international exposure in order to foster skills important to the uncertain battlefields of irregular warfare (IW). Interviewees particularly cited recurring training experiences while deployed with foreign militaries as ideal for understanding diverse national security cultures, the United States’ status in regional calculations, and the art of the locally possible. This expertise allows one- and two-star generals or admirals to manage regional security relationships at the DOD level. Equally as significant for theater-level IW, training experiences facilitate first name-basis relationships with local military leaders that prove crucial to multinational operations. While coordinating multinational special operations, one interviewee said, “I knew these guys, from Germany [and the] UK.” Another indicated that his Jordanian SOF liaison had been a classmate. Individuals should seek international exposure at various points during their career, whether with NATO partners, through foreign education, hosting of international officers at US schools, or in more autonomous “Foreign Area Officer-like” contexts.

Some officers also highlighted the utility of pre-accession experiences, such as backpacking in the Arabian Peninsula or extended travel through South Asia. They credited these experiences with making them comfortable in foreign areas and introducing them to those very regions in which they later operated as senior commanders. One SOF interviewee reflected that in operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan after traveling there as a youth, “I was coming home.” Another SOF commander related, “I have been immersed in foreign cultures for extended periods of time. That puts you outside your comfort zone and forces you to adapt.” These experiences teach officers how to interact with other cultures, cultivating patience, humility, and curiosity. For those without pre-accession multicultural experiences, time in uniform interacting with foreign civilians proved equally valuable. One senior Marine leader commented, “My United Nations Palestine tour prepared me for my leadership post. It was ‘immersion training.’”

### **Concerns and Cautions**

The interviewees agreed on much of what is required to shape IW leaders—both characteristics as well as essential formative experiences. Yet, more than three-quarters expressed the belief that the career paths preparing them to lead effectively had been anomalous, diverging from service norms. Likewise, many felt their progression to senior command billets relied on happenstance. According to one deputy combatant commander, “My career has been an aberration. I am surprised I have achieved up to this level.” These views emerge from interviewees’ sentiments and perceptions of service institutional preferences, rather than from statistical assessment of the

officers' careers.<sup>13</sup> More significantly, however, these senior leaders acknowledged the underlying value of their particular experiences to career progression, and also expressed the desire for their services to value such experiences institutionally. This concern is significant, as interviewees shared their views at a critical juncture in the life of the organizations they represent. Operationally, the US military is engaged in sustained, complex multi-theater operations. Organizationally, both SOF and GPF are experiencing structural growth. The confluence of these operational and organizational trends renders the recommendations of today's leaders quite relevant to the future.

### *Kinetic Emphasis*

Operationally, today's company- and field-grade officers have experienced a great amount and diversity of combat experience far exceeding that of their predecessors, which grants them an unprecedented degree of tactical prowess and operational ability. A former CJSOTF commander said, "In my career [prior to 2001], you'd be lucky if you had one or two live missions in a career. We now have kids [captains and majors] that do four to five missions a night." The latter's ability to think and adapt to changing tactical circumstances is much more honed. Likewise, the extended performance of conventional US forces in increasingly diverse roles has ensured that GPF junior leaders are skilled in core IW competencies.

Yet, combat exposure entails an opportunity cost. Summing up the operational implications of repeated deployments, one theater special operations command leader stated, "We're paying a price. We have accepted that as the price for defending our country, even if we don't realize it. I believe, hope, and pray that we can restore some balance to our deployments and our operational tempo. I hope that group [a Special Forces group] can go back to what really matters, building partner capacity so that those we train can do things for themselves. I look at that now as a transition because we are at war."<sup>14</sup>

Beyond the operational implications of kinetic operations are those events related to developing required leadership characteristics. In discussing the latter, interviewees often referred to noncombat experiences, considering them instrumental in developing necessary senior-level leadership skills. Due to continuing commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan, today's captains through Navy commanders or lieutenant colonels may not be able to take part in these developmental experiences. One might argue that it is today's senior leaders who missed out—on combat. Yet, if noncombat and nonmilitary assignments were contributing factors in the mid-career preparation of today's senior leaders for theater- and global-level success, it would only seem logical that it is equally important to ensure that tomorrow's senior leaders receive similar developmental opportunities.

While operations in Iraq and Afghanistan demand diverse capabilities, a sustained focus on a single operational mode (counterinsurgency tinged with counterterrorism) and geographic area (Muslim eastern Middle East and South Asia) can narrow perspectives, at the very stage in a career when they need to be broadened. As one combatant commander put it, "War can be a narrowing education. . . . It's the dramatic instance fallacy," whereby younger officers come away from an experience feeling "I went to Iraq; I now understand all war." A deputy combatant commander and career special operator agreed, opining, "We're so focused on the war that we have people only doing that, and not getting the broader experience. . . . Sure, we want guys with that war experience, but . . . we need broader [perspectives]." An early operational career dominated by combat might influence an individual's understanding of what it means to be a leader in future environments. According to a SOF component commander, "It is easy to be

wooded by the siren of the kinetic,” and as the latter becomes the dominant operational mode for both SOF and GPF, it can influence values and career preferences. The very breadth of their careers and the diversity of their noncombat experiences have taught today’s senior leaders, however, that “nothing that direct action forces do is decisive,” and that “victory is not in the killing.”<sup>15</sup> Interviewees’ comments suggest that to become the next generation’s strategic, global-level leaders, today’s emerging leaders should take advantage of every opportunity to pair their exemplary tactical and operational skills with the educational experiences and developmental assignments examined here.

### *Organizational Growth*

Beyond the influence of current operations on senior leader development are the implications associated with organizational expansion. In response to the diverse security challenges facing the United States, both GPF and SOF are growing in size.<sup>16</sup> This expansion will permit SOF and GPF to maintain operational tempo and gain the time and space for the developmental opportunities the interviewees recommended. This balance is critical, especially as it relates to the socialization process of newly minted special operators. It will permit them to understand important relationships: kinetic versus nonkinetic means, direct action versus “by, through, and with,” and SOF specificity versus integration with GPF.

The growth in special-operations forces will be of tremendous benefit to the future joint force if it avoids the systematization and bureaucratization that discourages the diverse experiences responsible for producing today’s senior IW leaders. Some SOF interviewees articulated this concern as an instinctual disquiet that “big is the enemy of SOF.” More pointedly, a current US Special Operations Command (SOCOM) strategist suggested that the growth of his component might result in “Big Army-like” practices, where specific and narrow command and staff billets might be preferred over broadening assignments.

A final organizational concern relates to the impact of more than a generation of SOF cultures. Over time, different SOF components have come to understand and work effectively with one another, but it was a major concern to at least four respondents, with experience as combatant command, corps, Joint Special Operations Command, and CJSOTF commanders, that there was a real possibility of attitudinal self-insulation of SOF from GPF. One suggested that while today’s SOF leaders were “born joint,” their younger counterparts might have a more narrow view of what joint means: “I think sometimes in the SOF community, we think of joint as joint with other SOF. . . . It’s not the broader joint.” Likewise, commanders who have led both “black” and “white” SOF units decried the channelization of special operators into one or the other track, so that, particularly for “black SOF,” leaders who are colonels or Navy captains and higher are “myopic” in perspective. As one corps-level commander with a short time in SOF put it, a one-star admiral or general who has spent his whole career in “black SOF” will “be very, very good at running operations. If we want him to run SOCOM as a four-star we would have done him a disservice, [because] he won’t know how to command a large organization.” Along with other organizational changes and the complexion of current operations, narrow career paths in the developmental phase may be precursors of even narrower career preferences at the senior levels, with implications for strategic perspective.

### **Institutional Changes**

To achieve a strategic perspective equal to their tactical and operational prowess, today’s officers need to pursue the developmental opportunities interviewees highlighted. The joint force and

DOD should institutionally support and leverage such choices. The experiences and reflections of interviewees suggest four central institutional recommendations. First, service and DOD leadership should create more “opportunity space” for the educational and developmental assignments that foster the cognitive, interpersonal, and managerial skills previously discussed. Such opportunities will contribute directly to the ability of these officers to succeed in the joint and interagency communities at the highest operational and strategic levels. Second, the DOD needs to institutionally encourage the type of interaction among its subcomponents and the interagency and international partners that are likely to be of strategic value. Third, DOD should implement service-appropriate methods for systematically identifying prospective leaders at the mid-grade point in their careers, thus enabling them to take advantage of developmental opportunity experiences. Fourth, branches, services, and the DOD as a whole should establish institutional policies to support the “out-of-the-mainstream” preferences by officers that support the development of leadership characteristics. This process may require a shift in organizational culture, in terms of consideration for promotion, staff assignments, and command. Ultimately, the objective is for mid-career officers to gain a conviction that far from imperiling their careers, these nonstandard assignments will help them advance.

### *Opportunity Space*

In order to effectively create opportunity space, it is critical to provide the right educational opportunities, both inside and outside the military. A common thread among interviewees was that PME itself did not provide an adequately broad, liberal education. An Army senior leader opined, “A broad educational base is a necessity. . . . It is something that is in most cases the most beneficial to conceptualizing strategy.” Despite the criticality of senior military education to developing a broad background and strategic-level leadership, most interviewees did not believe their PME alone was adequate to accomplishing that objective.

Interviewees’ suggestions to address PME shortfalls centered on “out-of-the-comfort-zone experiences.” As noted, this concern can be addressed through civilian education and “broader” PME. The services will need to implement the opportunities for civilian education recently allowed by DOD policy.<sup>17</sup> Given the requirement for today’s senior leaders to build and manage complex organizations, organizational dynamics should be part of the curricula at intermediate and senior-level schools. One interviewee explicitly recommended that organizational theory become a core element of military PME, and others endorsed that suggestion.

SOF leaders were concerned with education specifically relating to their community. Though praising initial training, interviewees noted the lack of a career-long SOF continuing education program. As one senior educator stated, “Our training is great. . . . I give us an A-. But on the education side, I give us a C+.” Some spoke very highly of the Defense Analysis program at NPS, while others touted the benefit of SOF electives at various staff colleges. Most thought, however, that what was missing was clear guidance delineating the type of educational experiences appropriate to SOF. Special operators would benefit if SOCOM or individual service components articulate a “consolidated SOF educational trajectory.” While not dictating a single educational path, this program should link existing SOF educational assets in a logical progression, while maximizing out-of-service opportunities in keeping with this new developmental strategy.

### *Interactions of Strategic Value*

The interviews highlighted the need for institutional support of a series of sustained interactions: between general-purpose and special-operations components, “white” and “black” SOF, and the military with the interagency and NGO communities. While these interactions do occur, they often take place during in-theater operations. Interviewees felt it would be much more useful for such interactions to commence prior to deployment. The services and DOD could contribute markedly to leader development by ensuring that this cross-pollination occurs early, possibly through assignments, internships, and training. Many interviewees felt that SOCOM and DOD should diversify the nonkinetic experiences associated with the “black SOF world.”

Beyond interactions between contributors to theater- and global-level irregular warfare, interviewees felt US personnel needed to increase their interaction with a broad array of foreign militaries. Reflecting on international opportunities and the gains they provide to cross-cultural understanding, one interviewee remarked:

We need to maximize experiences with foreign officers. We have to get more of them here and more of us over there. . . . We have very few US officers overseas (at foreign military schools). That’s a problem. . . . We should fund visits to foreign countries for those officers who became close with foreign officers who came to the United States.

Requiring and incentivizing these exchanges at the individual and unit level will pay dividends in operational capability and military-to-military diplomacy.

### *Diverse Career Paths*

The skills and experiences that the majority of interviewees viewed as critical for leadership development were generally outside standard career paths as officers understood them. Many considered themselves lucky to return to the service mainstream in order to contribute their experience-won skills. To eliminate this paradox, services and branches should use both the stick and the carrot by requiring a combination of educational and developmental experiences and honoring nonmainstream assignments through promotion and consideration for command. According to a combatant commander, “The system . . . has to tolerate nonstandardness. We should celebrate it.” A fellow combatant commander concurred, asserting “you want people who specifically come from different career paths.” Though some respondents suggested formalizing the consideration process for advancement based on nonstandard merits, most felt “it would be very difficult to do so. You can’t create committees. You do it by taking steps to ensure that these individuals are promoted and progress and that there are opportunities for these people.” Interviewees affirmed that this “honor[ing]-through-consideration” of nonstandard career paths should also be applied to officers who have developed a regional focus, as well as to noncombat arms leaders whose planning, leadership, and management skills ensure overall IW effectiveness.

### *Officers for Mentorship*

Identifying exceptionally talented leaders remains a challenge. Most interviewees felt “we generally get it right” with respect to identifying prospective future leaders. Some, however, were uncomfortable regarding the lack of rigor in identifying those officers at mid-career with the skill-sets, abilities, and background to excel at leading in hybrid environments. According to one SOCOM component commander, “Sometimes guys who are eye-wateringly good just don’t

get noticed.” Again, while interviewees rejected a formal process, several did advocate a means to identify subordinates with an aptitude for these developmental experiences. For a number of respondents, this would entail services inculcating in senior leaders an understanding of mentorship that is predisposed toward guiding subordinates who are deemed deserving.

Though not addressed by interviewees, identification and mentorship are also significant from the perspective of the tradeoffs that the developmental and broadening experiences highlighted in this article entail. Such tradeoffs present themselves in terms of increasing specific domain competency and familiarity with one’s own service. In confronting the constraints of time—both in terms of career progression and operational tempo—it is doubly important to develop programs and policies capable of identifying the right officers, at the appropriate stages in their careers, for mentorship and experiential broadening, if they are to develop the skills and abilities required to fill senior leadership positions in the joint force. Additionally, any approach to identifying and mentoring a cadre of joint force senior leaders will need to ensure that it provides opportunities for broadening exposure that are balanced against the requirement to focus on specific expertise.<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusion

Interviewees highlighted three clusters of characteristics necessary for successful IW leadership: cognitive, interpersonal, and managerial styles. These characteristics permitted them to understand their operating environment and plan successfully at the theater and strategic level. These same characteristics prepared them to marshal human and organizational resources while also equipping them to lead and inspire subordinates. While indicating a preference for career breadth, interviewees valued similar types of education, developmental assignments, and life experiences that cultivated the characteristics they deemed so important. In particular, they recommended diverse educational exposure, to include civilian institutions; recurrent joint assignments and exposure to the interagency processes and norms; assignments on theater- and strategic-level staffs in proximity to senior military and civilian leaders; substantive mixing between SOF and GPF forces; and repeated exposure to foreign cultures and their militaries.

In order to ensure that current operational tempos and institutional growth permit availability for these experiences, interviewees suggested modifications to institutional measures and policies. These recommendations involved creating billets for emerging leaders that permit them to take advantage of nontraditional developmental opportunities, and institutionally rewarding them for doing so. Interviewees affirmed the need for rigorous and sustained mentoring at the individual level, as well as development of institutional measures supporting mentorship. In sum, interviewees’ insight focused on ensuring that individual officers’ choices and institutional measures increase the likelihood that the characteristics and experiences identified here are found among the joint force’s future leaders, who will grapple with the challenges of diverse global operations in the midst of organizational change.

## Endnotes

1. See Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 5-6, 280–91.
2. These operating environment characteristics and functional implications have been referred to as “irregular warfare,” “hybrid war,” and “full-spectrum operations.” For these terms and their associated concepts, see *The Joint Operating Environment, 2008: Challenges and Implications for the Future Joint Force* (Norfolk, Va.: US Joint Forces Command, 2008); *Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC)*, Version 1.0 (Washington: Department of Defense, 2007); Pete Geren and George W. Casey, Jr., “Full-Spectrum Operations in Army Capstone

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15. For similar views, see Carlo Munoz, “SOCOM Chief Advocates ‘Balanced Warfare’ Approach for Future,” *Inside the Pentagon*, 12 February 2009.

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## Achieving Excellence in Small-Unit Performance

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*Combat exacts a moral cohesion, a solidarity more compact than ever before... The more men [and women] think themselves isolated, the more need they have of high morale. We are brought by dispersion to the need of cohesion greater than ever before.*<sup>1</sup>

With the advent of the Obama administration, the U.S. Army embarked upon a significant shift in military effort.<sup>2</sup> The primary U.S. strategic focus no longer remains rebuilding the state of Iraq. It has moved toward countering the Taliban insurgency in the mountainous regions of Afghanistan. Every environment is different from a military operations perspective, and Afghanistan certainly does not closely resemble its Iraq counterpart. Strategically, the numerous differences between Iraq and Afghanistan suggest that Afghanistan will be a greater challenge. Its terrain, climate, populace, natural resources, culture, and infrastructure all make operations in Afghanistan more difficult. Moreover, Afghan tribal warriors have historically displayed tenacity in insurgency. To compound these difficulties for our forces, critics argue that the U.S. military and its supporters must move to the rural segments of Afghanistan if the coalition is to be successful over the long term. Counterinsurgencies are seldom won from the confines of centralized base camps.

In all of this, the trends indicate the need for decentralized positions, distributed operations, effective small-unit leaders, and well-trained small units that must bear the brunt of close combat. The more decentralized operations are, the greater the reliance on effective leadership and small-unit performance. Recent research has revealed that we can best counter a decentralized, network-enabled enemy if our forces too are decentralized and network-enabled.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the tactics of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda to target civilians, schools, and crowded markets have placed a premium on discernment, perspective, and excellence in decision making at the small-unit level. The responsibility required of leaders and units at lower levels of command is clearly increasing, as is the potential that small units will continue to bear the brunt of close combat in the years to come. Units will fight separately and operate more independently with a greater need to be self-sustaining. Has the U.S. military done all that it can to improve small-unit performance and to develop small-unit excellence?

In the future, beyond Afghanistan, the range of challenges that we could potentially confront will become even greater. Our adversaries will certainly strive to decentralize, network, and operate among the people to blunt U.S. technological advantages. Thus, our continued success requires greater decentralization of capability, excellence in decision making, and the authority to overcome increasingly networked, decentralized threats. Simply stated, this requires us to increase our commitment to small-unit performance and leader development. One initiative, the Army Leader Development Strategy for an Expeditionary Army, underscores our increased commitment to develop leaders who are comfortable operating amidst this complexity.

This article sheds light on the characteristics of high-performing small units, expands on key Army Leader Development Strategy ideas, and considers ways to enhance small-unit performance. In the end, we will only achieve success through increased dialogue, a willingness to challenge the status quo, a sense of shared responsibility, and our persistent commitment across the Army.

## Characteristics of High-Performing Small Units

Seeking improvement in small-unit performance is as old as warfare itself. Polybius detailed the small-unit performance of the Roman army in *The Histories, Book X*, circa 146 BCE.<sup>4</sup> In this particular treatise, he highlighted the specific techniques used by Roman soldiers to plan and execute the destruction of the defenders of the walled city of Carthage. In 450 CE, Flavius Vegetius Renatus wrote *De Re Militare*, a prominent guide to improve small-unit performance for the Roman army, in an attempt to restore basic discipline to frontline units.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, merely stating that this has always been a goal does not preclude our need to continue to study how to maximize our capacity for attaining small-unit excellence today.

The traditional definition of a small unit tends to refer to the company level or below; however, the actual size of this unit may vary, depending on the scope, scale, and complexity of the mission.

**Effective leadership.** Effective leadership is not a journey in pursuit of perfection, but a continuous development process. The U.S. Army has been developing small-unit leaders since its inception and has published Army leadership manuals for decades. The current Field Manual 6-22, *Leadership*, defines those who lead. It states, “Leaders motivate, inspire, and influence others to take initiative, work toward a common purpose, accomplish critical tasks, and achieve organizational objectives. Influence is focused on compelling others to go beyond their individual interests and work for the common good.” Leadership deals with a broad range of skills. While not all-inclusive, leadership involves everything from demonstrating tactical and technical proficiency to motivating and building trust—from exemplifying the Warrior Ethos to fostering teamwork and cohesion.<sup>6</sup> “Be, Know, Do” is a more simplified version of an extremely complex set of characteristics.

We may have to incorporate initiatives earlier in the recruitment process. Efforts to bring early leadership opportunities to high school campuses may prove valuable over the long term. In addition, early screening of potential candidates, using human dimension tools, may help identify high quality candidates more effectively than the traditional screening provided by a high school diploma.

There is also work underway in the area of “trust” between leaders and subordinates. The Army Research Institute has initiated several projects to explore development of trust, including its swift development in ad hoc teams, scenario training for adaptive teams, and the Tactical Human Integration with Networked Knowledge efforts. Meanwhile, the Army’s Asymmetric Warfare Group is researching new techniques and methodologies in Outcome Based Training and Education. These initiatives may inform our understanding of leadership development and guide our efforts. Certainly, leadership is essential to any endeavor to improve small-unit performance.

**Effective use of information.** Exceptional small units actively seek and acquire information and use it effectively, an imperative in complex environments today. The rigorous demands of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations require that small units have access to national level databases, especially human intelligence databases. These databases expand the venues for leaders to learn from the edge, since many receive direct feeds from liaison elements on the tactical front. The Distributed Common Ground System-Army is available, but we need to train our Soldiers to leverage these assets.<sup>7</sup> The notion that leveraging is limited to higher-level headquarters units is no longer valid.

Moreover, the RAND study *Characteristics of High-Performance Units* found that “high-performance units do exist and one common characteristic is the effective use of information.”<sup>8</sup> These high-performance units “value information and use it by integrating information (either what is available or planning to get what they need) into operational plans.”<sup>9</sup> Information in these organizations was not stove-piped, but dynamically integrated into unit operations to assist Soldiers with understanding the environment, making decisions, disseminating new information, and providing information to subordinates.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to a common understanding, the high performance units possessed a common vision of how the operation would unfold. Information and vision improved cohesion and teamwork to achieve mission success. Units that do not value information do so at their own peril. Subsequently, the Army must strive to decrease Soldiers’ loads while connecting them to networks with applications that have been developed faster and increasingly leverage commercial infrastructures, such as the RITE capability (Relevant ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance] to the Edge). RITE uses satellite communications, an airborne layer, and third and fourth generation network extensions to provide network access to remote users.

**Competent decision making.** Small units demonstrate competence in the art and science of decision making. However, all small units do not necessarily excel in making *effective* decisions. Certainly core skill sets for decision making involve understanding, visualizing, and assessing the environment and situation. Effective decision makers, however, are also flexible, quick, resilient, adaptive, risk-taking, and accurate. These skill sets require higher-order training in critical thinking, and we must inculcate them into our training. The first core skill set is understanding—it is vital to decision making. Understanding needs to be measured and is related to the small-unit leader’s education, intellect, experience, perception, and the information he receives. To assist in understanding and enable decision makers to adapt in stride, the Army is exploring new training patterns like those developed by the Asymmetric Warfare Group and Army Research Institute. Intelligence, reconnaissance, and security are indispensable to understanding and can be supplemented by actively listening to and observing the population, leveraging technology, and listening to subordinates. Relevant information, augmented by training and the network, can enhance understanding and foster initiative.<sup>11</sup> We must continue to raise the standard of understanding across several areas and recognize that new norms are essential in the 21st century. Digital literacy, expanded use of space, and the understanding of cultures and foreign languages will enhance our knowledge base.

The second core skill, visualizing, improves decision making. We must train leaders at the small-unit level to establish mental frameworks of possible scenarios to enable them to detect, understand, and interpret relevant cues, patterns, and anomalies in the environment. Operations are fluid, dynamic, and changing, and appropriate visualization is essential to deal with a changing and complex environment. Anticipating and visualizing the end state requires small-unit leaders to understand the operational environment and to assess it continually against their cognitive baseline in terms of mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops available, time, and civil considerations.<sup>12</sup>

The third core skill, assessing, involves monitoring and studying the current situation. It encompasses the enemy’s reactions, vulnerabilities, and the changing environment and evaluates the progress of the operation using measures of effectiveness and measures of performance. Assessing involves comparing the anticipated end state with actual events on the ground and adjusting one’s situational awareness accordingly. In addition, the Army has developed the

human dimension concept to provide a broad, holistic approach to assess the Soldier's cognitive, physical, and social aspects. This assessment, in fact, goes beyond decision making, and looks at comprehensive Soldier fitness before, during, and after deployments. Accessing relevant information and leveraging the human dimension can improve Soldier resilience, intuition, and decision making under stressful conditions.<sup>13</sup>

**Foster innovation.** The relationships between agility, adaptability, and small-unit effectiveness are also as old as warfare itself. Since the advent of the pike, the longbow, the stirrup, and gunpowder, warriors have been agile enough to adapt to newer methods of warfighting for basic survival. Unquestionably, this basic characteristic remains applicable today. Innovation is best achieved when opportunity meets demand with immediate feedback. We need to deliver the right technologies to Soldiers who have to adapt while in contact with adaptive enemies. Some authors have recently argued that the Army needs to create a more adaptive culture by making small units the basic building block of Army operations.<sup>14</sup> We can improve agility and adaptability through training. We can encourage innovation by immersing Soldiers in challenging environments and exposing them to events that can accelerate their ability to learn under pressure. In addition, we can use the network to our advantage. Tactical Ground Reporting, coupled with mobile Internet devices and RITE, are good examples. By using them, we can begin to test a process of adaptability that leverages the network's new information technologies to enhance Soldier situational awareness, improve synchronization, and convey a leader's vision and intent as another means of bringing all elements of change together for small-unit effectiveness.

**Superior execution.** Small units use a basic set of procedures to execute assigned missions. Today, the preferred method is to use troop-leading procedures, a commonly understood process to successfully carry out assigned small-unit tasks in a time-compressed fashion. Troop-leading procedures give small-unit leaders a competent framework for planning, preparing, and executing operations, and they help with the development of plans and orders. While not rigid, troop-leading procedures follow eight practical steps: receive the mission, issue a warning order, make a tentative plan, initiate movement, conduct reconnaissance, complete the plan, issue the order, and supervise and refine. Leaders normally modify these steps to accommodate the specific mission at hand. The military decision making process is a parallel process used at battalion level and above. Interestingly, many of the steps undertaken in the military decision making process can be of value to smaller units. Future efforts to improve small-unit execution need to ensure the dissemination of the military decision making process to lower units or consider a modification of troop-leading procedures to incorporate insights derived from the decision-making process. For example, under the step of "make a tentative plan," small-units may consider developing and analyzing multiple courses of action before selecting the course of action. Outside the decision making process, and time permitting, they can conduct a "post-mortem" analysis session scrutinizing courses of action, on the assumption that they will fail, and then attempt to discover how failure occurred. This technique opens the thinking process to more readily identify potential weaknesses in the plan.

To deal with complex environments, the Army has recently developed "design" and is teaching and making this approach available to small units.<sup>15</sup> Rather than a top-down approach to "framing a problem," the new design approach provides an opportunity for subordinate leaders to help frame the problem for superiors. Emphasis should be placed on "co-creating of context." The approach should rely on top-down and bottom-up inputs from all levels, particularly from Soldiers' interaction with the population and their ability to leverage social networking.



**Figure 12-1. U.S. Army Soldiers from 52d Signal Battalion, Patch Barracks, Vaihingen, Germany, practice small-unit tactics during a Warrior Training exercise, near Baden Wuttemberg, Germany, 5 May 2009. U.S. Army photo by Eric Steen.**

The bottom line is that mission success hinges on enabling small-unit excellence in decision making and consistent superior execution. Can we improve our troop-leading procedures and the military decision making process? By using best practices and innovative training methods like Outcome Based Training and Education and cognitive-based training, we can develop hybrid sets of innovative training procedures that can lead to high performing and adaptive teams.

**Thorough preparation and pre-combat inspections.** How do we better leverage the new forms of electronic media for mission preparation? Today, small-unit preparations are much more advanced in form and substance. These activities include, but are not limited to, plan refinement, reconnaissance, coordination, pre-combat inspections, movement, and rehearsals. During plan refinement, leaders adjust the plan based on new information, enemy actions, unit dispositions, and results of reconnaissance. Additional overhead reconnaissance improves execution by monitoring threat activities up to the actual event. Rehearsals come in several forms and aim to improve small-unit performance during execution. Rehearsal techniques include full-dress rehearsal, reduced-force rehearsal, terrain-model rehearsal, sketch-map rehearsal, map rehearsal, network rehearsal, combined arms rehearsal, support rehearsal, and battle-drill rehearsal.

With the advent of network connectivity, small units can now exploit new software programs to rehearse with joint, multinational, interagency, and intergovernmental partners. Today, computerized mission rehearsal imagery and maps allow units to virtually see their objectives and routes to objectives through embedded training. This includes ground-level color photos or video footage of the area of operations. Virtual training has also expanded to the online Army Training Network and the Joint Training Counter IED (improvised explosive device) Integration Center, where devices like the Apple iPod Touch, iPhone, and other devices allow Soldiers to download the latest vignette to hone skills such as collateral damage avoidance.

Through mobile Internet devices, any Soldier will be able to carry his or her lesson to the squad tent or to the dining facility, or use it for hip-pocket training. New immersive simulation environments can also enhance unit capabilities in stressful situations. Electronic video war games, such as Virtual Battle Space 2 (VBS2), provide realistic scenarios that stress leaders' reaction capabilities; VBS2-based video vignettes of actual operations enhance teaching. Even beyond this, immersive environments for the entire unit could lead to greater resilience and complex adaptive behaviors.<sup>16</sup> The end result of incorporating more varied, authentic, demanding, and relevant mission rehearsals is a cognitively prepared, more effective, and adaptive combat unit.

The Army is shifting to immersive training. This is training that emphasizes Soldiers learning by teaching themselves as opposed to emphasizing the role of teachers in the learning process. It places Soldiers in a most realistic, relevant set of conditions while in a virtual or live battlespace. Should we do even more to improve rehearsals and immersive environments and leverage live, virtual, and constructive integrated training environments?

**Thorough assessment of performance.** U.S. Army small units frequently use the after action review to enhance the learning process. After action reviews allow all Soldiers within a unit to discuss an actual event and help ensure that all participants discover for themselves what happened, comprehend why certain actions occurred, and discuss how they can improve performance. They provide a nonthreatening environment, encourage Soldiers and leaders to be more candid, and foster self-discovery in areas in which Soldiers and leaders need to improve. After action reviews provide the essential feedback to correct and improve training deficiencies. Successful small units habitually use after action reviews to provide a candid assessment of strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. The best units are open to embracing change, have open discussions on how to improve, and support active learning in all ranks.

Over time, the technique of "red teaming" has proven to be highly effective at improving practices in higher headquarters. Similar techniques may prove beneficial at lower echelons with minimal force structure additions.

**Executing full spectrum operations.** Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, exposes Army units to a different set of tasks in its newest edition. Many of these tasks are not the traditional force-on-force tasks that involve kinetic actions. Thus, high-performing small units must be capable of understanding, training for, and executing a diverse set of military tasks, even though the timelines for preparation are more compressed than in the past. Army forces traditionally used offensive and defensive operations to defeat the threat on land. They must now simultaneously execute stability or civil support operations along with offensive and defensive operations anywhere along the spectrum of conflict and in any operational environment. Stability operations tend to cover offensive and defensive operations in peace operations, peacetime military engagements, and limited interventions. These new norms raise the bar for Soldier basic tasks. These new tasks include foreign cultural and language awareness, digital literacy, use of space assets like Global Positioning Systems, and an understanding of enemy-site exploitation and forensics. Civil support tasks apply to operations within the United States and its territories. Today, operations require versatile, well-trained units and tough, adaptive leaders that can deal with complex environments.

**Possess a dynamic process of change.** Captain Timothy Lupfer, in his Leavenworth Paper, *The Dynamics of Doctrine: The Changes in German Tactical Doctrine during the First World War*, sheds light on a proven approach to improving small-unit performance. He examines the

process of institutional change that led to remarkable tactical successes for German units on the Western Front. This approach was not rigidly sequential, but involved a dynamic process that required great intellectual capacity and firm character to drive the successful changes down to small units during a time of war. The ten-step process included perceiving the need for change, soliciting ideas from frontline units, and defining, disseminating, and enforcing the change, as well as modifying equipment and organizations and training, testing, evaluating, and refining the change.<sup>17</sup> Using these steps, General Eric von Ludendorff implemented rapid changes to his tactical units that led to two major breakthroughs. First, the use of the elastic defense in depth, developed by Ludendorff in 1916, halted Allied infantry offenses with a minimum number of German defense units. Second, the use of newly developed tactical doctrine led to a series of successful German offensive advances in 1918. As General Wilhelm Balck once noted, “Bullets quickly write new tactics.” In both cases, the solutions were tested before fielding. During World War I, desperately needed change resulted in rapid developments to improve the effectiveness of small German units on the Western Front. Our Army has a similar process of change today. Can we learn from these early experiences?

**Peer-to-peer integration and development.** The emergent qualities of high-performing small units have a number of notable attributes—the synergistic capacity to work together; the ability to develop superior leaders (beyond the appointed leadership); the capacity to adapt; the flexibility to handle fast changing situations; and the resilience to maintain these characteristics in the face of adversity, including the death of team members. Recent work in the field of neurological sciences is making great strides in building resilience, stress tolerance, and leadership *in extremis*. Increased awareness of the importance for Soldiers to be physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually fit highlights another dimension to the challenges of achieving small-unit excellence.

There is a shared cognition or common understanding that evolves in training together that is closely coupled with trust and interdependence. These attributes are forged and shaped through the development of teamwork and the emotional fulfillment of being a part of a team or a greater whole. The success of the team reflects back on individual success and a sense of belonging, accomplishment, and achievement. The bond created when team members train together and build unit cohesion is valuable, and something we may not replicate otherwise. Small units achieve greatness through this when competence breeds the confidence that cements cohesion. Distributed operations and decentralized command may force small units to excel while being isolated, but it also requires a special strength to avoid creating their own rules in the absence of higher headquarters supervision. Decentralized operations will certainly lead to a greater reliance on the need to develop teamwork, cohesion, and trust.<sup>18</sup>

Today, the U.S. Army is increasing its emphasis and focus on improving small-unit effectiveness by connecting the Soldier to the network—in both the garrison and the operating environment. There are several ongoing approaches to achieve connectivity. One approach is the development of the Ground Soldier System. We are providing battle command and situational awareness capabilities to dismounted small-unit leaders by connecting them to the network in the operational environment to enable appropriate and timely tactical actions, focus organic fires, and facilitate requests for joint supporting fires while minimizing the potential for fratricide. This system provides the tools that give small-unit leaders the flexibility to handle rapidly changing situations and conduct distributed operations. Development of the Ground Soldier System should converge with other systems, such as handheld devices, Rifleman’s Radio, and Joint Battle Command.



**Figure 12-2. U.S. Soldiers from the 52d Signal Battalion practice small-unit tactics during a warrior training exercise at the Boeblingen Local Training Area in Germany, 5 May 2009. U.S. Army photo by Eric Steen.**

Our Army is also leveraging the development of simulations and tools that bring the battlefield to the Soldier in an immersive environment. We are continuing to experiment and capture lessons learned at Army Expeditionary Warrior Experiment and Army Evaluation Task Force, as well as other experimental and operational venues. We are also connecting through new efforts in the implementation of the Human Dimension Strategy and the Army Campaign Plan.

We are improving small-unit performance by improving individual Soldier performance. The Lighten the Load initiative is streamlining the basic equipment our Soldiers use and reducing its weight—from the over 100 pounds today to around 73 pounds by 2017. We are fielding new composite materials to reduce the weight of protective vests, improve helmet ballistic protection, and increase Soldier mobility. We are improving combat identification with dual-purpose flashlights that provide basic illumination and reflect a Soldier’s identity in terms of friend or foe.

However, improvement is a continuous process. We still need to do much more work. In the area of live, virtual, and constructive environments, our goal should be to ensure that all Soldiers have access to immersive training. In the area of handheld devices, we need to give every Soldier a personal digital assistant with sufficient power, applications, speed, and memory to handle current and projected requirements. Small-unit leaders are the centerpiece of current combat operations. The Army must develop flexible and adaptive leaders and provide appropriate network-connected tools to facilitate superior execution in decentralized operating environments. In the human dimension, we must improve morale and unit cohesiveness and provide the tools to understand the cognitive, physical, and social aspects of comprehensive Soldier fitness. We should give every small-unit leader and individual Soldier the capacity to access information regarding his or her comprehensive Soldier fitness.

## Conclusion

Several common threads are apparent in the high performance of small units.

First, the use of information makes a significant difference in building units able to exploit advances in improved small-unit leadership, understanding, subordinate actions, and adaptability across the spectrum of operations.

Second, while the basics have not changed, we can leverage advances in human-dimension concepts and new decision making tools to create a significant leap in small-unit performance.

Third, a dynamic process of change is necessary to document notable advances and to share these techniques with the rest of the Army so that we can have a wide impact on the operational force.

Fourth, testing is necessary to get the right solutions to the right problems.

Small-unit excellence is possible. With a purposeful approach to change, the U.S. Army can develop dynamic solutions for the operational force and better prepare our small units to achieve excellence in the 21st Century.

## Endnotes

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