

# **Insights and Best Practices**

## **Focus Paper**



# **Interorganizational Coordination**

***Fourth Edition***

**Deployable Training Division  
Joint Staff J7**

**July 2013**

**Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited**

This is the Fourth Edition of the Interorganizational Coordination Insights and Best Practices Focus Paper, written by the Deployable Training Division (DTD) of the Joint Staff J7 and published by the Joint Staff J7.

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## PREFACE

The Joint Staff J7 supports the CJCS and the Joint Warfighter through joint force development to advance the operational effectiveness of the current and future joint force. This paper, written by the Deployable Training Division (DTD), helps inform both the joint warfighters and key functions within the J7, notably lessons learned, doctrine, education, and future joint force development. In addition to this paper, the DTD has also developed an overarching Joint Operations Insights and Best Practices Paper and numerous other focus papers that share insights and best practices for various challenges observed at joint headquarters. All of these papers are unclassified for broad accessibility. I commend these papers for your reading.

The DTD gains insights on operational matters through regular contact and dialogue with combatant and joint task force commanders and their staffs as they plan, prepare for, and conduct operations. The DTD observer/trainers collect and compare practices among the different headquarters, draw out and refine “insights” and “best practices,” and share them with the joint force.

We are fortunate to have several senior flag officers, active and retired, assist in development and vetting of these insights and best practice papers. Of note, General (Retired) Gary Luck, a Senior Fellow at the National Defense University, plays an active part. Their participation not only helps keep the DTD trainers at the theater-strategic and operational level, but also ensures that they retain a commander-centric perspective in these papers.

Please pass on your comments to DTD’s POC Mr. Mike Findlay so that we can improve this paper. Email address is: [js.dsc.j7.mbx.joint-training@mail.mil](mailto:js.dsc.j7.mbx.joint-training@mail.mil).



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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

Diplomatic, informational, and economic factors increasingly affect national security in today's complex environment. We have observed numerous best practices, all centered on an atmosphere of inclusiveness, in how operational commanders and our interagency partners work together to achieve objectives. This inclusiveness is often in collaboration with IGOs, NGOs, and the private sector in a broad comprehensive, whole of government approach in bringing together all elements of national and international power to achieve strategic objectives.

There are challenges associated with unified action and interagency coordination. The players recognize that there will not be pure "unity of command" with one single authority and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. They acknowledge that absolute "unity of effort" is often difficult. Also, our interagency partners do not have the funding, number of personnel, or the capacity of the military. Further, their perspectives on a situation and possible solutions can be different than our own. There is also the simple friction of working together with the different "cultures" of other agencies and organizations. Other agencies use different planning and decision-making processes than do military commands. Interagency coordination is just not as easy as one would like it to be. That said, we observe a continuing recognition and effort toward integration of effort toward common goals.

### Key Insights:

- Personal relationships are key to coordination and unity of effort.
- Focus on common goals and objectives to attain unified action.
- "C5 thinking" (Command, Control, Cooperation, Coordination, and Collaboration) is more appropriate to gaining unity of effort than terms like "Command and Control."
- Thinking inclusion vice exclusion with external stakeholders is important during planning, execution, and assessment. Inclusion allows better understanding of the situation and the broader problem (beyond a military-only perspective), leading to better "whole of government" solutions.
- Understand the different roles, authorities, missions, culture, and processes of external stakeholders in both foreign and domestic operations.
- Coordination and execution in this complex environment with the numerous stakeholders is extremely challenging and needs continuous effort to keep on track.
- Recognize and mitigate the classification and information sharing implications.
- Effective relationships and coordination with lead federal agencies are key to gaining situational awareness of external stakeholders who can impact the mission.

**Unity of Effort:** Coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization - the product of successful unified action.

**Unified Action:** The synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort. *- Joint Pub 1-02 for both*

**Interagency Coordination:** Within the context of Department of Defense involvement, the coordination that exists between elements of the Department of Defense and engaged U.S. government agencies, for the purpose of achieving an objective. *- Joint Pub 1-02*

**Interorganizational Coordination:** The interaction that occurs among elements of the DOD; engaged USG agencies; state, territorial, local, and tribal agencies; foreign military forces and government agencies; intergovernmental organizations (IGOs); nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and the private sector. *- Joint Pub 3-08*

**2.0 UNIFIED ACTION.** U.S. military operations are typically conducted within a unity of effort framework which includes interagency partners, and often IGOs, NGOs, and the private sector. Every headquarters we visit identifies unity of effort as key to achieving strategic objectives in today's environment. Our interagency

partners in the field agree. All recognize the value of harmonizing and synchronizing military actions with the actions of other instruments of national and international

power. We find the term "C5 thinking" (Command, Control, Cooperation, Coordination, and Collaboration) is much more appropriate to these unity of effort settings than is the term "Command and Control." As Secretary Gates stated, "...to meet the myriad challenges around the world ...this country must... create the capability to integrate and apply all of the elements of national power to problems and challenges abroad."<sup>1</sup>

**"C5 thinking" (Command, Control, Cooperation, Coordination, and Collaboration) is more appropriate to gaining unity of effort than terms like "Command and Control."**

Joint Publication 3-08, *Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations*<sup>2</sup>, uses the term "interorganizational" to address DOD interface with all external stakeholders including domestic and foreign government agencies, foreign militaries, IGOs, NGOs, and private organizations. Interagency is still an appropriate term when discussing DOD interface with U.S. Government (USG) agencies. As discussed, achieving unity of effort is the stated goal from all partners' perspectives, however, even defining 'unity of effort' can be difficult. As seen in the box to the right, there is a difference of definition between US State Department and US Defense

Department definitions of 'unity of effort.' Although the actual differences of meaning are slight, this demonstrates the difficulties when working among various agencies and partners who may not speak the same 'language' as the military.

We have observed a very inclusive approach of working hand-in-hand with interagency partners and other interorganizational stakeholders in achieving unified action. The

military commanders we visit in the field understand the different authorities, perspectives, and 'cultures' among these entities. They avoid taking an authoritative lead role in this coordination realizing the value of different perspectives and capabilities, and that a military-led approach may be counterproductive to effective relationships, impede overall unity of effort, and compromise mission accomplishment.

**Unity of Effort – Definitions**

DOD Definition:

Coordination and cooperation toward common objectives, even if the participants are not necessarily part of the same command or organization - the product of successful unified action.

Source: JP 1-02

DoS Definition

A cooperative concept, which refers to coordination and communication among USG organizations toward the same common goals for success; in order to achieve unity of effort, it is not necessary for all organizations to be controlled under the same command structure, but it is necessary for each agency's efforts to be in harmony with the short- and long-term goals of the mission. Unity of effort is based on four principles:

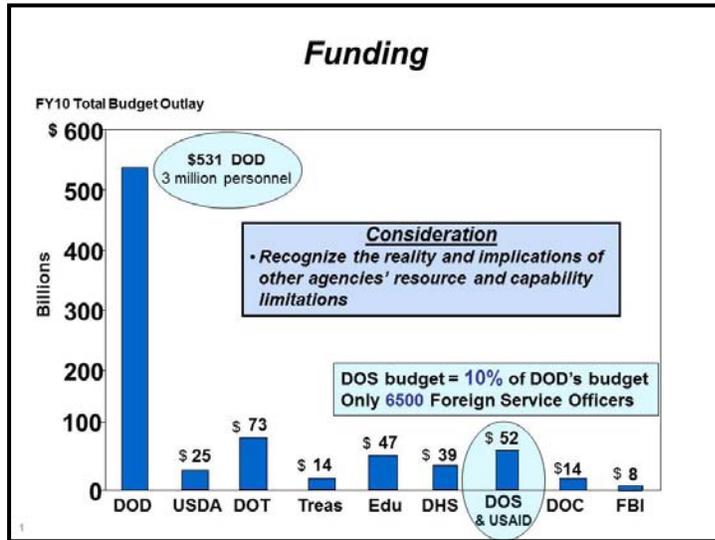
1. Common understanding of the situation
2. Common vision or goals for the mission
3. Coordination of efforts to ensure continued coherency
4. Common measures of progress and ability to change course if necessary

Source: 3D Planning Guide: Diplomacy, Development, Defense (Sept 2011)

<sup>1</sup> Remarks delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Landon Lecture (Kansas State University), Manhattan, Kansas, Monday, November 26, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations*, Joint Pub 3-08 (Washington, DC: 24 June 2011).

This coordination continues to improve; however, friction will normally remain at the operational and theater strategic level with respect to unified action and interagency coordination in day-to-day operations. This friction is tied to different authorities, cultures, and focus areas relevant to the various USG departments.



There is also a difference in capacity. Our interagency partners do not have the capacity of the U.S. military. The figure at left, while dated, provides a representative picture of the Federal budget apportionment among the Executive Branch agencies. A bar chart showing personnel figures would depict a similar picture. Department of State (DOS), together with USAID, had about a \$50B budget and 57,000 employees in FY2010 of which half are foreign nationals. This is in stark contrast to DOD with its \$513B budget and 3 million strong work force. This

difference in capacity often drives the military to assist with tasks it is not habitually accustomed to support. The military-civilian teams which make up the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in both Iraq and Afghanistan are an example of the military support to a traditionally civilian task of reconstruction and development.

There remain numerous challenges to fully achieving unified action. In the past several years our operational commanders and interagency partners have overcome many of the difficulties at the theater-strategic and operational levels through the development of personal relationships, mutual respect, and recognition of the need for teamwork in attaining national objectives.

### 3.0 FRAMEWORK FOR DOMESTIC OPERATIONS.

#### Categories of Military Domestic Operations:

Military operations inside the U.S. and its territories fall into four categories: Homeland Defense (HD), Emergency Preparedness (EP), Civil Support (CS), and Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA).

HD is defined as “*The protection of United States sovereignty, territory, domestic population, and critical defense infrastructure against external threats and aggression or other threats as directed by the President.*”<sup>3</sup> Within the context of HD, the homeland is “*the physical region that includes the continental United States [(CONUS)], Alaska, Hawaii, United States territories and possessions, and surrounding territorial waters and airspace.*”<sup>4</sup>

EP includes those measures taken in advance of an emergency to reduce the loss of life and property and to protect a nation’s institutions from all types of hazards through a comprehensive emergency management program of preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. DOD EP contributes to HD and CS missions and the National Preparedness Goal.

CS is DOD support to U.S. civil authorities for domestic emergencies, and for designated law enforcement and other activities.

DSCA is CS provided under the auspices of the National Response Framework (NRF).<sup>5</sup> It is defined by the NRF as support provided by U.S. military forces (Regular, Reserve, and National Guard), DOD civilians, DOD contract personnel, and DOD agency and component assets, in response to requests for assistance (RFA) from civilian Federal, State, and local authorities for domestic emergencies, designated law enforcement support, and other domestic activities.<sup>6</sup> The NRF provides structures for implementing national-level policy and operational coordination for domestic incident response. Incidents include actual or potential emergencies or all-hazard events that range from accidents and natural disasters to actual or potential terrorist attacks. Such incidents range from modest events wholly contained within a single community to others that are catastrophic in nature and national in their scope of consequences.



The DOD nearly always supports civil authorities at the Federal, State, and/or local levels in the mission areas of CS, DSCA, and EP, while leading efforts in HD missions. The President and SecDef define the circumstances under which DOD will be involved in these domestic operations.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Homeland Defense*, Joint Pub 3-27, (Washington, DC: 12 July 2007), p GL-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p GL-8.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *National Response Framework*, January 2008,

<http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nfr/nrf-core.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> “State” includes the 50 States plus territorial entities. “Local” includes city, county, tribal, town, and other municipal jurisdictions.

### National Policies (general overview):

Policies and law pertaining to domestic military operations are significantly different, and often more complex, than those governing foreign military operations. Pursuant to Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, the Secretary of Homeland Security is responsible for coordinating Federal resources within the United States to prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.<sup>7</sup> HSPD-5 further designates the Secretary of Homeland Security as the “Principal Federal Official” (PFO) for domestic incident management. The Secretary can further designate a PFO to execute incident management responsibilities.

HSPD-8<sup>8</sup> and HSPD-20<sup>9</sup> are companion directives that expand upon the concept of a single national incident management system as described in HSPD-5. HSPD-8 outlines steps for improved coordination by Federal departments and agencies in preparation for response to a domestic incident and prevention during the early stages of a terrorist attack. HSPD-20 provides policy and guidance on a comprehensive national plan to ensure continuity of essential government activities and functions. The primary DOD policy and planning documents that address emergency preparedness are DODD 3020.36 (Assignment of National Security Preparedness Responsibilities to DOD Components) and the DOD Strategy for Homeland Defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities (published February 2013).

The NRF is a guide as to how the nation conducts all-hazards response. It is built upon scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordination structures to align key roles and responsibilities across the nation. A basic premise of the NRF is that incidents are generally handled at the lowest jurisdictional level possible. In the vast majority of incidents, State and local resources and interstate mutual aid provide the first line of emergency response and incident management support. When State resources and capabilities are overwhelmed, Governors may request Federal assistance. The NRF provides the guide for Federal interaction with State, local, tribal, private-sector, and nongovernmental entities in the context of domestic incident management to ensure timely and effective Federal support. The Catastrophic Incident Supplement (CIS) to the NRF provides the framework for the operational-level military support. The scope of the disaster will determine the size of the force employed by U.S. Northern, Southern, and/or Pacific Commands (as these are the GCCs which would be involved in DSCA).

DOD integrates into the national incident response architecture through DSCA.<sup>10</sup> DSCA refers to DOD support provided by Federal military forces, DOD civilians and contract personnel, and DOD agencies and components in response to requests for assistance. The Secretary of Defense (SecDef) will authorize DSCA subject to his discretion as to the impact on DOD’s ability to meet the nation’s defense requirements. DOD typically provides DSCA on a reimbursable basis as authorized by law.

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<sup>7</sup> Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, “Management of Domestic Incidents,” 28 February, 2003.

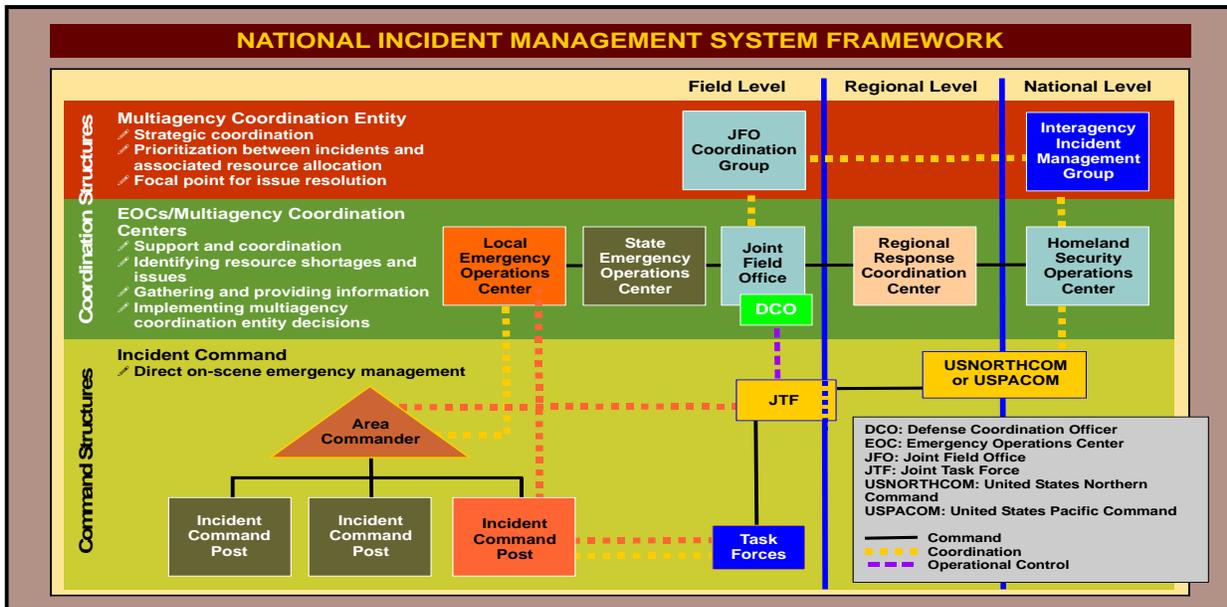
<sup>8</sup> HSPD-8, “National Preparedness,” 17 December, 2003.

<sup>9</sup> HSPD-20, “National Continuity Policy,” 4 May 2007.

<sup>10</sup> The primary policy and planning documents that govern the DSCA processes are DoDD 3025.18, CJCSI 3125.01B, and Department of Defense Strategy for Homeland Defense and Defense Support of Civil Authorities; February 2013.

Organization (for DSCA scenarios):

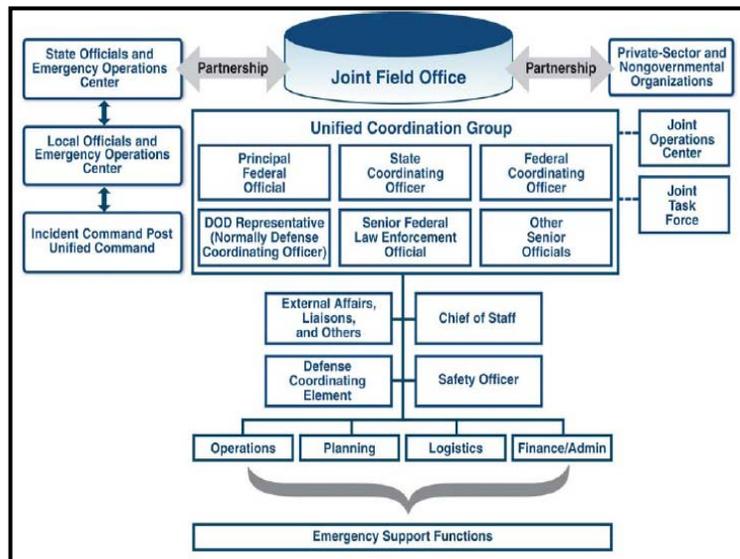
The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provides the framework for response at all jurisdictional levels, regardless of the cause, size, or complexity of the domestic incident. NIMS is a comprehensive nationwide template for incident management to standardize processes, protocols, and procedures for use by all responders. Additionally, NIMS mandates the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) to organize and manage incidents of all sizes and scopes. The broad NIMS framework, shown in the figure below, depicts the coordination and command structures from field level to national level.



The Joint Field Office (JFO) is a temporary Federal facility established by DHS / FEMA at the operational level to provide a central coordination point for Federal, State, and local executives with responsibility for incident oversight, direction, and/or assistance to effectively coordinate protection, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery resources (see figure).

The JFO does not manage on-scene operations. Instead, the JFO focuses on providing support to on-scene efforts and conducting broader support operations that may extend beyond the incident site.

Within the JFO, the Federal Coordinating Officer<sup>11</sup> (FCO) manages Federal resource support



<sup>11</sup> Designated by the Secretary, DHS

activities. The FCO is responsible for coordinating the timely delivery of Federal disaster assistance resources and programs to the affected State and local governments, individual victims, and the private sector.

The Defense Coordinating Officer<sup>12</sup> (DCO) is a USNORTHCOM asset assigned to each Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) region and works within the JFO structure. The DCO serves as DOD's single point of contact to the FCO. RFAs are coordinated and processed through the DCO.

A DSCA scenario provides the greatest potential for employment of a large scale military force. Based on the magnitude, type of incident and anticipated level of resource involvement, the DOD may designate a Joint Task Force (JTF) Commander to command Federal (Title 10) military activities in support of the incident objectives. The JTF Commander exercises operational control of Federal military personnel and most defense resources in a Federal response (excluding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). Unless federalized, National Guard forces remain under the control of a State Governor. It is important to remember that the JTF will remain a supporting element to state and federal authorities.

Military forces normally remain under the established Title 10, 32, or State Active Duty military chain of command within the designated area of responsibility (AOR). However, Title 32 forces may be federalized and fall under Title 10 control. This transfer has both legal and rules for the use of force (RUF) implications.<sup>13</sup>

The use of a JTF does not replace the requirement for a DCO who remains the DOD single point of contact in the JFO for requesting assistance from DOD.<sup>14</sup> In accordance with the NRF, the JTF synchronizes its actions with the several multiagency coordinating structures at the field, regional, and headquarters levels. As such, the JTF HQ will often have a liaison element at the JFO to support the DCO and assist in coordination and unity of effort. This liaison element does not supplant the DCO roles and responsibilities as part of the JFO Unified Coordination Group and staff.

USG resources and interagency coordination information can be found at the National Response Framework Resources Center website: <http://www.fema.gov/national-response-framework>

#### Insights and Best Practices:

- Upon activation of a JTF, clarify roles and responsibilities of the DCO and JTF Commander with respect to the FCO and the geographic combatant commander (GCC).
- Understand and follow the NRF-described role of the DCO and provide robust liaison to the DCO to help share situational awareness, determine current and future support requirements, and support the mission assignment development process.
- Take time to understand the NIMS framework; specifically how the incident command posts and area command centers relate to the multiagency coordination centers for operational information sharing and resource coordination (particularly the request for assistance process).

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<sup>12</sup> The DCO is normally an O-6.

<sup>13</sup> In certain circumstances, after agreement between the President and the associated Governor, a Contingency Dual Status Commander may be appointed with command and control responsibilities over both Title 10 and Title 32 forces.

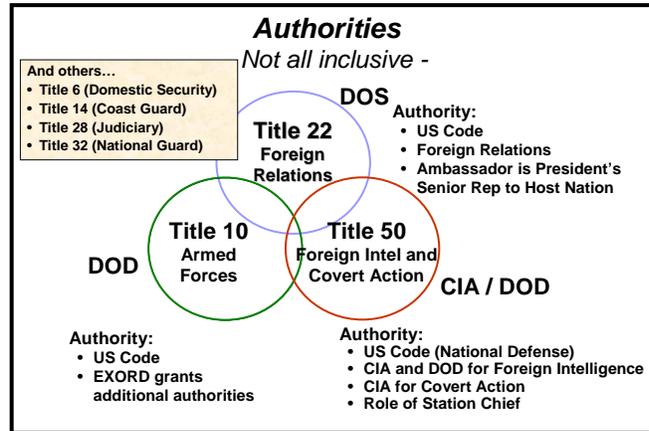
<sup>14</sup> *National Response Framework*, <http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nfr/nrf-core.pdf>.

- Understand the NIMS Incident Command System (ICS) scalable organizational structure of the JFO (i.e., the management, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration sections) in order to better integrate with the JFO.
- Offer assistance to the FCO with JTF staff planning, monitoring, and assessment capabilities in the JFO. Advise the FCO and DCO on the best use of JTF capabilities, and assist with development of RFAs. This staff support may often be provided along Emergency Support Functions (ESF) lines.
- Use an existing common unclassified information sharing mechanism, such as the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), to collaborate and share information with the interagency and other external stakeholders.

#### 4.0 FRAMEWORK FOR FOREIGN OPERATIONS.<sup>15</sup>

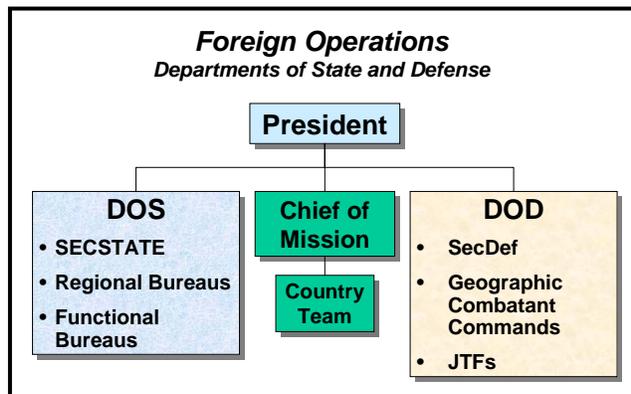
Policies: Within the Executive Branch, DOS is the lead foreign affairs agency, assisting the President in foreign policy formulation and execution.

By U.S. Code, each USG agency has unique authorities and responsibilities. Under Title 22, the Secretary of State is responsible for assisting the President with foreign policy; Title 10 gives responsibility for the Armed Forces to the Secretary of Defense. Understanding authorities/roles/processes of interagency partners and other external stakeholders helps us gain synergy of action.<sup>16</sup>



Within the USG, the Armed Forces perform in supported and supporting roles with other USG departments and agencies. Sometimes the Joint Force Commander (JFC) draws on the capabilities of other organizations; sometimes the JFC provides capabilities to other organizations; and sometimes the JFC merely deconflicts activities with those of others.

U.S. military forces always remain under the command authority of the President. Coordination and integration among the joint force and other government agencies, IGOs, NGOs, and private sector entities should not be equated to the command and control of a military operation.



Organization: The U.S. bilateral representation in the foreign country is known as the diplomatic mission. The headquarters of the mission is the embassy.

A mission is led by a Chief of Mission (COM), either an ambassador or a chargé. The COM is responsible for recommending and implementing national policy regarding the foreign country, and is responsible for overseeing the activities of USG employees in the mission. The COM has authority over all

USG personnel in country, except for those assigned to a combatant command, a USG multilateral mission, or an IGO. The country team, headed by the COM, is the senior in-country interagency coordinating body.

Department of Defense Directive (DODD) 5105.75 (DOD Operations at U.S. Embassies) establishes the position of Senior Defense Official (SDO) as the principle DOD Official in U. S.

<sup>15</sup> The source for much of this “doctrinal” information is JP 3-08. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations*, Joint Pub 3-08 (Washington, DC: 24 June 2011).

<sup>16</sup> See DTD Focus paper on Authorities dated July 2013. See URL on inside of front cover.

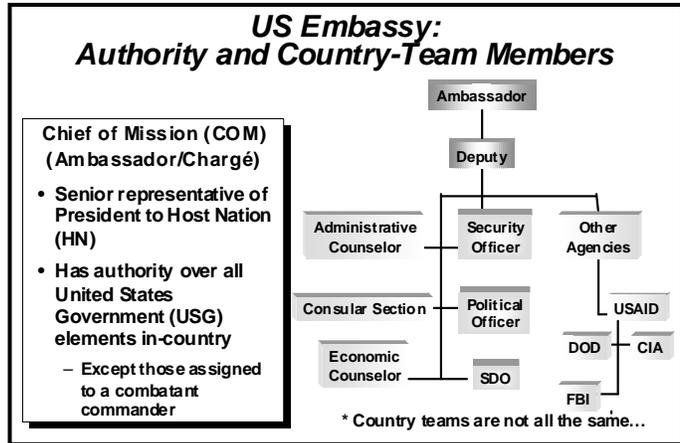
embassies, as designated by the SecDef.<sup>17</sup> The SDO is the diplomatically accredited Defense Attaché (DATT) and Chief of the Security Assistance Organization (SAO). As such, the SDO/DATT is the COM's principal military advisor on defense and national security issues, the senior diplomatically accredited DOD military officer assigned to a U.S. diplomatic mission, and the single point of contact for all DOD matters involving the embassy or DOD element assigned to or working from the embassy. The SDO/DATT is the in-country focal point for planning, coordinating, supporting, and/or executing U.S. defense issues and activities in the host nation, including Theater Security Cooperation programs under the oversight of the GCC.

There is normally both a U.S. Defense Attaché Office (USDAO) and a Security Assistance Office (SAO) on the country team. These offices are both organized under the SDO/DATT as discussed above. The USDAO is an office of Service attachés led by the DATT and managed by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The SAO operates under the direction of the COM and coordinating authority of the SDO, reports administratively to the GCC, and is funded by Defense Security Cooperation Agency. The SAO is called by various specific names such as the Office of Defense Cooperation, the Security Assistance Office, and the Military Group, largely based by the naming preference of the receiving country.

Beyond the SDO/DATT there may be benefit to having a GCC or JTF LNO at the embassy for a specified event or operation. This will, again, be a negotiated process with the receiving embassy country team. There are a number of reasons why an Ambassador may not want additional military in and around their embassy – including host nation concerns (e.g., many nations limit the number of military members allowed in U.S. embassies as a quid pro quo to how many are allowed into their embassies in the U.S.), space and communications limitations, and confusing new coordination requirements.

Within a theater, the GCC remains the focal point for planning and implementation of regional and theater military strategies, policies, plans, and engagements that require interagency coordination. As such, the GCC coordinates closely with each COM within his AOR to develop Country Plans which provide overall focus and strategic goals.

USG agencies, including DOD, may sometimes be placed in some form of supported or supporting relationships with Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs). IGOs are formal organizations made up of two or more governments usually formalized by treaties, such as the United Nations (UN) or the Organization of American States (OAS). Our relationship with IGOs will depend on the situation and the governing treaty. However, in some operations, USG



<sup>17</sup> Department of Defense, DODD 5105.75, *Department of Defense Operations at U.S. Embassies*, (Washington, DC: 21 December 2007).

agencies' relationships with IGOs are neither supported nor supporting. In these cases, cooperation is voluntary and based upon national guidance, common goals and good will.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) do not operate within military, governmental, or IGO hierarchies. Therefore, the relationship between the Armed Forces and NGOs is neither supported nor supporting. However, we find that common interests may drive a close relationship (e.g., in humanitarian assistance / disaster response).

We continue seeing the U.S. Armed Forces operating as part of multinational organizations. As stated in the National Security Strategy of May 2010, the U.S. will work “*from inside international institutions and frameworks to face their imperfections head on and to mobilize transnational cooperation.*”<sup>18</sup> When working within a coalition or IGO structure it is important that the JFC understand other nations' prerogatives, operational caveats, limitations, and relationships. Coalition and multinational partners can bring significant capabilities. Commanders and staffs must understand how to most effectively incorporate these capabilities. Incorporation of these multinational and coalition factors throughout the decision cycle helps enable unity of effort; keeping in mind that unity of effort does not necessarily mean a balance of effort.

Foreign operations also, by definition, require consideration of host nation concerns and perspectives. U.S. forces are, to varying degrees, operating in foreign countries at the invitation of the host nation. Even in non-permissive environments consideration of the civilian population's perspective is essential. We have seen some operational commanders raise information about host nation institutions or organizations to the level of critical information requirements through “Host Nation Information Requirements (HNIRs),” identified as Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs). HNIRs allow the commander to more effectively partner, develop plans, integrate with civilian activities, and make decisions.

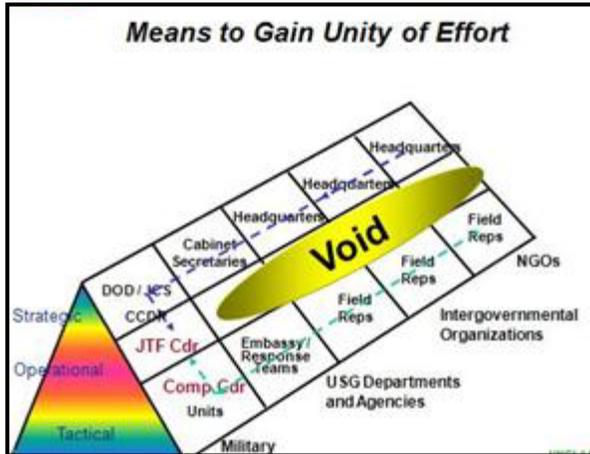
#### Insights and Best Practices:

- Develop strong personal relationships with key interagency and IGO leadership to promote unity of effort and overcome organizational and cultural differences.
- Upon activation of a JTF, clarify the JTF Commander's authority with respect to that of the GCC relative to interaction with affected COMs. Additionally, clarify the JTF role with the SDO in terms of speaking with one voice to the COM and the Country Team.
- Sending liaison officers (LNO) to an Embassy is a negotiated process; it's not automatic. Be proactive in working this.
- Avoid ‘overwhelming’ interagency partners and other external stakeholders with coordination and planning demands by channeling most communications through your LNO (and the SDO) team.
- Incorporate and enable LNOs from host nation, coalition, and multinational partners to ensure understanding and consideration of national and IGO limitations, capabilities, and caveats.

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<sup>18</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy*, (Washington, DC: May 2010), p 13.

**5.0 COORDINATION INSIGHTS AND BEST PRACTICES.** Coordination at the theater-strategic and operational level is difficult because of the differences in organizational structure between DOD and other organizations. The military is structured to operate at the national-strategic level in Washington, D.C., theater-strategic level at the combatant commands, and operational and tactical levels at the JTF and below. USG agencies and departments are organized to operate at the strategic and theater-strategic levels in Washington, D.C., and at the operational and tactical level in the field. For example, Regional Bureaus of the DOS and



USAID correspond to a GCC regional (theater-strategic) view. However, the regional ‘boundaries’ of the DOS Regional Bureaus and the GCC boundaries do not align. Other agencies also have regionally-focused organizations similar to DOS bureaus in the Washington, D.C. area. Their ‘boundaries’ likewise do not fully align with GCC AORs. This geographic separation between GCCs and DOS/agency regional bureaus complicates coordination efforts at the theater-strategic and operational levels. Often, the headquarters of the USG agencies, IGOs, and NGOs will work directly

with their field representatives and embassies, creating information and coordination ‘voids’ at the GCC and JTF headquarters (see figure).

The theater-strategic and operational headquarters have gained numerous insights in how to improve coordination at these levels with the intent of filling this void and achieving better unity of effort. While not perfect, these means are all centered on an atmosphere of inclusiveness and how to coordinate and work together to achieve objectives. We break these means down into four major categories noted on the adjacent figure.

**Insights**

- **Various operational headquarters have developed means to help gain unity of effort**
  - **Understanding of authorities, capabilities, and culture**
  - **People: Liaison and advisors**
  - **Organizations: Coordination elements, Centers and Groups, and Interagency Task Forces**
  - **Processes: Collaboration in assessment and planning, information sharing, and synchronization of actions**
- **Still not perfect... improving**

**Understanding:** As noted, coordination among the many disparate agency, IGO, NGO, and private sector organizations is difficult. Each has its own culture, philosophy, goals, authorities, responsibilities, skills, and processes. The operational commanders, their staffs, and our partners have spent time gaining an understanding of the others’ unique differences, and recognize the value in building and maintaining personal relationships. This ‘education’ and relationship building is difficult and never ending, but has high payoff in bridging these different ‘cultures.’

Something as simple as the name of an organization, mission, or task, will affect the willingness and ability of some interagency, IGO, and NGO partners to participate in U.S. and military-led missions. A prime example of this was the tsunami relief effort in 2004. By understanding the operational environment and adjusting to this reality, the commander focused the names of the organizations to tasks at hand. The Joint Task Force became the Combined Support Force (CSF) and Disengagement became Transition (see figure on next page). Words have both meaning and

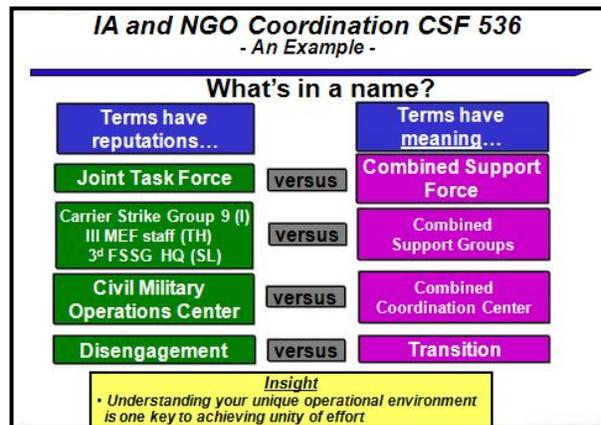
reputations, and the commander's understanding of this from the external stakeholder's perspective can greatly enhance the cooperation among partners.

People:

Coordination is centered upon people and relationships. One insight regularly reinforced is the importance of quality liaison officers (LNOs) to other organizations. They are an excellent means to ensure a shared understanding exists with other agencies, and to facilitate inclusiveness and sharing of information. These LNOs are often the only representative of the sending unit that the other organization's leadership and personnel see. This is especially true in the interorganizational arena where personal relationships are especially important.

Best practices on the use of liaison personnel:

- Liaison personnel from other agencies/organizations:
  - Fully assimilate them into your organization and clarify their role in terms of their authority, as either the agency's 'personal' representative that has the authority to speak on behalf of the agency leadership or as a conduit of information to/from that organization.
  - Clarify their role/authority with any other personnel from their agency/organization that may be members in coordination centers, working groups, etc., in your headquarters.
  - As appropriate, recognize and use them as their parent agency's personal representative to your unit.
  - These liaison personnel normally cannot physically attend the full myriad of meetings in your battle rhythm. Identify at the Chief of Staff and principal J-code director level how to best leverage the liaison's skills, knowledge, and access to their parent agency.
  - They are not staff officers; don't tie them to a desk in the joint operations center monitoring operations or pigeon hole them into only one working group/cell.
  - Request their support on watching for and solving connectivity and classification issues with their agency.
  - Include them in any physical or virtual (e.g., VTC) meetings with their parent organization.
  - Support them with appropriate information technology, desk space, and telephones to allow them to work within your organization and reach back to their agency. Include them in your information management plan.
- Your liaison to other agencies:
  - Send quality personnel. They are your personal representatives. Impress on them the need to establish and maintain quality personal relationships with the gaining organization.
  - Publish their Chain of Command.



- Ensure they understand the respective authorities, responsibilities, goals, processes, and culture of the agency/organization to which they are being assigned.
- Ensure they understand your guidance and intent prior to dispatching them to other agencies. Keep them informed of changing guidance and intent through regular, periodic updates.
- Empower them to speak on your behalf to the gaining organization. Reinforce their credibility and your trust and confidence in them at every opportunity with the gaining agency.
- Involve them in your internal updates and assessment.
- Keep them focused on watching for and solving connectivity and classification issues with you.
- Ensure they are empowered to work with your staff to gain full situational awareness of your planning and insights so they can provide credible and accurate input to their respective agency organization planning efforts to nest the DOD plan within the broader USG whole of government plan.

Advisors may come from a parent organization or through a hiring process to gain specific expertise in your headquarters. Many of the best practices above apply; however, one key difference is that they are in all likelihood not authorized to speak for a particular agency. Their role is to provide you their personal advice based on their experience. You and your staff have the responsibility to conduct full staff coordination with all respective agencies.

There are some specific examples of advisors employed at the JFC level to ensure effective interagency and interorganizational coordination. These include the Political Advisor (POLAD) and the Senior Civilian Representative (SCR). The POLAD is (normally) a U.S. State Department representative assigned at the operational or strategic (GCC) level to provide advice to the commander on U.S. State Department and regional political perspectives. The POLAD is not an LNO from the State Department, but rather an experienced advisor to the commander to assist in developing a broad understanding of regional and global perspectives.

We have seen the SCR concept used prevalently in the Afghan theater. We find the SCR enabling better synergy and harmony with our interagency partners. The SCR is normally sourced from a parent organization, such as State Department or USAID, depending on the operational focus and predominance of effort. The SCR's authorities are normally specified by the COM. We find the SCR often empowered with supervisory authority over non-DOD civilian personnel in the staff and subordinate organizations. The personal relationships between the commander and SCR is critical to overall synergy of operations and directly affects the civilian/military relationships throughout the staff and organization.

Best practices on use of your advisors:

- Clarify their authority to speak on behalf of an agency/organization.
- Clarify their relationship with any liaison or other element from the respective agency/organization and within the JTF or GCC.
- Recognize their limitations; you are only receiving their personal viewpoint based on their experiences and information when serving as the POLAD.

Organizations: The large amount of detailed coordination with the interagency and external stakeholders necessary for unity of effort can easily overwhelm a liaison element. Almost every operational headquarters and interagency partner has grown beyond the use of only a liaison element in coordinating assessments, planning, and execution. They have all implemented some form of the organizations noted in the figure at right.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Organizations</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><u>Coordination elements</u></b> (liaison cell) at IA and IGOs. Support coordination and limited situational awareness.</li><li>• <b><u>Coordination centers</u></b> (24/7 coverage) at JFC, IA, or IGO. Support coordination and full situational awareness.</li><li>• <b><u>Coordination groups</u></b> at a locn for working issues, planning, and arriving at consensus.</li><li>• <b><u>Executive steering groups</u></b> consisting of decision makers that periodically meet to make decisions and ensure unity of effort.</li><li>• <b><u>Interagency task forces</u></b> that allow for “collocated” planning and control of operations while respecting agency authorities and responsibilities.</li></ul>
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We have seen the need to populate appropriate staff elements in the headquarters to provide monitoring, assessment, planning, and execution of interorganizational coordination. Recognizing limited capacities of our many partners and stakeholders in both planning and execution, military staff personnel may need to also provide an interorganizational perspective to planning and operations.

We have noted some examples and insights in the use of these organizations in today’s operations:

Coordination Elements: Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) has deployed a 2-4 person “Country Coordination Element” at each of the U.S. Embassies in the region to assist in planning, execution coordination, and ensuring the COM has full situational awareness of CJTF-HOA operations in the respective country.

Insights:

- Provide LNOs to key partners to help ensure unity of effort.
- If they can’t come to us, we must go to them.

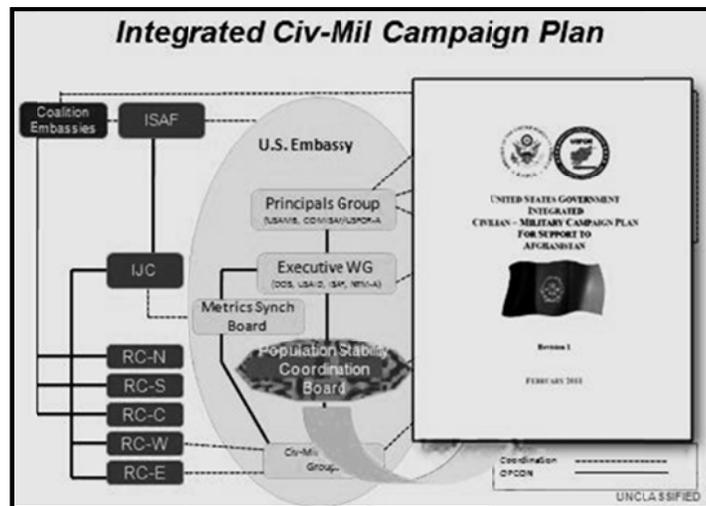
Coordination Centers: A recent example of a coordination center is from the Haiti Earthquake relief efforts. USSOUTHCOM established JTF Haiti to coordinate U.S. defense efforts following the Haiti earthquake in January 2010. The JTF Haiti Commander soon realized he needed a central point of coordination. To support this the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center (HACC) was established as a 30 person JTF cell task-organized for the purposes of achieving horizontal and vertical integration with the Government of Haiti (GoH), the UN, USG agencies, and the international humanitarian community. Toward this end the HACC operated from both the U.S. Embassy and forward at the UN Logistics Base. Of note, in this situation, USAID was the Lead Federal Agency (LFA) and JTF Haiti was supporting. Another example of coordination centers are tactical level Civil Military Operations Centers (CMOC). These function to share situational awareness and coordinate civil and military humanitarian and other related actions.

Insights:

- A continuously operating center that serves as the ‘focal point’ of information for all the stakeholders enhances planning and execution. This is not necessarily a military-run center.

- Resource the coordination center to perform its function of sharing situational awareness and coordination of near term execution actions.
- The coordination center can break through bureaucratic walls.
- Habitual relationships and a thorough understanding of the different authorities enable operational success in the interagency environment.
- Not all NGOs will go to a CMOC for numerous reasons. Don't expect your tactical CMOCs to have fully guaranteed situational awareness.

Coordination Groups. There are several examples of coordination groups. The Afghan theater, given the focus on reconstruction and development, has a significant and complex confluence of interagency efforts. To enhance the unity of effort the U.S. “Integrated Civilian – Military Campaign Plan” was developed to establish coordination elements at all levels of command from the Principals Group at the Ambassador and ISAF Commander level, to the Civ-Mil Working Group at the Regional Command level. This structure helps to ensure that SCRs and counterpart military commanders are effectively and efficiently coordinating efforts.



Combined Forces Command – Korea established a Combined Interagency Coordination Group, to develop positions for subsequent discussions with parent agencies. The Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs), established to varying degrees at some GCCs, are another example of bringing stakeholder representatives together to share perspectives that can serve to enrich each others’ planning efforts.

Insights:

- Clarify authorities of coordination group participants to ‘speak’ for their respective agencies. Expect the requirement that the participants will need to ‘vet’ positions with their respective parent agencies.
- Continue to understand and respect different agency’s roles, missions, goals, culture, authorities, and processes.
- Recognize the resourcing challenge that many of the interagency partners will have in providing their representatives. Be prepared to work with a small representation cell that may not have all the capacity of your military staff. Ensure information is shared with partner staff members and conversely, their perspective is included in the event their personnel cannot be present.
- Habitual relationships, detailed planning, and a thorough understanding of the different authorities, agendas, and biases can lead to a way ahead.
- Inclusion of stakeholders during planning and execution enhances outcomes.

Executive Steering Groups (ESG). The ESG can fill a key void at the operational level for interagency decision-making. As noted up front, decision authority for the various USG agencies is often lacking at the operational level. An ESG forum in which decision makers from the respective agencies and organizations come together to make decisions within overarching National-level policy direction is very valuable in achieving unity of effort. These are usually informal groups – coalitions of willing stakeholders, not mandated but used out of necessity and common interest. We have seen ESG organizations in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Pakistan during the earthquake relief, and in domestic operations such as Katrina.

Insights:

- An operational level forum in which decision makers from the different agencies informally meet to address issues and arrive at decisions consonant with overall policy direction is essential in the interagency environment of differing authorities and goals.
- Commander's involvement and personal relationships are keys to unity of effort.
- Work with the COMs to determine the need of an ESG. Co-chair an ESG-organization with the COM and other key personnel.
- Regular meetings with key stakeholders lead to greater understanding of partners' authorities, missions, roles, culture, processes, and goals, and lead to unity of effort.
- Developing a common set of desired effects goals and objectives helps to gain unity of effort.

Joint Interagency Task Forces (JIATF). Fully integrated teams provide the most effective unity of effort. While these task forces are not task forces in the truest 'joint' sense of the word – exercising command of all subordinate forces, they are unique in that many of the agencies' field level headquarters and decision makers are collocated in the JIATF. JIATF South is an excellent example of an interagency task force that has matured over 20 years of operations with clear OPCON, TACON, and supporting relationships. The players all recognize that the military commander does not have command authority over all the participants. The different agencies still retain many of their authorities, responsibilities, and prerogatives. However, this collocation of decision makers and integrated command structure cuts through the typical individual agency stovepipes and enables rapid integrated action, albeit for discrete purposes (e.g., counter drug).

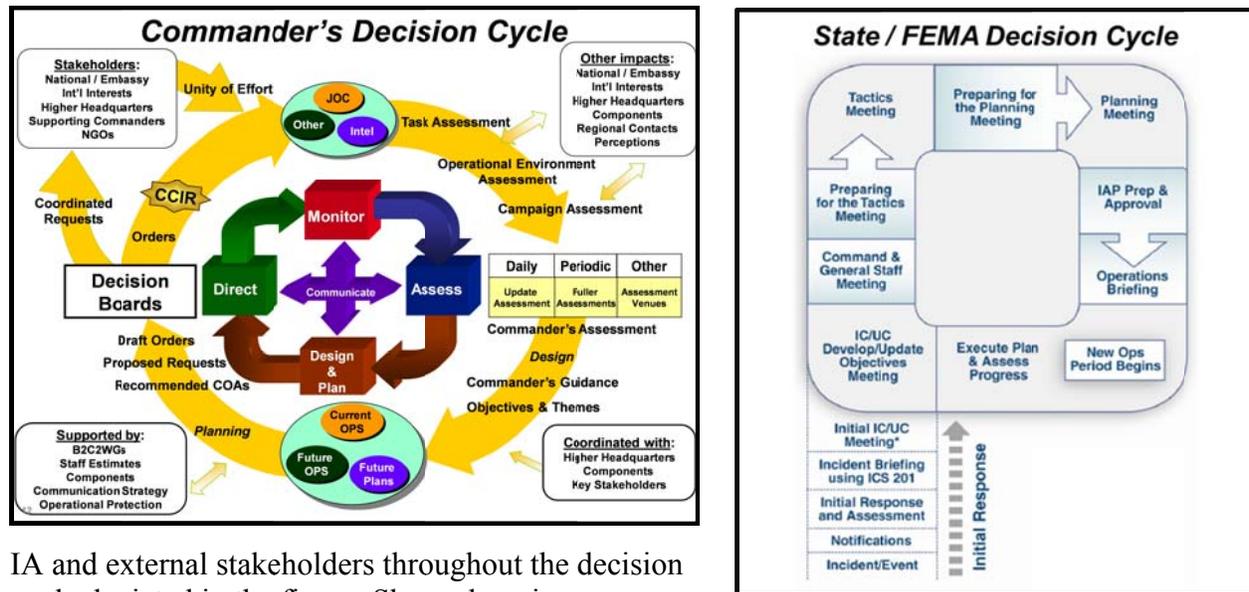
An example of a 'headquarters level' JIATF is Combined Joint Interagency Task Force (CJIATF) 435 in Afghanistan. CJIATF-435 is made up of U.S. service members, civilians and coalition members, and partners with numerous Afghan ministries to achieve the desired end state of self-sustaining Afghan national detention facilities and rule of law (corrections) institutions compliant with Afghan and international law. The CJIATF structure includes a U.S. military commander, a U.S. civilian deputy commander, as well as an Afghan military commander. This organization continues to evolve.

Insights:

- JIATFs may take a longer time to develop, and require fully vetted terms of reference and a detailed memorandum of agreement (MOA). Do not anticipate rapid formation of a JIATF in a crisis.
- Recognize the difficulty in establishing JIATFs in which agencies, in effect, subordinate their assets under another agency's control.

- Continue to understand and respect different agency authorities, missions, roles, responsibilities, culture, and processes.
- Realize other agencies' limited resources may restrict their ability to quickly and regularly provide personnel to support a JIATF.

Processes: We have also observed several common processes that enhance coordination with the



IA and external stakeholders throughout the decision cycle depicted in the figure. Shown here is a comparison of the JTF Commander's Decision Cycle and the state and federal decision cycle, called the "Planning P" as described in the NIMS (see figures on previous page). As we transition from military led and focused operations it becomes vitally important that commanders consider the decision cycles of other mission partners and external stakeholders. The commander's decision cycle will not always be the driving cog in the machine. This is notably true for DSCA operations where the military is, by definition, in a supporting role. Whether in handing off to civilian authorities as in Iraq or Afghanistan, or supporting civilian authorities in DSCA, the interorganizational partner will have an inherent, if often undefined decision cycle; it is incumbent upon the commander and staff to ensure they are synchronized effectively and integrated into that supported decision cycle.

As the military increasingly becomes the supporting element to external partners, we need to ensure we manage our own expectations on their processes, procedures, and structures. As discussed earlier each entity will have its own culture and means of doing business. Commanders cannot assume that the interorganizational partner's decision cycle will move at the same rate as his/hers, but must understand it well enough to anticipate when and how to best engage. The commander and the commander's staff must anticipate the partners' needs and be able to lean forward, particularly in DSCA and HA/DR operations where our response is time-critical. Again, as stated before, the use and inclusion of LNOs will be important to support this process.

Interagency and interorganizational coordination is a staff process. Like other staff processes (e.g., intelligence, communications, logistics), it requires ownership and defined responsibilities within the staff to function properly. A lack of discipline in coordinating with external entities can result in inefficient stovepiped efforts that are prone to creating gaps and duplication of effort. Continuous horizontal synchronization of the external coordination effort is necessary to

send a clear and accurate message to outside organizations, and to ensure the activities and equities of external stakeholders are brought into the planning, assessment, and decision making process.

Insights:

- Both the operational commanders and the interorganizational players have learned the value of continuous communication and coordination during assessment, planning, directing, and monitoring actions. This coordination enables better understanding of the environment and the problem, and results in jointly developed plans that take best advantage of the complementary capabilities of the different agencies. Coordination during planning results in feasible and better integrated plans which are executable.

**Insights**

- **Inclusion of stakeholders during assessment, planning, and execution enhances the plan and execution**
- **Likewise, JTF involvement in stakeholder planning enhances their plans and execution**
- **Collaborative processes and means with stakeholders enrich assessment and planning**
- **Information sharing means (network, web portals, e-mail) allow inclusion of stakeholders**
- **Force tracking/reporting means ensure common situational awareness**

- Another key insight is that our involvement in the interorganizational planning can enhance their operations – just as they do ours.
- Physical and virtual collaboration means allow inclusion of stakeholders. We should not rely exclusively on virtual (technical) means. Relationships and collaboration with partners is most often a human, hands-on endeavor. Do not allow technical information sharing shortfalls, gaps, and seams to damage your interaction and inclusion with these valuable stakeholders. Not all interorganizational stakeholders are as comfortable with electronic information sharing or communication through PowerPoint; personal relationships are still critical.
- Sharing and collaboration with our interagency partners and with IGOs, the NGO community, and the private sector remain a significant challenge. Achieving some degree of technical means of information sharing must be a focus area for the commander and staff going into an operation. They must determine the right networks (from the standpoint of classification), work the classification piece hard (strive to not over-classify information), and ensure all the stakeholders agree on common tools and software.
- As discussed earlier, interorganizational organizations are staffed at much lower levels and cannot support the level of B2C2WG events to which we are accustomed. Ensure that information is effectively shared and allow them to prioritize their time. Push for the important events at the critical time; do not overwhelm our partners with planning and B2C2WG events.

Best practices:

- Identify and develop any required memorandums of agreement to support interagency coordination, command relationships, personnel exchanges, and other important challenges/processes.
- Write for release within mission parameters for your interorganizational stakeholders and external stakeholders, and incorporate robust disclosure policies and procedures.
- Avoid use of acronyms. All agencies, IGOs, and NGOs have their own library of acronyms; we must learn theirs and translate ours.

- Establish (if possible use existing and accepted) information sharing and collaboration protocols to work with interorganizational players and other external stakeholders.<sup>19</sup> Don't plan in isolation - allow for an interactive and dynamic interface to enable collaboration between the joint headquarters and the interorganizational players.
- Determine information sharing means in terms of the network, web portals, and e-mail to allow for inclusion of your interorganizational stakeholders. Ensure all parties maintain shared situational awareness and have access to all relevant information. There are numerous push and pull means to share information – the appropriate method is dictated by type of information and its urgency.
- Consider your interorganizational stakeholders in terms of force tracking. Current best practices include loaning them certain 'blue force trackers,' or the use of periodic reporting and LNOs to maintain situational awareness of their disposition and activities.
- Consider a separate directorate with responsibility for interagency and interorganizational coordination, or assign this to a principal staff director. Use staff integration elements such as working groups and cells to ensure continuous horizontal synchronization of coordination with external organizations. We have seen many JFCs assign this responsibility to the J5 or J9.

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<sup>19</sup> Some of these are: APAN-info.net, Acbar.org, Interaction.org, Globalaction.net, and Reliefweb.org. Be cautious about introducing new means as the interagency, IGO, and NGO communities may already have an established means to collaborate and share information.

## **Glossary**

### **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AOR – Area of Responsibility	JDEIS – Joint Doctrine, Education, and Training Electronic Information System
APAN – All Partners Access Network	JFO – Joint Field Office
C2 – Command and Control	JIACG – Joint Interagency Coordination Group
C5 – Command, Control, Cooperation, Collaboration, Coordination	JIATF – Joint Interagency Task Forces
CCIR – Commander’s Critical Information Requirements	JLLIS – Joint Lessons Learned Information System
CJIATF – Combined Joint Interagency Task Force	JTF – Joint Task Force
CMOC – Civil Military Operations Center	LFA – Lead Federal Agency
COM – Chief of Mission	LNO – Liaison Officer
CONUS – Continental United States	MOA – Memorandums of Agreement
CS – Civil Support	NGO – Nongovernmental Organizations
CSF – Combined Support Force	NIMS – National Incident Management System
DATT – Defense Attaché	NRF – National Response Framework
DCO – Defense Coordinating Officer	OAS – Organization of American States
DIA – Defense Intelligence Agency	PFO – Principal Federal Official
DOD – Department of Defense	POLAD – Political Advisor
DODD – Department of Defense Directive	PRT – Provincial Reconstruction Team
DOS – Department of State	RFA – Request for Assistance
DR – Disaster Response	RUF – Rules for the Use of Force
DSCA – Defense Support of Civil Authorities	SAO – Security Assistance Organization
DTD – Deployable Training Division	SCR – Senior Civilian Representative
EP – Emergency Preparedness	SDO – Senior Defense Official
ESF – Emergency Support Functions	SecDef – Secretary of Defense
ESG – Executive Steering Groups	UN – United Nations
FCO – Federal Coordinating Officer	USAID – United States Agency for International Development
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency	USDAO – United States Defense Attaché Office
GCC – Geographic Combatant Commander	USG – United States Government
GOH – Government of Haiti	USNORTHCOM – United States Northern Command
HA – Humanitarian Assistance	USSOUTHCOM – United States Southern Command
HACC – Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center	
HA/DR – Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Response	
HD – Homeland Defense	
HNIR – Host Nation Information Requirements	
HSIN – Homeland Security Information Network	
HSPD – Homeland Security Presidential Directive	
IA – Interagency	
ICS – Incident Command System	
IGO – Intergovernmental Organizations	
J5 – Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate of a Joint Staff	
J9 – Civil-Military Operations Staff Section	

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