

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE PERSONNEL RECOVERY FUNCTION

Personnel recovery is an issue of national importance. Preserving the lives and well being of U.S. servicemen placed in danger of isolation or capture while participating in government-sponsored activities overseas, is one of the highest priorities of the Department of Defense. We base this high priority on four enduring principles:

- First, and foremost, Americans place great value on the sanctity of human life. When the President commits forces overseas, we have a moral obligation to do everything in our power to bring our personnel home safely.
- Second, by inculcating in the minds of our Armed Forces personnel that if they become isolated we will recover them, we build confidence and a willingness to exert their utmost in times of great stress.
- Third, when our Armed Forces possess an effective personnel recovery capability, we deny our enemies a valuable source of intelligence and political leverage against our government.
- Finally, our highly trained soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, and DoD civilians are a valuable and limited resource, which we cannot afford to lose.

Isolated, lost, captured, or unaccounted-for personnel can change the perception of an otherwise successful operation, and provide the enemy a powerful bargaining tool. Americans, and the American Congress, are becoming accustomed to the U.S. engaging its adversaries with

<i>Incident</i>	<i>Conflict of Spectrum</i>	<i>Method of Recovery</i>
Captain O’Grady (Bosnia/Herzegovina)	Operations Other Than War (Peacekeeping)	Military (Marine TRAP)
CWO Bobby Hall (North Korea)	Operations Other Than War (Peacekeeping)	Diplomacy
CWO Durant	Operations Other Than War (Humanitarian Assistance)	Diplomacy
Just Cause (Panama)	Contingency Operation (U.S. Asset Recovered)	Military (SOF)
Restore Democracy (Haiti)	Contingency Operation (U.S. Asset Recovered)	Military (SOF)
Desert Storm	Limited Regional Conflict	Military (SOF)
Lt Goodman (Lebanon/Syria)	Contingency Operation (Retaliation Raid for Bombing the Marine Barracks)	Civil/ Diplomacy (Rev Jesse Jackson)

Figure 1

few or even no American casualties. A televised view of an American being dragged through the streets of a foreign capital like we witnessed in Mogadishu, can turn the tide of our national will, and affect U.S. national policy.

More recently, Saddam Hussein's public display of human shields to protect critical targets during Desert Storm could have had a profound effect on U.S. policy had the war lasted longer. As depicted in Figure 1, personnel recovery incidents have occurred in the past, and will certainly reoccur in the future. Likewise, the means of recovery (i.e., military, diplomatic, or other) is also likely to vary.

Personnel recovery is the sum of military, civil, and political efforts to obtain the release or recovery of personnel from uncertain or hostile environments and denied areas whether they are captured, missing, or isolated. Within the military methods, there are several categories of recovery as shown in the figure at right.

Military personnel recovery operations range from basic Search and Rescue missions performed in peacetime or a permissive environment, to highly complex Unconventional Assisted Recovery Mechanisms in a high threat environment.



Figure 2

DoD Oversight

The DASD (POW/Missing Personnel Affairs) assumed policy, control, and oversight responsibility for personnel recovery within the Department of Defense in August 1996. In 1997, DPMO consolidated previous Search and Rescue (SAR) and Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) guidance into a single DoD directive. This directive assigned the Secretary of the Air Force as the DoD Executive Agent (EA) for personnel recovery. In 1998, the Chairman signed CJCS Instruction 3270.01 providing guidance to DoD components concerning operational implementation of personnel recovery policies.

The changes DPMO began affected numerous organizations. The Air Staff stood up a Personnel Recovery Division and an Air Force personnel recovery response cell in June 1998. The Defense Reform Initiative Directive #29 resulted in the alignment of personnel recovery support functions into a new Joint Personnel Recovery Agency (JPRA) which is scheduled to stand up by October 1, 1999. This merging of responsibilities into a single agency under a combatant commander will cause DPMO to examine the continued wisdom of retaining the Air Force as the Executive Agent for personnel recovery. We may want to consider reassigning the responsibility to the Commander, USACOM, thus emphasizing the joint nature of personnel recovery operations.

Doctrine

Joint Publication 3-50.2, “Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue,” states that each Service is responsible for performing CSAR in support of their own operations, consistent with assigned functions. While personnel recovery is more than just CSAR, the Services continue to organize, provide, and equip dedicated personnel recovery assets based on CSAR requirements (IAW current CSAR doctrine).

Although the Services are responsible for their own CSAR, the regional CINCs are designated by DoD directive to coordinate search and rescue in their AOR, and Joint Force Commanders have primary authority and responsibility for CSAR within their areas. Furthermore, the regional CINCs are tasked to establish and maintain personnel recovery procedures and programs; ensure personnel recovery is integrated into planning and training; and to identify personnel recovery requirements, intelligence requirements, and shortfalls.

Services and USSOCOM

The Army does not have dedicated personnel recovery assets. It task organizes aviation, ground forces, and watercraft as necessary to conduct personnel recovery.

The Marine Corps conducts tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) as part of a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). A MAGTF is composed of specific aviation, ground, support and command elements working in conjunction. All MEU(SOC)s, which are one form of a MAGTF, conduct specific training in TRAP prior to certification. Special Purpose MAGTFs may also be organized to execute TRAP missions when necessary. USMC TRAP is best understood as a *training-added* capability of the MAGTF rather than an inherent capability of an individual community within the Marine Corps.



The Air Force has dedicated active duty, reserve and National Guard personnel recovery assets. It conducts personnel recovery with HH-60s, with HC-130s to provide aerial refueling.

The Navy has dedicated personnel recovery assets in each of its ten Carrier Air Wings through HH-60s. Additionally, the Navy has two Reserve HCS Squadrons with a primary mission of conducting overland personnel recovery. The U.S.

Navy trains all of its helicopter crews to conduct non-combat over-water personnel recovery.

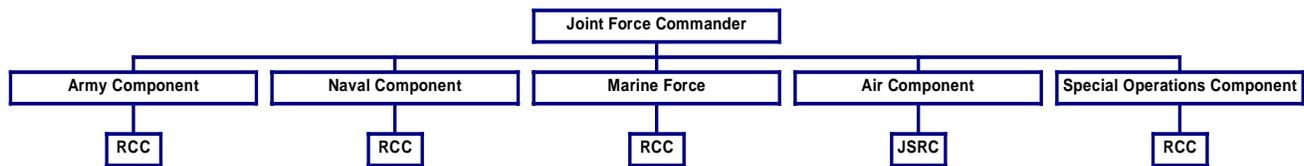
USSOCOM does not have dedicated personnel recovery assets, but has inherent personnel recovery capability by virtue of its specialized aircraft and training. USSOCOM considers personnel recovery a collateral activity, not a principal mission. Unconventional Warfare, however, is a primary mission of USSOCOM as directed in Title 10, U.S. Code. Evasion and escape is, however, a subset of personnel recovery by definition, and accepted by USSOCOM as one of their primary missions



Regional CINCs

Although all the regional CINCs have the responsibility for search and rescue within their AORs, they vary in whether personnel recovery assets are assigned to them. USACOM and USPACOM have assigned, dedicated land-based personnel recovery assets in their theaters. USEUCOM has assigned special operations assets able to accomplish personnel recovery activity. USSOUTHCOM and USCENTCOM do not have assigned personnel recovery assets; either dedicated land-based or special operations.

Within the combatant commands, every Component is required to organize a Rescue Coordination Center (RCCs) that orchestrates all recovery operations in their respective areas of responsibility. The RCCs are operated unilaterally by personnel of a single Service or



Component. Additionally, CINC designates one of the RCCs as his Joint Search and Rescue Center (JSRC), normally the Air Component. The JSRC is the primary recovery facility in theater, and should be equipped and manned to plan, coordinate and execute joint personnel recovery operations within the geographical area assigned to the joint force.

All Service Components are capable of executing Search and Rescue operations with their organic assets, and to a limited extent, Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) operations in a low-threat environment. The Air Force and Navy are capable of CSAR in low- to medium-threat environments, but only Special Operations Forces have the ability to prosecute recovery operations in a high-threat environment. When the incident exceeds the Service Component's capability to perform the recovery, the Service Component normally refers the mission to the Joint Search and Rescue Center for resolution by a joint force. Any mission exceeding the capabilities of conventional joint forces begins to fall into the domain of Special Operations Forces. However, some missions are too dangerous to undertake, even with Special Operations Forces, and diplomatic initiatives may be the only means of securing the release of the individual(s).