The Planner's Role in the Civil-Military Relationship: Syrian Crisis Action Planning (2011-2013)

A Monograph

by

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AY 2015-001

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 16-03-2015	2. REPORT TYPE Master's Monograph		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) JUN 2014 – APR 2015
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Planner's Role in the Civil-Military Relationship: Syrian Crisis Action Planning (2011-2013)			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
			5b. GRANT NUMBER
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S) MAJ Sean Carmody			5d. PROJECT NUMBER
			5e. TASK NUMBER
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301			8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship, Advanced Military Studies Program.			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT
Crisis action planning (CAP) is the military process for resolving imminent and emerging crises. CAP activities require the interaction and collaboration of numerous echelons to provide military and whole-of-government options to the National Command Authority for consideration. The interactions of CAP directly test and influence the nature of US civil-military relations. Syrian CAP from 2011-2013 presents a contemporary case for study. Analysis of the case reveals the relationship that military planners and commanders have with developing and implementing policy options while engaging in civil-military relations. As the conflict simmered and became more volatile, the US government expended increasing energy to understand the environment and problem while searching for solutions. The planning efforts evolved over time, and, as dialogue improved, organizations overcame bureaucracy to build consensus. Throughout the period, evaluations of options never resulted in military intervention. Instead, the US government applied instruments of national power in discrete ways for limited ends focused on symptoms of the conflict. This monograph concludes that the essential activities for military planners and leadership to support crisis planning include cultivating appropriate authorities and relationships, clarifying roles and expectations, assimilating strategic and regional contexts, and creating shared understanding of the character of the conflict.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
Crisis Action Planning; Joint Operation Planning; Syria; Civil-Military Relations

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON MAJ Sean Carmody
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			19b. PHONE NUMBER (include area code)
(U)	(U)	(U)	(U)	65	(734) 330-5578

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

Name of Candidate: MAJ Sean T. Carmody

Monograph Title: The Planner's Role in the Civil-Military Relationship: Syrian Crisis
                    Action Planning (2011-2013)

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author, and do not
necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any
other government agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

Abstract

The Planner's Role in the Civil-Military Relationship: Syrian Crisis Action Planning (2011-2013), by MAJ Sean Carmody, 50 pages.

Crisis action planning (CAP) is the military process for resolving imminent and emerging crises. CAP activities require the interaction and collaboration of numerous echelons to provide military and whole-of-government options to the National Command Authority for consideration. The interactions of CAP directly test and influence the nature of US civil-military relations.

Syrian CAP from 2011-2013 presents a contemporary case for study. Analysis of the case reveals the relationship that military planners and commanders have with developing and implementing policy options while engaging in civil-military relations.

As the conflict simmered and became more volatile, the US government expended increasing energy to understand the environment and problem while searching for solutions. The planning efforts evolved over time, and, as dialogue improved, organizations overcame bureaucracy to build consensus. Throughout the period, evaluations of options never resulted in military intervention. Instead, the US government applied instruments of national power in discrete ways for limited ends focused on symptoms of the conflict.

This monograph concludes that the essential activities for military planners and leadership to support crisis planning include cultivating appropriate authorities and relationships, clarifying roles and expectations, assimilating strategic and regional contexts, and creating shared understanding of the character of the conflict.

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Acknowledgments

My greatest acknowledgement is to the true professionals that sacrificed their time, for no personal gain, to take surveys and conduct extensive interviews for this work. Without your commitment to stewarding the profession of arms, none of this work would be possible. To the faculty of SAMS, thank you for your dedication to both education and advancing the professional body of work. To Adam Jackson, you were the ideal sounding board for my research machinations and without you, I surely would have spiraled. To my wife, thank you for picking up the slack caused by my lording over a laptop for twelve months.

Acronyms

APEX	Adaptive Planning and Execution
ASD	Assistant Secretary of Defense
CAP	Crisis Action Planning
CCDR	Combatant Commander
COA	Course of Action
COCOM	Combatant Command
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
DoD	Department of Defense
IPR	In-progress Review
JIACG	Joint Interagency Coordination Group
JOPES	Joint Operation Planning and Execution System
JOPP	Joint Operation Planning Process
JPEC	Joint Planning and Execution Community
JS	Joint Staff
NCA	National Command Authority
NSC	National Security Council
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
USCENTCOM	US Central Command
USD(P)	Undersecretary of Defense for Policy

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Introduction

Crisis Action Planning

A crisis "is fast-breaking and requires accelerated decision making."[1] This immutable truth has far-reaching consequences for the planner and decision maker alike. The first is that an assessment of the crisis must reveal the nature and implications of the crisis. Determining if the crisis poses a threat to the nation or its interests is of first importance.[2] Only then, planners can begin to design and leaders implement an approach to resolve the situation. US joint planning doctrine evolved around this notion by utilizing separate but analogous planning systems, deliberate and crisis action planning (CAP). While deliberate planning seeks to prepare for forecastable problems, CAP exists to provide options to problems of an immediate and evolving nature.[3]

Doctrine defines CAP as the "system process involving the time-sensitive development of joint operation plans and operation orders for the deployment, employment, and sustainment of assigned and allocated forces and resources in response to an imminent crisis."[4] The process provides the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and combatant commanders (CCDRs) a systematic way to generate options for decision makers and the subsequent plans, orders, and resources necessary to execute those options approved. The joint planning conducted for the current Syria crisis reflects the dynamic and evolving nature that CAP doctrine predicts. From the outset of armed hostilities in March 2011, military planners and commanders utilized the CAP system process to understand, visualize, and describe options for consideration by strategic

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[1] Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2011), II-28.

[2] Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2010), 60.

[3] JP 5-0, xvii.

[4] Ibid., GL-7 – GL-8.

leaders. As the responsible combatant command, US Central Command (USCENTCOM) bore

the greatest share of the obligation to develop options for consideration by these leaders to

include the President of the United States.[5]

While CAP is an essentially military process, the combatant command generates the

initial outputs of planning to support and enable civil-military dialogue. Civil-military dialogue is

an enduring phenomenon in the American system of civilian leadership of the military. Dr. Janine

Davidson of the Council on Foreign Relations, and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense

for Plans, categorized three forms of friction that make the process of generating military options

for civil leadership challenging. The first is a disagreement of the two parties, civil and military,

on what model of expert advice works best. The second friction stems from a disconnect in the

demand expectations of civil leaders and the supply outputs of military planning processes. The

third friction arises from military cultural biases on what constitutes the use of force in an

American way of warfare.[6] Emile Simpson cites a related challenge in that military leaders at all

levels complain of a lack of strategy from the top. He frames the requirement of civil-military

dialogue in terms of desire and possibility.[7] Then, if dialogue predicates strategy, military leaders

should not expect ideas and guidance to flow linearly from the President to boots on the ground.

Joint doctrine acknowledges this dilemma in representing all planning, including CAP, as

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[5] Barret Level, interview by Dr. Lisa Beckenbaugh. May 20, 2013, transcript, Operational Leadership Experiences collection, Combat Studies Institute, 6-19, accessed July 24, 2014, http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll13/id/3074/rec/1

[6] Janine Davidson, "Civil-Military Friction and Presidential Decision Making: Explaining the Broken Dialogue." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (March 2013): 131.

[7] Emile Simpson, "Constitutional Stability versus Strategic Efficiency: Strategic Dialogue in Contemporary Conflict," *Infinity Journal 2, no. 4* (Fall 2012), 5: accessed July 28, 2014, https://www.infinityjournal.com/article/80/Constitutional_stability_versus_strategic_efficiency_st rategic_dialogue_in_contemporary_conflict/.

iterative and cyclical. It emphasizes the collaborative nature of the process and describes how that collaboration of ideas, options, plans, and decisions should function.[8]

The dynamism of this interaction results in another phenomenon for which planners and commanders at the operational level must account. When a crisis occurs which falls outside the limits of existing strategy and policy, operational approaches tend to rise and supplant existing policy. Effectively, the circumstances can result in strategy, the arrangement of ends, ways, and means balancing cost and risk, pulled out of the hands of policy, the desired outcomes and approaches advocated by the National Command Authority (NCA).[9] According to Simpson, in the absence of political context and guidance from policy makers, operational ideas tend to supplant strategy which risks framing the conflict in purely military terms.[10] So, the efficiency and efficacy of CAP as a process determines more than the responsiveness of the US military to solve imminent problems. CAP indirectly shapes the civil-military nature of US institutions.

Secretary of Defense (SecDef) Robert Gates described this type of civil-military interaction during a comparable crisis to Syria, Libya:

> As usual, I was furious with the White House advisers and the [National Security Staff] NSS talking about military options with the President without Defense being involved: 'The White House has no idea how many resources will be required. This administration has jumped to military options before it even knows what it wants to do. What in the hell is a "humanitarian corridor?" A no-fly zone is of limited value and never prevented Saddam from slaughtering his people.'[11]

This highlights the frictions categorized by Dr. Davidson and suggests there might be normative factors influencing the generation of options for consideration by civilian leaders. This

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[8] JP 5-0.

[9] Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 138.

[10] Emile Simpson, *War from the Ground Up: Twenty-First Century Combat as Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 228.

[11] Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 512.

monograph seeks to determine how planning directives and guidance influenced options

generated by USCENTCOM during Syrian CAP, 2011-2013. Conflicting expectations during

Syrian CAP held by each echelon and organization involved created obstacles to the

USCENTCOM operational planners' ability to provide appropriate military options for

consideration by strategic leaders.

The Syrian CAP Case

       The crisis in Syria began for US planners almost immediately upon initiation of armed

hostilities between the Bashar al-Assad regime and the Syrian population.[12] The crisis in Syria

and Iraq as of this writing is an evolving one. Being that US and allied involvement in planning

for this crisis is ongoing, the plans and formal documents detailing these efforts are, and will

likely remain, classified for the near future. However, the interaction between the Secretaries of

Defense and State, the CJCS, and Congress establishes an open, unclassified window into the

requirements of civil-military dialogue and contemporary, if unclassified, options provided to

senior civilian leadership. Additionally, these public interactions serve as milestones to frame

CAP efforts.

       Following the initiation of the Syrian armed conflict in March 2011, the USCENTCOM,

the Joint Staff (JS), and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) began the process of CAP

pursuant to guidance from the National Security Council System.[13] Over the following two years,

hostilities escalated to include the Syrian government's purported use of chemical weapons in

April of 2013.[14] Addressing this conflict required a collaboration between these organizations to

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[12] Interview with OJ#5.

[13] Interview with OJ#5.

[14] Chuck Hagel, "Global Security Priorities for the US: Chuck Hagel," *Speech*, (9th IISS Regional Security Summit: The Manama Dialogue, Manama, December 7, 2013): accessed August 7, 2014, http://www.iiss.org/en/events/manama%20dialogue/archive/manama-dialogue-2013-4e92/plenary-1-a895/chuck-hagel-80d9.

generate options for consideration by the NCA. These planning efforts culminated with the public

disclosure of five military options by the CJCS, General Martin Dempsey, in a series of letters

and testimony to Congress from July through September 2013.[15]

During Secretary Kerry, Secretary Hagel, and General Dempsey's combined testimony to

the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Syria, General Dempsey summarized the

preceding year's efforts. Dempsey clarified how he evaluates options stating that:

> Over the past year, we've provided a full range of options. And my advice on
> those options was based on my assessment of their linkage to our national
> security interests and whether they would be effective. On this issue, that is the
> use of chemical weapons, I find a clear linkage to our national security interest.
> And we will find a way to make our use of force effective."[16]

In response to a question by Senator Menedez, Dempsey further clarified the substance of the

planning directive he received from the President. GEN Dempsey stated that "the task I've been

given is to develop military options to deter -- that is to say, change the regime's calculus about

the use of chemical weapons and degrade his ability to do so -- that is to say, both activities

directly related to chemical weapons themselves, but also potentially the means of employing

them -- and anything further than that I would prefer to speak about in a classified setting."[17]

General Dempsey's correspondence with Senator Carl Levin, which became known as

the "Dempsey Letter," dated 22 July 2013, marks the public culmination of 25 months of CAP.

The subsequent result was a diplomatic resolution to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons

capability.[18] This study assumes that from the disclosure of the "Dempsey Letter" until the

congressional testimony of 3 September 2013 planners only refined these options. This

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[15] Senate, US Congress, *Kerry, Hagel and Dempsey Testify at Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing on Syria Foreign Relations Committee,* 113th Cong., 1st sess., (3 September 2013).

[16] Senate, US Congress.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Chuck Hagel.

assumption stems from the continued reference to these five options during the testimony.[19] While numerous planning efforts at multiple echelons occurred during these 25 months, this monograph treats this period, March 2011 until July 2013 as a single case study in the application of CAP.[20]

This case is of particular value because it both resembles current situations of policy concern and the participants are available for survey and interview.[21] By tracing the doctrinal and procedural expectations of CAP, this monograph establishes the expected cause and effect relationships of planning directives, guidance, and options. Surveys and interviews of planners at OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM reveal how, when, and why the process conformed or deviated from these expectations. Understanding how guidance, planning, and antecedent conditions influenced the process in this most contemporary case study will illuminate lessons to help the operational planner to play his important role in the civil-military relationship. If these conditions prove normative, they may imply that changes to doctrine, CAP processes, or education are warranted.

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[19] Senate, US Congress

[20] Interviews with OJ#3, OJ#5, CE#1, CE#2, CE#3, and CE#4.

[21] Stephan Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1997), 79-83; Interviews with OJ#2 and OJ#4.

Contemporary US Civil-Military Theory

At present, no unclassified study, systemically analyzing this case, exists in the literature. However, volumes of work address the relationship of civil and military authorities across US history. Of those works that theorize or make explanatory claims about the relationship, most focus on the civil-military relationship writ large. Samuel Huntington is one of the most prominent modern theoreticians of civil-military relations. In his seminal work, *The Soldier and the State,* he suggested that three attributes distinguish the American civil-military relationship. They are that a meaningful difference in civil-military roles exist, that the key element to civilian control is professionalism in the military, and the essential condition to enable that professionalism is military autonomy.[22] While many critics have taken issue with elements of his argument, it has remained one of the most influential prescriptions for structuring civil-military relations for roughly five decades.[23] Most notably, these precepts are readily apparent in the Weinberger-Powell doctrine of the policy for use of force. This doctrine amounts to tests or preconditions necessary for American intervention. Over time, they shaped military culture, altering military expectations of the civil-military relationship. More directly, these expectations still influence joint doctrine.[24]

Some critics of Huntington, such as Peter Feaver, take the separation of roles as given and focus instead on describing and explaining the incentives of roles. His work notes inherent incentives in a boss-subordinate relationship which, translated to civil-military relations, could predict and explain certain tendencies. These correlate to incentives for the military to

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[22] Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-military Relations,* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957).

[23] Peter Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 7, 78.

[24] Andrew Erdmann, "The U.S. Presumption of Quick, Costless Wars," *Orbis* 43, no. 3 (Summer 1999): 363.

underperform in their role and for civilians to over-expect in theirs.[25] Emile Simpson frames this difference in terms of desire versus probabilities. The military, as the professional experts, retains propriety over assessing risk, costs, and methods; thus, they may be inclined to overvalue their judgments in military affairs. Conversely, the civilian leadership expects, within reason, to receive expertise that enables their desired outcomes. This desire leads to overestimation of feasibility and adequacy of options presented.[26]

What none of these commentators debate is that a degree of separation of powers is and should remain the hallmark of the civil-military relationship. With a nation committed to civil authority over the military profession, decision making is at the cornerstone of that authority. To enable that decision making, the civilian leaders must elicit advice, guidance, and options on a whole host of military concerns. Long-term planning, strategy, and force management evolved over time to become very structural and deliberate; however, the nature of crisis management remains in the realm of the immediate. The literature is much thinner in the area of crisis management decision making specifically.

Dr. Davidson provided historical evidence and personal experience in line with the descriptions by both Feaver and Simpson.[27] She notes that,

> There's a lot of lies in military doctrine, there's a lot of myths…that basically tell you all the civilians are somehow divinely inspired enough to know exactly what end state they want when something bad happens. When the civilians look to the military leadership for answers, they want options…they want creativity.[28]

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[25] Feaver.

[26] Emile Simpson, *War from the Ground Up: Twenty-First Century Combat as Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 126-129.

[27] Davidson.

[28] Sydney J. Freedberg, "The Army Gropes Toward A Cultural Revolution," Breaking Defense, October 22, 2014, accessed November 25, 2014, http://breakingdefense.com/2014/10/the-army-gropes-toward-a-cultural-revolution/.

Likewise, both Secretaries of Defense Robert Gates and Leon Pannetta recently published similar experiences with crisis management. Each highlights numerous individual accounts of discrepancies in expectations amongst their civilian and military cohorts.[29]

  This case study tests the experiences of participants in the process against doctrinal and regulatory expectations. While many commentators and theorists emphasized the decision making aspect of the civil-military relationship, most evaluated both sides of the relationship as largely monolithic. This case study exposes the intricacies of the OSD, JS, and COCOM relationship from both leader and planner perspectives.

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[29] Gates.; Leon Panetta and Jim Newton, *Worthy Fights: A Memoir of Leadership in War and Peace* (New York: Penguin Press, 2014).

Methodology

As noted in the introduction, the study of the Syrian CAP case requires primary research methods. To determine the relationship between guidance, options, and conditions in the process, this research must establish firstly what doctrine and regulation indicate are the dominate interactions, inputs, and outputs of the process. Secondly, participants of the case must offer their experience of the process indicating correlation or deviation with expected outcomes. Analysis of these individual experiences indicates correlation or deviation with doctrine and regulation. Lastly, synthesis of the case exposes what conditions, influences, and dynamics affected the process and may be normative.

To accomplish these requirements, this monograph employs the political science methods of inferring and testing antecedent conditions.[30] The case is the Syrian CAP bounded by time (March 2011 to July 2013) and the echelons of the OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM. The monograph follows three sequential methods. First, a process trace of the relevant portions of the CAP process within the Joint Operational Planning Process (JOPP) defines the expectations of causal relationships that determine the study variable. The study variable is the dependent variable defined as the number, quality, and distinguishability of options generated by USCENTCOM. Quality is defined as politically informed military advice suitable for consideration by the JS, CJCS, OSD, and the President. Due to this definition, the trace will consider all relevant civil-military interactions within the executive branch that may directly or indirectly intervene in the process. The process trace elucidates the relevant independent, intervening, and condition variables anticipated by doctrine and regulation.

Next, the results of the process trace informed two surveys of participants, one for each of the two target cohorts: 1) planners and leaders within the JS and the OSD, and 2) USCENTCOM planners and leadership. Survey of the former cohort qualifies the number and

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[30] Van Evera.

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distinguishability of options provided and ascertains antecedent conditions experienced during the process. Survey of the later cohort qualifies the clarity and completeness of planning directives and planning guidance issued by the JS and USCENTCOM leadership. These surveys were anonymous and crafted to avoid eliciting classified information.

After initial analysis of survey results, targeted interviews of members of each cohort sought to determine normative conditions influencing the process and clarify differences in experience of the two cohorts. The interviews, like the surveys, focused exclusively on the process traced and avoided questions concerning classified information. The procedure for the interview was asking the participant a number of open-ended questions establishing the experience of the participant relevant to their role in the process.[31] Analysis of the survey and interviews reveals what aspects of the process happened according to doctrinal expectations, which did not, and the underlying reasons why. The outside material mentioned in the literature review provided necessary background for the process trace as well as informed the analysis and conclusions. External influences, such as civil-military interactions, outside the boundary of the case informed the analysis and conclusions where participants stressed their significance.

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[31] The researcher documented and maintained a transcript copy of the interview annotated by a code correlating to the individual's cohort. The primary risk to participation was that a remark by a participant reflects negatively on an existing relationship or harms the individual's professional reputation. To minimize this risk, individuals are only cited by a reference number and any quotations were subject to participant review prior to publication. There was no direct benefit for participation offered. There was no compensation or cost associated with participation.

Process Trace

Definition of CAP

      Within joint operational planning, there exist two distinct sub-processes, deliberate and CAP. While many aspects of these two processes mirror each other, the time-sensitive nature of crises require accelerated and more dynamic processes than does deliberate planning.[32] Joint doctrine defines CAP as the "process involving the time-sensitive development of joint operation plans and operation orders for the deployment, employment, and sustainment of assigned and allocated forces and resources in response to an imminent crisis."[33] A crisis is "an incident or situation involving a threat to the United States, its citizens, military forces, or vital interests that develops rapidly and creates a condition of such diplomatic, economic, or military importance that commitment of military forces and resources is contemplated to achieve national objectives."[34]

Description of CAP

      In the broadest frame, CAP involves the activities of initiating the process, developing and disseminating planning directives, conducting joint operational planning to generate options, collaboration, and decision making. Each of these five activities require the interaction of the OSD, JS, and COCOMs.[35] Due to the nature of crises, a situation may or may not be immediately self-evident as a crisis. The consequence is that either multiple echelons (i.e. COCOM, JS, and OSD) initiate CAP simultaneously or one echelon perceives that the situation warrants a CAP

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[32] JP 5-0, II-23.

[33] JP 5-0, GL 7-8.

[34] JP 1-02, 60.

[35] JP 5-0.

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response and initiates the planning process independently.[36] In the latter case, the process can either begin with the generation of planning directives from the JS, informal guidance from OSD, or it may begin with the COCOM anticipating the need for options and initiating planning in advance of guidance.[37] The collaboration of OSD, JS, and COCOMs and their use and interpretation of planning directives, guidance, and options prescribe the process. The outcomes of the process are to further refine plans, adapt existing plans, terminate planning, or execute a plan.[38] While detailed planning continues following a decision by the NCA to execute a selected option or options, this study bounds the process to the point that a decision is made whether or not to execute generated options.[39]

Nature of Planning Directives

Whether CAP initiates from a planning directive or the anticipation of a COCOM, the directives are an important input to the process. The different types of planning directives range in their detail and expected outcomes. Warning orders direct a COCOMs initiation of the planning process to generate options for consideration, typically in the form of a commander's estimate. Planning orders direct the COCOMs development of detailed operations orders or contingency plans in anticipation of a course of action selection by the NCA. Alert orders direct execution planning of a selected course of action by the NCA. The other forms of orders, such as deployment orders, involve the explicit execution of operations and only indirectly influence the generation of and decision to execute options.[40]

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[36] Department of Defense Manual (DODM) 3020.44-M, *OSD Defense Crisis Management (CrM) Procedures* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2010), 11-18.

[37] JP 5-0, II-28 – II-35.

[38] JP 5-0, II-20 – II-21.

[39] Ibid., II-33.

Regardless of the form of directive, the CJCS is the issuer. In addition to formally written and transmitted planning directives, doctrine also acknowledges that verbal orders may initiate planning or amend directives.[41] However, no doctrinal or procedural reference limits the input of verbal guidance to the CJCS or COCOM. The Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) serves as both the principal advisor to the SecDef on all matters of policy and plans and is the Department's representative to the National Security Council (NSC) Deputies Committee. As such, the USD(P) uniquely receives, interprets, and influences NCA guidance that ultimately informs planning directives or verbal guidance in the conduct of crises management.[42] To fulfill these responsibilities, the USD(P) oversees crises management in conjunction with the CJCS and through a designated representative. The USD(P) will assign an Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) within their office to "[lead] the defense crisis management response and ensur[e] the information needs and other requirements of the Secretary of Defense are met."[43] Additionally, COCOMs:

> sometimes participate directly in the interagency process by directly communicating with committees and groups of the NSC and [Homeland Security Council] HSC systems and by working with the interagency to integrate military with diplomatic, economic, and informational instruments of national power, the normal conduit for information between the President, Secretary of Defense, NSC, HSC, and a Combatant Command is the Chairman.[44]

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[40] Ibid., II-31 – II-33.

[41] Ibid., II-33.

[42] Department of Defense Directive (DODD) 5111.1, *Undersecretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)),* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 1999), 3-4.

[43] Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 3024.44, *Defense Crisis Management* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2007), 2.

[44] Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 5715.01C, *Joint Staff Participation in Interagency Affairs* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2012), C-3.

These relationships indicate that each crisis will involve a unique flow of guidance and coordination between the OSD, JS, and COCOMs. In principal, guidance flows from the President, through the NSC and OSD to the CJCS for formal issuance, from the Secretary of Defense through the USD(P) and representative ASD to the CJCS for formal issuance, or directly from the CJCS and his representatives. Alternate means of flow include verbal guidance from the President, and/or the Secretary of Defense, the USD(P), the representative ASD, or the CJCS and his representatives.[45]

While doctrine offers generic classifications of information included in planning directives, the CJCS manuals for the Adaptive Planning and Execution (APEX) framework and the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) detail the minimum and recommend inclusions. Subtle differences exist in the categories of information included in planning directives depending on the reference. Some explicitly annotate each while others refer to them implicitly. Accounting for all these references, a planning directive, at a minimum, "describes the situation, establishes command relationships, and identifies the mission and any planning constraints."[46] Additionally, typical planning directives include the "purpose of military operations, objectives, anticipated tasks, forces available to the commander for planning, and strategic lift allocations."[47] Ancillary, but often relevant, inclusions are constraints or restraints, tentative timelines for mobilization, deployment, or employment, or directed courses of action.[48] Planning directives may also include reference to strategic documents, strategic guidance,

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[45] See Figure 1 below for graphical representation of the described flow of guidance and directives.

[46] JP 5-0, II-31; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Guide (CJCSG) 3130, *Adaptive Planning and Execution (APEX) Overview and Policy Framework* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2012).

[47] JP 5-0, IV-5 – IV-6.

[48] Ibid., I-1, I-13, I-20, I-31 – I-33.

international, regional, or domestic political considerations, or higher headquarter operational assessments.[49] Lastly, planning directives may include specific requirements for option generation such as a directed end state, direction to consider multiple end states, termination criteria, number of options to prepare, specific options to consider, strategic and operational risk guidance, or completeness or distinguishability guidance for options.[50]

Nature of Planning Guidance and Options

The supported CCDR is responsible for assessing crisis situations and creating options for consideration by senior leaders. They do this utilizing the two primary planning methodologies, JOPP and operational design.[51] Upon receipt of a planning directive or in anticipation, the CCDR issues planning guidance to initiate the JOPP process. Often the planning effort will begin with design as a tool for the Commander to understand the problem and visualize an approach to solving that problem.[52] The primary inputs to initiating planning and conducting mission analysis or operational design "are the higher headquarters' planning directive, other strategic guidance, and the commander's initial planning guidance."[53] Following the creation and presentation of courses of action (COAs) by the staff, the CCDR may, " a) review and approve COA(s) for further analysis, or b) direct revisions to COA(s), combinations of COAs, or development of additional COA(s)."[54]

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[49] DODM 3020.44-M, 41; Joint Publication (JP) 3-08, *Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2011), G-5; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM) 3122.01A, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume I, Planning Policies and Procedures* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Defense Technical Information Center, 2006), T-A-1 – T-A-4.

[50] CJCSG 3130, A-7 – A-9, A-14.; DODM 3022.44-M, 41.

[51] JP 5-0, IV-1.

[52] Ibid., III-4.

[53] JP 5-0., IV-4.

Following COA analysis, the staff conducts COA comparison. The key outputs of this step are evaluated COAs, a recommended COA, and the rationale for selection.[55] At the conclusion of the comparison, the CCDR either approves the staff's recommendation, approves with modifications, approves a different COA than recommended, directs a not previously considered COA, or defers decision.[56] In absence of an approved COA, the staff will again plan based on the specific planning guidance issued. Throughout the conduct of design and each step of JOPP, the CCDR continues to interface with his staff and planning teams, updating planning guidance all the while.[57] Once the CCDR selects a COA, he directs the staff to complete the Commander's Estimate for submittal to the CJCS for Estimate Review. The CCDR may tailor the contents of the Commander's Estimate based on "the nature of the crisis, time available to respond, and the applicability of prior planning."[58] The CJCS Estimate Review then determines the adequacy, feasibility, and acceptability of the provided options.[59]

Both doctrine and instructions allow for flexibility in the actual format of the Commander's Estimate. In each reference, the verbiage for expected options varies, but the potential outputs can be classified as either a range of whole-of-government approaches, a range of military options, multiple, distinguishable COAs, or one COA recommended for approval.[60] Regardless of the number, type, and quality of options provided in the Commander's Estimate, all references allude to the value of providing a multiplicity of options. "Providing multiple options

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[54] Ibid., IV-25.

[55] Ibid., IV-37.

[56] Ibid., IV-42.

[57] Ibid., IV-16.

[58] JP 5-0., IV-43.

[59] Ibid., IV-43 – IV-44.

[60] Ibid.; CJCSM 3122.01A.; CJCSG 3130.

for senior decision makers provides opportunity to mitigate risk across Combatant Command areas of responsibility. Multiple options pertain to both options for achieving a desired end-state, and to specific courses of action designed to achieve an individual objective or condition."[61] CCDRs should "state all practicable COAs open to the commander that, if successful, will accomplish the mission."[62] Therefore, the CCDR must ensure that options provided for review meet, at minimum, the requirements described in planning directives or verbal guidance from the NCA and, at best, seek to provide multiple, whole-of-government options for consideration by senior decision makers.

Nature of Collaboration between OSD, JS, and COCOMs

During the period considered by this case, the Department of Defense instituted the APEX framework.[63] This framework "is based on the established policies and procedures governing joint operation planning and execution found in the JOPES volumes as well as joint doctrine."[64] As such, JOPES processes still dictated the underlying mechanisms that directed procedural collaboration during the entire period of the case study.

Collaboration for CAP happens across the Joint Planning and Execution Community (JPEC). This community includes all Department stakeholders for a particular crisis plan as defined in CJCS planning directives.[65] The community's "use of collaborative tools ensures information sharing and feedback among JPEC members involved in COA development."[66] Upon

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[61] CJCSG 3130, A-14.

[62] CJCSM 3122.01A., T-F-4.

[63] CJCSG 3130. DoD implemented APEX during the spring of 2012.

[64] Ibid., 2.

[65] JP 5-0, II-11 – II-13.

[66] CJCSM 3122.01A, E-5.

planning initiation, the SecDef or CJCS designates a supported commander and supporting

commands. The supported commander has the lead for all CAP planning related to the particular

crisis and should leverage the expertise and assistance of the supporting commands. Subordinate

and service commands also collaborate as part of the JPEC to assist in generating options and

support resource feasibility for developing options. Communication tools available for

collaboration across the JPEC include oral, newsgroups, messages, time phased force and

deployment data exchange, web pages, collaborative planning tools such as video

teleconferences, and restricted access planning tools.[67] The supported commander, with the

authority given in planning directives, leads the collaborative effort across the JPEC to generate

options for presentation to senior leaders.[68]

The approval process for options is also a collaborative effort. This component of the

process is manifest in the in-progress reviews (IPRs) that precede option and plan approval.

"IPRs constitute a disciplined dialogue between commanders and their higher headquarters and

are a part of the formal adaptive planning review and approval process for campaign and

contingency plans."[69] However, during CAP, these IPRs may be compressed or accomplished

simultaneously due to time constraints. If fully utilized in CAP, there are three pre-execution

types of IPRs that can happen sequentially or may be repeated iteratively depending on approval

decisions. IPR A, Plan Assumption Approval, integrates strategic guidance from the President,

SecDef, CJCS, and others with the initial mission analysis, threat assessment, and assumptions

provided by the CCDR.[70] IPR C, Concept of Operation Approval, involves the CJCS and SecDef,

in consultation with others in the JPEC, reviewing and advising either the President or the SecDef

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[67] CJCSM 3122.01A, E-10 – E-11.

[68] Ibid., E-15.

[69] JP 5-0, I-3.

[70] JP 5-0, II-19 – II-20.

on approving a concept for detailed planning. Similarly, IPR F, Final Plan Approval, involves approving a final detailed plan for execution.[71]

Lastly, interagency collaboration is essential for effective CAP. "In a crisis response, coordination between DoD and other USG agencies will normally occur within the NSC interagency policy committee and, if directed, during development of the USG strategic plan."[72] However, the COCOM employs its organic Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG), or equivalent, to participate in CAP providing expertise and conduits for coordination to external agencies. As CAP commences, the CCDR should seek unity of effort across government in developing options, include key participants as feasible, coordinate to consider all elements of national power, and determine augmentation to and liason and coordination authorities for the JIACG and staff.[73]

CAP Causal Relationships

CAP, as defined and structured in doctrine and regulation, is a highly detailed and explicit process. As comprehensive as the process is, the nature of crises dictate that each CAP effort will contain unique elements of guidance flow, timelines, specific requirements for options, as well as type and scope of collaboration. Some interactions remain fixed regardless of crisis. JOPP and operational design require staffs to present CCDRs with multiple options. However, formal planning directives dictate the specific requirements of options that CCDRs and their staffs must address and forward for consideration. The requirement may be a single COA, but when feasible and practicable, estimates and concepts should include a range of military options if not whole-of-government approaches. COCOMs expect to receive guidance containing

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[71] CJCSM 3122.01A, E-6 – E-14.

[72] JP 3-08, xx.

[73] JP 3-08, xx.

"strategic end states with suitable and feasible national strategic objectives that reflect US national interests."[74] Additionally, doctrine and regulation encourage CCDRs and staffs to seek strategic guidance external to CAP, such as from other policy and strategy documents, speeches, or statements, which may coincide or conflict with the formal CAP guidance. Also, multiple channels of informal guidance exist to add clarity and depth to the COCOMs assessment of strategic guidance and objectives but could confuse expectations if not in concert with formal guidance. Thus, though the COCOM is the focal point for option generation, the sheer volume of stakeholders may simultaneously confound and foster quality option generation. The quality and frequency of dialogue between the COCOM and senior leaders is an intervening variable directly influencing option generation. Lastly, stated or perceived horizons for strategic decision will shape the duration of JOPP and operational design that the COCOM conducts but may not account upfront for necessary iteration of the guidance, concept, and plan-review-approval cycle. Figure 1 provides an author-generated process trace that incorporated expectations described by both doctrine and regulation.
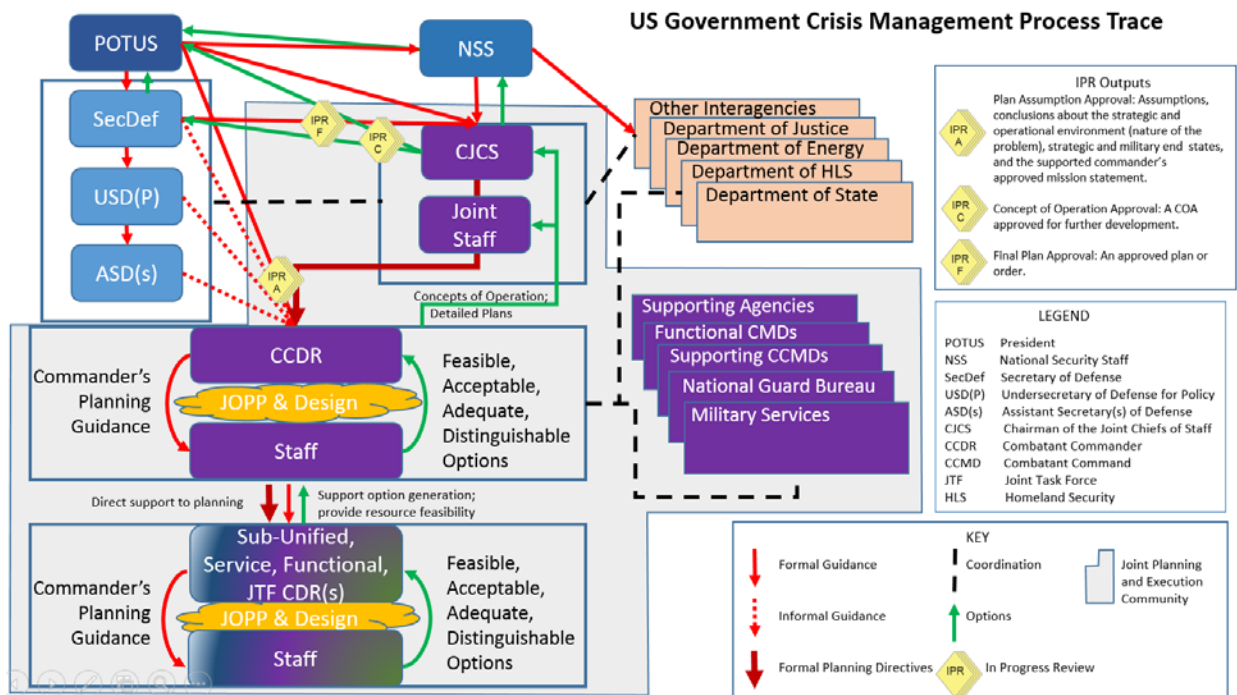
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[74] JP 5-0, II-19.

Figure 1. US Government Crisis Management Process Trace[75]

Source: Author generated.

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[75] This is an author generated figure accounting for all available joint doctrine and regulation.

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Survey Results

The survey of participants of Syrian CAP, 2011 – 2013, involved ten individuals chosen because of their experience with the process. The logic of the survey bore directly from the process trace with questions designed to test the expectations described in both doctrine and regulation. The participants answered questions based on two cohorts: leadership and planners on either the JS or OSD and leadership and planners within USCENTCOM. Five participants from each cohort completed the survey. The majority of the questions were identical to both cohort. These mirrored questions provide contextual differences in how each cohort experienced key aspects of the process. Some questions were specific to the cohort, such as the application of JOPP by USCENTCOM, assuming that only those in that cohort should be expected to have experienced that portion of the process.

The survey included four functional areas of the process: planning directives and higher headquarter guidance, option generation and JOPP, collaboration between OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM, and overall process questions. In each area, both qualitative and open-ended questions gathered the individuals' experience with that portion of the process.

Planning Directives

The survey included one open-ended and four qualitative questions on planning directives and external guidance. The first three questions established the frequency that participants observed required, recommended, or optional inclusions in planning directives.

All three questions indicate that, generally, USCENTCOM leadership and planners experienced greater completeness in planning directives received as compared with those charged to produce them.[76] The most significant exception was on the frequency of "direction to consider multiple end states." Here, OSD and JS leadership and planners recalled greater direction to

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[76] See Appendix 1 Q1, Q2, and Q3.

consider multiple end states indicating a difference in expectations. Both cohorts responded to the fourth question, "How comprehensive were planning directives at meeting the expectations (doctrinally and procedurally) for the unique conditions of the conflict?" The result was an even distribution of somewhat to moderately comprehensive. This indicates that all parties recognized that the planning directives in the Syrian case could have been more comprehensive.

In the open-ended questions, participants offered what negatively affected the process of generating planning directives. Respondents in the OSD / JS cohort cited "[a] fixation on Joint Doctrine process, indecision on strategic direction, and an inability to anticipate/calculate the long-term affect across the region of a policy shift of employing DoD."[77] Respondents of the USCENTCOM cohort cited, "unrealistic or achievable goals and aspirational planning not aligned with what politicians were willing to execute."[78] Additionally, one respondent noted that:

> I found the JS directives directed options to be planned for in lieu of focusing COCOM efforts on a coherent strategic end state, objectives and termination criteria. I found the Joint Staff developed their own options, in lieu of the COCOM CDR and directed him to plan for those options, or they selected unachievable objectives.[79]

These responses indicate that, in the Syrian case, each cohort experienced significant differences in the feasibility, adequacy, and distinguishability of requirements described in planning directives.

Options and JOPP

The section of questions on option generation included two mirrored qualitative questions, one mirrored open-ended question, and two qualitative questions specifically on the

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[77] Survey response by anonymous members of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[78] Survey response by anonymous members of USCENTCOM cohort, December 11, 2014.

[79] Survey response by anonymous member of USCENTCOM cohort, December 11, 2014.

conduct of JOPP for the USCENTCOM cohort. The first two questions establish the frequency of categories of options provided as experienced by each cohort and the level of concurrence with those options meeting directed expectations.[80]

On the categories of options provided, USCENTCOM leadership and planners experienced more frequency of providing the higher quality categories of a range of options including whole-of government approaches, a range of military options, and multiple, distinguishable options. While the degree difference is small, it was consistent across the respondents. Similarly, USCENTCOM leadership and planners had a markedly higher agreement on options meeting expectations than did those responsible for receiving the options. Only one respondent, from the OSD / JS cohort, commented on the open-ended question as to what negatively affected the process of generating options citing, "lack of imagination [and] a resistance to plan or otherwise think through the problem."[81] Of note, this respondent cited only participating in Syrian CAP during the first half of the case period.

The two qualitative USCENTCOM JOPP questions establish planner and leadership's evaluation of command planning guidance and the tests of validity of the options provided.[82] Generally, USCENTCOM leadership and planners were satisfied with the completeness of command planning guidance internal to their headquarters. As for testing the validity of their options, they assessed them to be almost always feasible, usually suitable, and sometimes to usually acceptable. This suggests planners and leadership over weighted the feasibility of considered options relative to their risk and cost.

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[80] See Appendix 1 Q6 and Q7.

[81] Survey response by anonymous member of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[82] See Appendix 1 Q9 and Q10.

Collaboration and Overall Process

The collaboration and overall process sections included two qualitative questions establishing observed quality of collaboration and the efficiency and effectiveness of the CAP process writ large.[83] Additional open-ended questions ascertained participants' thoughts on what factors appreciably influenced collaboration and the process.

On the level of satisfaction with collaboration, both cohorts experienced collaboration broadly as satisfactory. Both experienced the greatest satisfaction between the JS and USCENTCOM and the least satisfying collaboration noted by the OSD / JS cohort was that between OSD and USCENTCOM. In response to collaboration, one member of the OSD / JS cohort noted that, "as a rule - there should never be collaboration between OSD and a COCOM. OSD is supposed to work through the JS and not directly with a COCOM. Any time OSD went directly to a COCOM without going through JS it always caused problems and derailed the process."[84] This comment suggests the individual expected a more linear collaboration structure than the process trace indicates. USCENTCOM participants noted a number of factors that negatively influenced collaboration. These included, "directed COAs from FAOs on the [JS]," a lack of understanding military capabilities by members of OSD and the JS, and pressure on USCENTCOM to, "deliver what the PC/DCs wanted, not what the best military approach was long term."[85] Both sets of comments suggest that most dissatisfactions with collaboration correlated with individual expectations of others roles in the process.

When questioned about what most influenced the Syrian CAP process, both cohorts mentioned that desire and direction for a menu, or range, of options, personal relationships, as

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[83] See Appendix 1 Q11 and Q12.

[84] Survey response by anonymous member of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[85] Survey response by anonymous members of USCENTCOM cohort, December 11, 2014.

well as disparate problem framing greatly affected the process. A member of USCENTCOM "found that the Joint Staff was always looking for a range of options and the COCOM was always seeking a strategy with clear policy driven end states and objectives founded around a real understanding of the problem."[86] Similarly, a member of the OSD / JS cohort summarized the character of the Syrian CAP as, "defining a range of options deemed suitable, acceptable, and feasible by senior leadership remains a challenge. This discussion begins with a dialog between senior military leaders that only moves to our civilian leadership once COAs begin to get developed."[87] Other individuals of both cohorts echoed these sentiments in their emphasis on the value of shared understanding and fostering collaborative relationships across the various headquarters.

Throughout the respondents' answers, experience of the process was generally compatible between the two cohorts. The differences were largely oriented on the degree of salience of a particular aspect of the process or the underlying reason that aspect of the process occurred the way that it did. Elements of the desire versus possibility paradigm were present and significant.[88] Likewise, the first two frictions of the civil-military relationship proffered by Dr. Davidson were pervasive, differences between the character of military advice supplied and the demand for that advice as well as which model of military advice is appropriate.[89] Lastly, Feaver's theory of incentives by position may be partially explanatory as well, evidenced most clearly in USCENTCOM planners and leaderships tendency to overweight feasibility as a test of

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[86] Survey response by anonymous member of USCENTCOM cohort, December 11, 2014.

[87] Survey response by anonymous member of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[88] Simpson, *War from the Ground Up: Twenty-First Century Combat as Politics*, 126-129.

[89] Davidson.

options considered.[90] While none of the data provided is statistically significant due to necessarily small sample size, the congruence of these trends across participants' responses is noteworthy.

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[90] Feaver.

CAP Influences and Effects

Following analysis of the survey results, interviews with nine selected individuals offered

deeper insight into the influences, effects, and dynamics of crisis management. Five individuals

from the OSD and JS cohort and four from USCENTCOM provided their personal assessments of

the Syrian CAP process and crisis management writ large. While like the survey, the experience

of nine individuals may not be statistically significant, the researcher selected these specific

individuals based on their depth of participation with the Syrian CAP case, direct involvement

with planning, and proximity to senior decision makers. The range of participants included field

grade planners, general officer planning leadership, and senior civilian planning and policy

leadership. The scope of participant experiences included combatant command, JS, OSD, and

direct participation in the NSC. The questions proffered derived from the results of both the

process trace and survey. The following analysis incorporates the experiences of participants

from both survey and interview determining what influences and effects CAP generally, the

Syrian case specifically, and the effects those influences had on guidance, options, and process.

General CAP Influences

Participants offered a myriad of influences on crisis management processes; however,

five themes of influences rang through all the research. The character of the conflict, strategic and

regional context, roles and expectations, authorities, and relationships emerge as principle

influences. Not all crises are equal in terms of their impact to national and regional interests and

the complexity of the underlying problems.[91] The perceived import of the interests at stake

directly influences the weighting of effort that each organization and echelon apply to CAP

processes. Additionally, because the national response structure is hierarchal and authority-based,

the level of complexity of the conflict indirectly relates to the echelon and coordination required

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[91] Interviews with CE#2, CE#3, and OJ#4.; Survey responses by anonymous members of
OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM cohorts, December 11, 2014.

to address the crisis.[92] "Easy problems get solved by combatant commands with some oversight by the JS and interagency."[93] As important as the conflict itself, the regional and strategic context of the potentialities of the conflict heavily influence CAP. On Syria specifically, all nine individuals interviewed, and some survey respondents, described a range of issues within the region and strategic implications of intervention on the global level. Many cited the importance of assessing second and third order effects in evaluating options for any conflict.[94] Others noted domestic politics as a direct influence on how both civil and military leaders frame crises.[95]

While the influences of the character of the conflict and context are largely conditional, the roles and expectations of organizations and individuals involved in CAP span individual crises. By design, the process is a coherent, well-defined system of individuals and organizations each with their own role to play. However, because crises are conditional, the process is amenable to modification. Each interviewee described their expectations of both the organization to which they belonged and the myriad of interdependent organizations with which they interacted. In the broadest sense, a consensus on roles of the OSD, JS, and COCOM promulgated responses. However, a number of differences in expectations were present. A member of the JS noted, "COCOMs have got to understand that the JS doesn't have tasking authority. We're the guys that are in between. We're trying to translate."[96] A complementary thought by a planner at USCENTCOM was that "the JS to us was more of an extension of USD(P). While we cared what the JS asked us for, we didn't want to be constrained by their expectations."[97] This particular

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[92] Interviews with CE#1, CE#3, OJ#4.

[93] Interview with OJ#4.

[94] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#4, CE#1, CE#2, CE#4.

[95] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#2, OJ#4, and CE#2.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[96] Interview with OJ#3.

[97] Interview with CE#1.

divergence of military expectations was indicative of other subtle, but important, differences in understanding how each organization and echelon affects the process.[98]

Within the civil-military structure as well, many individuals cited important differences in roles and expectations. These included a lack of both broad and specific understanding of the military instrument of power by many civilians, slight but influential differences in perceived authorities, and often stark differences in what outputs to expect from CAP.[99] Some of the military professionals described unrealistic expectations from civilian leadership and a "fundamental lack of understanding military power."[100] Others noted the lingering influence of the Weinberger-Powell doctrine on expectations of the relationship.[101]

> Weinberger-Powell doctrine is flawed in that it doesn't reflect the reality of our experiences. However, there is still a fraction of military professionals that believe in the ideals of the doctrine, in that clear objectives are a prerequisite to developing and executing military options. The success of the Gulf War only served to reinforce this incomplete philosophy and the force learned a lesson that we can always apply military power and then leave. Also this led to the military doctrine of clearly defined end states and termination criteria. These are inadequate concepts and instead, we should start by framing the range of acceptable political outcomes and then plan from there.[102]

A correlated view was that,

> [The Weinberger-Powell] doctrine does focus planners on considering the outcomes of the conflict, but [the planning] is too hard to think you won't need to alter the termination criteria maybe on a monthly basis. Also, not assessing any military options as suitable is not an excuse to provide options for [our civilian leadership] to consider. We need something akin to [the Weinberger-Powell] doctrine.[103]

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[98] Interviews with OJ#3, OJ#4, and CE#1.

[99] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#3, and OJ#5.

[100] Interview with OJ#1.

[101] Interviews with OJ#2, OJ#3, and OJ#4. The Weinberger-Powell doctrine is a set of intervention principles and restraints advocated by Caspar Weinberger and General Colin Powell for inclusion in debating the employment of the military instrument of power.

[102] Interview with OJ#2.

[103] Interview with OJ#4.

Many interviewees and survey respondents echoed the underlying tension of these differences as significantly influential to contemporary crisis management.

A related influence on CAP is both explicit and implicit crisis authorities. These include authority to plan, coordinate, direct, or to issue guidance. Crisis planning begins with existing authorities, but quickly evolves as the expected lines of authority adapt to the requirements of the effort. Whether authority to formally plan with another country, coordinate efforts between agencies and departments, or interdepartmental authority to directly liaise between echelons, each serves to alter the underling process which may have consequences beyond the desired intent.[104] One such sentiment was that "[OSD] does not have the authority to [directly liaise with] COCOMs. The JS is supposed to be there to refine and translate intent. [By allowing direct liaison] you risk opening Pandora's Box."[105] Analogously, the quality and density of personal relationships influence the exercise of these authorities and sharing of information. Eight of nine interviewees directly attributed successes or challenges in the process to personal relationships.[106] Thus, cultivating appropriate authorities and relationships, clarifying roles and expectations, assimilating strategic and regional contexts, and creating shared understanding of the character of the conflict account for the most significant influences on crisis management.

Syrian CAP Influences and Effects

Given the overarching influences on crisis management, the Syrian case provides an example of the interaction of these influences and how they affected the process. Simmering, escalating and increasing in complexity best characterizes the Syrian crisis. One member of the Joint Staff described the crisis as, "[in] a category that wasn't crisis so much as what we termed

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[104] Interviews with OJ#2, OJ#3, OJ#4, CE#1, and CE#3.

[105] Interview with OJ#3.

[106] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#4, OJ#5, CE#1, CE#2, CE#3, and CE#4.

'anticipated crisis'. It's an abstract norm, not a doctrinal framework. We have sound process for

peace or war, but not for the in between, the episodic conflict short of war."[107] Likewise, a

USCENTCOM planner noted that, "in a way, [the Syrian crisis] snuck up on us, but in a way it

didn't."[108] Another characterization of the crisis concluded that "the [military] wanted to put a

label on it and let that drive how we acted and responded. We failed to recognize that this might

be something different."[109] By seeking categories and labels to fit the DoD's existing planning

paradigm, particularly early in the crisis, a great amount of intellectual capital, time, and energy

focused on framing the problem to create shared understanding from combatant command to

national command authority. Almost universally, interviewees considered this the most essential

aspect of planning; however, in this case, the volatility and changing conditions of the crisis

outpaced process timeframes to generate shared understanding.[110]

Adding to the complexity internal to Syria, the regional and strategic context also

evolved. Early in deliberations, some highlighted the important context of the Arab Spring. In

2011, many within the executive branch and international relations community were at odds to

make sense of events unfolding in the Middle East. Some considered this a regional phenomenon

of power-order readjustment long overdue, while others contemplated the conditions of each

country individually and what their outcomes might entail.[111] "As we understood the internal,

regional, and great power problems, that all played as we tried to find a solution. Internal power

structures, Iranians, Hezbollah, Iraqi Shia, and Russian interests all weighed in."[112] Additional

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[107] Interview with OJ#2.

[108] Interview with CE#1.

[109] Interview with OJ#3.

[110] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#3, OJ#4, CE#1, CE#2, CE#3, and CE#4.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM cohorts, December 11, 2014.

[111] Interviews with OJ#4, OJ#5, and CE#5.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM cohorts, December 11, 2014.

concerns included proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian concerns, neighboring nations' security, and a host of disparate interests.[113] Accounting for all these complexities made predictive assessments extremely challenging and increased the duration and depth of discourse required to build consensus both within and amongst the DoD, the interagency, and NSC on underling problems inherent in the conflict.

As observed in general, Syrian CAP authorities and relationships began by following doctrinal and procedural prescriptions with minor exceptions. Over time, they evolved due to the increasing complexity of the crisis. This evolution was initially simple and informal, followed by simple and formal CAP centered around USCENTCOM. Following initial IPRs, the process became complicated with formal interdependencies between USCENTCOM, JS, OSD, and NSC. Processes eventually became complex and formal, adding layers of bilateral and multinational planning and collaboration. Near the culmination of the period, "the NSC was very interested in developing framing policy on use of instruments of national power. They provided a foundation for the integration and synchronization effort, but NSC still retained control of [the integration function]."[114] Thus, at no point in Syrian CAP was any department or agency granted broad authority to coordinate and integrate a whole-of-government approach. While this grossly oversimplifies the myriad of interactions that took place over the period, it serves to accurately, if not precisely, describe the increasing complexity of process that paralleled the character of the conflict itself.[115]

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[112] Interview with OJ#4.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM cohorts, December 11, 2014.

[113] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#3, OJ#4, CE#1, CE#2, CE#3, and CE#4.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM cohorts, December 11, 2014.

[114] Interview with OJ#4.

[115] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#4, CE#1, CE#2, and CE#3.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

Likewise, expectations of individuals' roles and responsibilities and those of others

significantly shaped the Syrian CAP process. Differences in how individuals and organizations

understood and interpreted civil-military relations created appreciable tension. All parties agreed

and understood at what level decisions were made. However, divergent views on what constituted

best military advice were disruptive.[116] These differences emanated from dissimilar interpretation

of feasibility, adequacy, acceptability, and completeness. The military professionals of the

combatant command, and by extension JS, stressed providing options that were militarily

feasible, adequately addressed or solved the problem, were acceptable in terms of risk to mission,

force and cost, and were complete enough to minimize surprise during execution. Conversely,

civil leadership viewed their role in assessing and deciding on options in terms of feasibility,

adequacy, and acceptability to attain international and domestic political aims.[117]

This perspective caused senior civil leaders, in general, to want "a la carte military

options and the ability to mix and match options without a real concept of desired effects."[118]

Military leaders perceived that this desire in their civilian counterparts bore from viewing options

as additive, in that each option had an associated cost that could be tallied in linear terms.[119] This

tendency, in turn, frustrated military leadership's ability to communicate the second and third

order effects of mixing and matching discrete options.[120]

Perception of this dynamic by some at USCENTCOM and the JS caused direct feedback

in the form of reinterpretation of best military advice. To some civil leadership, this appeared as

an attitude of "give guidance and get out of the military's way" reminiscent of sentiments in the

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[116] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#3, OJ#4, and CE#1.

[117] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#3, OJ#4, CE#1, and CE#2.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[118] Interview with OJ#1.

[119] Interviews with OJ#2, OJ#3.

[120] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#3, OJ#4, and OJ#5, CE#3.

Weinberger-Powell doctrine.[121] In contrast, military leaders and planners perceived the civilian desire for "back-of-the-napkin assessment. This is problematic when, later, formal assessments come back significantly different in terms of cost and risk. There is an inherent hesitance for the military to provide hasty analysis."[122] Likewise, in response to the perceived inadequacy of civilian assessment mechanisms, some individuals within each cohort noticed a tendency to down-select options. This manifested directly from the JOPP process, which expects a CCDR to recommend which option, or COA, he judges to be best military advice. In contrast, "Our civilians want to read the whole book, not just the military summary. [The military] believes we can distill down and screen out the un-feasible COAs. [Civilians] didn't take the planning journey with us or get to read the whole book. There's tension there. That's the rub. So, the military's responsibility is to develop a range of options based on best military advice."[123] The tension resided in settling whom was responsible to screen options if the guidance was to provide a menu of them. Competing views on acceptability added to this tension. "We were good at drawing out, both the operational and strategic risk, in terms of risk to mission and force. I don't recall a lot of guidance on risk. Over time, [the JS] added constraints to the [planning directives] which served as our risk guidance. I think civilian leaders wanted all options regardless of risk."[124] These contending notions of distinguishability, completeness, and acceptability of options resulted in frustration by professionals at USCENTCOM, JS, and OSD alike.

The effects of these varied interpretations and perceptions on policy and guidance were multiple. On policy, at no point was a clear intention to intervene substantially during this period formally assimilated into the planning process. This lack of pre-decision directly caused the

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[121] Interview with OJ#5.

[122] Interview with OJ#3.

[123] Interview with OJ#4.

[124] Interview with CE#3.

retention of interagency integration by the NSC. By retaining this function, no organization, to include USCENTCOM, could effectively plan and integrate a whole-of-government approach for consideration. Thus, by design, guidance remained oriented on developing and updating the menu of discrete military options for the NSC to consider. In turn, the feedback of this approach, coupled with the simmering character of the conflict, effectively stifled strategy formulation.[125] "USCENTCOM would have loved to engage in a dialogue to develop a coherent regional strategy, but many of the Pentagon's civilians were unwilling or unqualified to have that discussion. The incremental escalation of the conflict, discussed as an anticipated crisis, negated the desire to have a formal strategy development. Thus, the emphasis was on discrete military options as an output of narrow operational planning from the character of the conflict."[126] So, in effect, policy remained focused on the peripheries of the conflict.

Overtime, guidance evolved from very ambiguous to a mixture of specific but disparate objectives, aims, and constraints. Additionally, separate lines of authority and coordination formed between USCENTCOM, the JS, elements of USD(P), and others.[127] An example was the USCENTCOM planning team which gained direct liaison with USD(P) due to the nature of their particular planning directive. A member of that team noted that, "we didn't work for the JS per se. So, we didn't develop a formal commander's estimate. We had a direct dialogue with the staffers of USD(P) and gained near-real time feedback. We would not have got the plan through without [USD(P)] staffer integration."[128] Some highlighted the utility and effectiveness of this

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[125] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, OJ#3, OJ#4, OJ#5, CE#1, and CE#3.; Survey responses by anonymous members of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[126] Interview with OJ#2.

[127] Interviews with OJ#2, OJ#4, OJ#5, CE#1, CE#2, CE#3, CE#4.

[128] Interview with CE#1.

approach while others emphasized the challenges brought on by these contending layers of bureaucracy.[129]

The crisis simmered while the DoD and NCA wrestled with discrete military options that, by themselves, served to address peripheral symptoms of the crisis. The macro effect was that the national decision making apparatus strategically paused and delayed decision to intervene substantially. Because the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity of the conflict outpaced structural capacity to create shared understanding, the level of confidence in predicted outcomes never rose to the point that warranted significant intervention. A member of USCENTCOM summarized their challenge in developing options in that, "we created a menu of options, but it's like the movie Argo. 'This is the least worst option we've got.'"[130] Likewise, a member of the JS summarized the dilemma noting that "the Syrian government feared a Syrian Awakening scenario. There were very interesting internal dynamics. I think we saw Syria very clearly early on. What we struggled with was, 'how will this end?' This evolved on a daily basis. When we realized that [Syria] wasn't going to fragment, but fracture, there was a point of no return."[131] More than two years of CAP resulted in significant increases in understanding of the environment and problem; however, much of the military options proved insufficient for execution. This period concluded publicly with the submission and consideration of options in the "Dempsey Letter." What followed was a negotiated solution to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons capability. This manner of attaining policy aims was not novel. As observed by Henry Kissinger, "faced with an administrative machine which is both elaborate and fragmented, the executive is forced...in the direction of extra-bureaucratic means of decision."[132]

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[129] Interviews with OJ#3, OJ#4, CE#1, and CE#3.

[130] Interview with CE#1.

[131] Interview with OJ#4.

[132] Henry Kissinger, "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *Daedalus* 95, no. 2 (Spring 1966): 511, accessed December 9, 2014, www.jstor.org/stable/20026982.

Syrian CAP Dynamics and Trends

Accounting for all the influences and effects described, a system perspective of the Syrian case provides insight into the dynamics and trends of the crisis management. Figure 2 depicts graphically the system dynamics in terms of feedback loops. As the crisis began, the NCA evaluated that the interests at stake were less than the costs of a significant intervention. This led to symptomatic solutions. Secretary Hagel testified to Congress in April 2013 that "the U.S. military is constantly updating and adjusting tactical military planning to account for the rapidly shifting situation on the ground and to prepare for additional new contingencies, not only those associated with the Syrian regime's chemical weapons but also the potential spillover of violence across Syria's borders that could threaten Allies and partners."[133] These comments are indicative of decisions to address symptoms of the crisis rather than intervene fully.

As the Syrian government escalated force gradually and deliberately to obviate an international response, the level of violence increased and the conflict widened, drawing more internal actors into the crisis.[134] As the conflict widened within Syria, the implications for regional actors increased and their involvement escalated in turn. Similarly, as the conflict gained regional import, the strategic consequences of the crisis increased over time. Together, the increasing regional and global context added complexity to the crisis.

For the US Government as a system interacting with the crisis, the principle side effect of Syrian, regional, and global feedback was to raise uncertainty of both what was happening within the country and what that meant for taking action. Increasing media attention and the ongoing withdrawal from Iraq constrained both collaboration and dialogue for what could become another major conflict.[135]

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[133] US Department of Defense, *Statement on Syria before the Senate Armed Services Committee as Delivered by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel*, April 17, 2013 (Washington, DC): accessed March 7, 2015, http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1771.

[134] Interviews with OJ#2 and OJ#4.

As the US Government reevaluated options during this period, the interests for intervening combined with anticipation of uncertain outcomes for the options under consideration. The NCA continued to evaluate that the interests at stake were less than the sum of the costs and risks of a significant intervention. The cycle of negative feedback then continued with the application of more symptomatic solutions to the crisis. Secretary Hagel summarized the Department's CAP efforts noting that, "[the DoD has] been developing options and planning for post-Assad Syria and we will continue to provide the President and Congress with our assessment of options for U.S. military intervention."[136] Because the NCA did not decide during this period to intervene militarily, the CAP cycle of developing, providing, assessing, and evaluating options continued. As a result, no authorization to develop a whole-of-government approach emerged.[137] Secretary Hagel confirmed this stating, "the responsibility of the Department of Defense is to protect America's national security and to provide the President with a full range of options for any contingency."[138]

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[135] Interviews with OJ#2 and CE#2.

[136] US Department of Defense, *Statement on Syria before the Senate Armed Services Committee as Delivered by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel*.

[137] Interview with OJ#4.

[138] US Department of Defense, *Statement on Syria before the Senate Armed Services Committee as Delivered by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel*.

Syrian Crisis Emergent Dynamics 2011-2013

Figure 2: Syrian Crisis Emergent Dynamics 2011-2013[139]

Source: Author generated.

From these feedbacks, certain trends developed over time. Figure 3 graphically depicts the relationship of the conditions affecting option generation and evaluation. The increasing importance of the crisis, combined with the cumulative study and analysis of the problem at all echelons, increased shared understanding over time. As individuals and organizations continued discourse about the crisis, the gap in understanding shrank.[140] This building of consensus was entirely indicative of the designed function of the National Security Council System. "[The NSC's] purpose is to develop and refine issues while attempting to gain interagency consensus prior to forwarding to the President for decision."[141]

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[139] This is an author generated figure accounting for all relevant Syrian CAP influences and effects. As with any system representation, this is a simplification and not necessarily representative of the state of affairs for any particular point in time.

[140] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#4, and CE#1.

[141] JP 5-0, II-2.

As consensus grew within the DoD and interagency, the evaluation of the costs and risks associated with military intervention increased as well. One survey respondent described the evaluation process by noting that "the dynamic back and forth between USCENTCOM and the JS and then USD(P) moves into the interagency and results in thousands of questions being asked as everyone wants quick, easily executed COAs which do not cost much, require as small a footprint as possible, and accomplish an evolving mission with as little risk as possible."[142] However, the qualitative growth in the expected costs and risks of intervention correlated with the volatility of the crisis. As the internal system of Syria became more fragmented, the military options to unwind the crisis became more multifaceted. As the regional and strategic context deepened, the strategic risks of intervention also increased.[143]

As noted, increasing volatility and complexity within Syria caused uncertainty to increase. However, the trend towards consensus and increased shared understanding had a balancing effect. By the end of the period, uncertainty in both the OE and the outcomes of options was in decline. The widening of the conflict also modified the national and regional interests at stake. The introduction of chemical weapons to the conflict heightened US counter-proliferation concerns.[144] The involvement of external actors increasingly threatened regional stability and US interests across the region.[145]

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[142] Survey response by anonymous members of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[143] Interviews with OJ#1, OJ#2, and OJ#4.

[144] Interviews with OJ#2 and OJ#4.

[145] Interviews with OJ#4 and CE#4.

Syrian CAP Trend Dynamics:

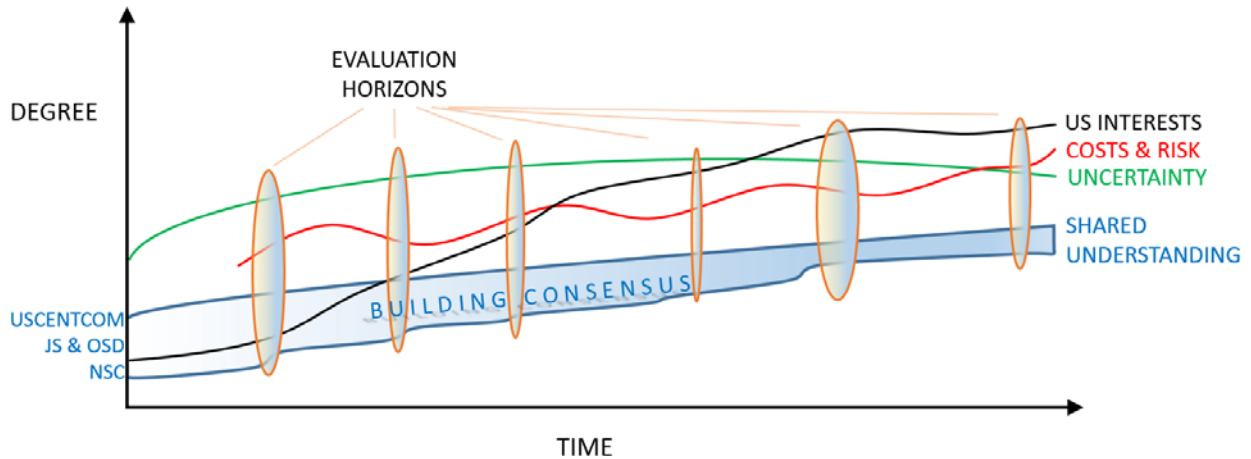## Gaps in Interest, Cost, Risk, Uncertainty, & Shared Understanding

Figure 3: Syrian CAP Trend Dynamics[146]

Source: Author generated.

At multiple points during this period, there were discrete option evaluation horizons. Within the Department, these were primarily the formal IPRs conducted during CAP. Others were evaluations made at the NSC interagency policy, deputies, and principal committees as well as the White House. A survey respondent described the Syrian CAP ideal as a "planning process that allows the political leadership to understand what is within the realm of possibility relative to use of military power coupled with well-articulated and dispassionate description of potential outcomes, requirements (cost) and risk."[147]

Regardless of the level of decision, these five conditions accounted for the core of the "interagency deliberation of national security policy issues requiring Presidential decision."[148] At

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[146] This is an author generated figure depicting the relative relationship between interest, cost, risk, uncertainty, and shared understanding. The specific degrees and decision horizons represented for each of these conditions merely illustrates value and does not represent a quantifiable or measureable value.

[147] Survey response by anonymous members of OSD and JS cohort, December 11, 2014.

[148] JP 5-0, II-2.

points of evaluation, the spread between shared understanding, certainty of outcomes, and the interests at stake weighed against the costs and risks represented gaps requiring debate. Thus, the adeptness of USCENTCOM, the JS, and OSD to frame and articulate options in these terms characterized the quality and productiveness of civil-military dialogue.

Conclusion

Syrian CAP from 2011-2013 represents planning at a level of complexity that rivaled that of the problem it intended to solve. As the conflict simmered and became more volatile, the US government expended increasing energy to understand the environment and problem while searching for solutions. The USCENTCOM led planning efforts evolved into an intricate web of authorities and relationships. As dialogue improved, echelons overcame bureaucratic constraints to build consensus. All the while, the NCA's evaluation of military options never resulted in military intervention. Throughout the period, the US government applied instruments of national power in discrete ways for limited ends focused on symptoms of the conflict.

The implication of considering military options separate from or in addition to applying other elements of national power was that US foreign policy emerged as less-than-whole-of-government solutions. The Atlantic Council's recent report on integrating national power suggests that,

> a purely military approach to the myriad of national security challenges that the nation faces will no longer be enough. Indeed, this is one of the key strategic lessons learned from the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now is the time to act on these lessons to provide options for a whole-of-government approach to US national security policy that leverages all tools of American power and statecraft. The United States must move forward with a synchronized and coordinated interagency approach from initial planning to execution in order to confront the vast array of challenges and threats in the twenty-first century.[149]

The Syrian CAP case highlights the structural inability of the US government to conduct whole-of-government planning absent a Presidential decision to do so. CAP processes led to generating ways considering the available, or potentially available, means to reach limited ends. It could not produce comprehensive strategy designed to create holistic solutions to complex problems.[150] If

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[149] James L. Jones, Jr., "Foreward," in *All Elements of National Power: Moving Towards a New Interagency Balance for US Global Engagement* (Washington, DC: The Atlantic Council, Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security, 2014), accessed January 13, 2015, http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/All_Elements_of_National_Power.pdf.

[150] Interview with OJ#2.

the character of the Syrian case is representative of future crises, then CAP alone may be insufficient to address them. Absent an overhaul of US interagency and Unified Command structure, questions remain as to the military's role in providing expert advice to the NCA. If the role is limited to providing best, apolitical military advice, are CAP processes lacking mechanisms to effectively integrate political and interagency considerations? Can or should the US military incorporate political recommendations with military options? "The assertion that COCOMs have usurped other U.S. government entities in the foreign policy arena may deserve greater examination. Geographic Combatant Commanders generally agree their role is more political than military."[151] Present day COCOMs, in many ways, represent the nexus of US foreign policy.

CAP as a process and APEX as a framework will be the structure for solving crises of a military nature for the near future. The Syrian case highlights opportunities to reconsider the doctrine of crisis planning and the training and education of military planners and commanders. Crises will, with or without intervention, evolve over time. Planners and commanders should expend their greatest cognitive energies early in CAP to establish the character of the crisis. This should incorporate disparate perspectives and integrate interagency positions. Through robust dialogue between his staff, the JPEC, and the interagency, the CCDR should build consensus on this character and its relationship to the regional and strategic context. This description may form the core of the narrative within the Commander's Estimate provided for in-progress review. Further dialogue within the NCA should narrow the gap in shared understanding.

Also, early in CAP, the COCOM, JS, and OSD should address authorities and relationships necessary to suit the planning and coordination warranted by the character of the crisis. These deviations from doctrinal status quo require explicit directive and consensus to

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[151] US Congress, Congressional Research Service, *The Unified Command Plan and Combatant Commands: Background and Issues for Congress*, (Washington, DC, 2013), 60.

hasten the new lines of authority and coordination deemed necessary to pursue further planning and execution.

As the civil-military dialogue evolves and converges towards shared understanding of the environment, equally important discussions should occur to close gaps in screening and evaluation of options. Military leaders should elicit as precise as practicable the civilian leaderships understanding of feasibility, acceptability, adequacy, distinguishability, and completeness. As noted, these will be inherently in contention as each cohorts' perspectives are naturally different. Guiding dialogue to close this gap can ease the civil-military relationship and aid reaching a broader consensus on options.

Guidance will most often come from these dialogues and pass to the planner via commander's intent. However, planning directives should clearly articulate the combined screening and evaluation guidance to provide the planner optimal insight into the desired political outcomes that developed options and approaches intend to produce. Training and education of planners should also continue to emphasize these dynamics. Planners must understand their role in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. Joint professional military education and exercises for CAP scenarios should emphasize both framing problems in their regional and strategic context and apply multi-echelon approaches to stress the critical coordinating and dialogue functions not attainable via single-echelon scenarios.

The Syrian CAP case presented planners, commanders, and policy makers a myriad of unique challenges to resolve. Each cohort and individual sought resolution of the crisis with the utmost agency afforded their positon and relation to the problem. While the character of the Syrian crisis may not be fully normative of what the US government will face in the future, the interactions, effects, and dynamics confronted appear to be structurally significant and worthy of evaluation. "While policy and strategic guidance clarify planning, it is equally true that planning

offers clarity to policy formulation."[152] As long as this statement is true, US military planners and commanders will have a vital role in the development and implementation of foreign policy.
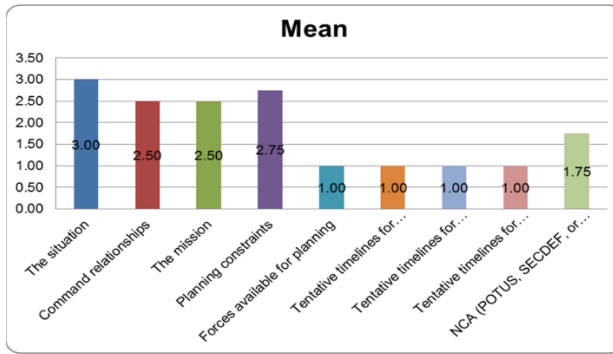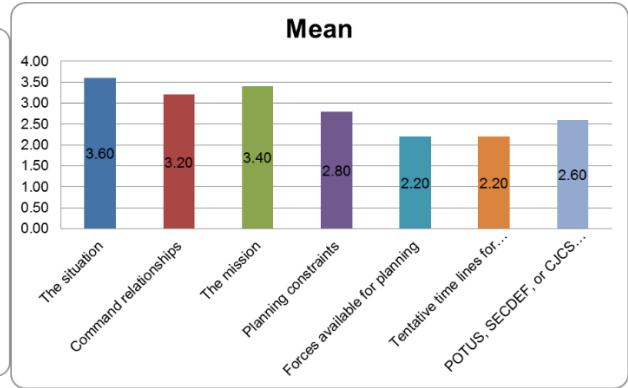
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[152] JP 5-0, III-3.

Appendix 1

Q1: Planning directives concerning Syrian CAP issued to USCENTCOM contained the following information: (4 = Always; 3 = Usually; 2 = Sometimes; 1 = Never)
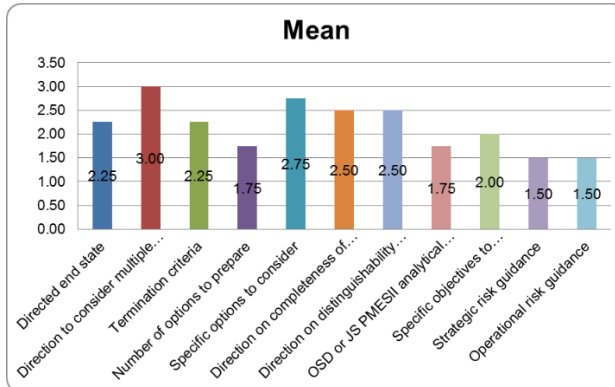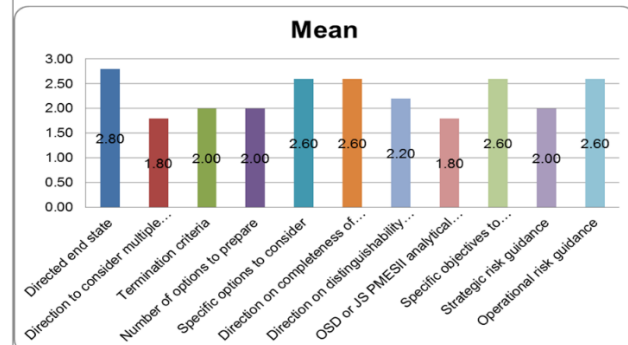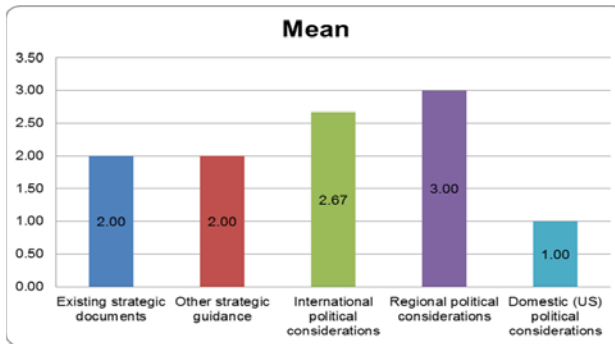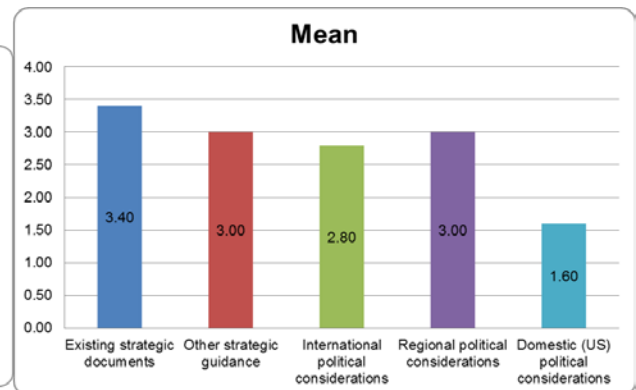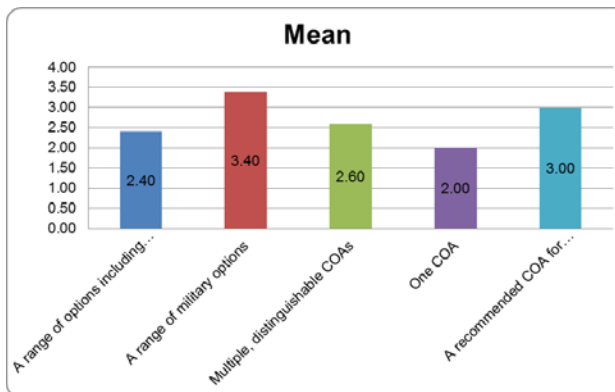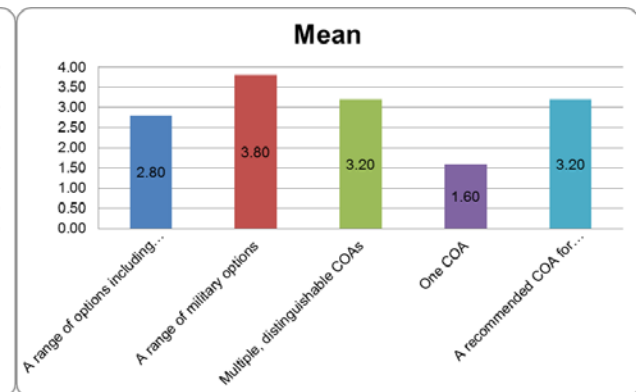
OSD / JS Cohort   USCENTCOM Cohort

Q2: How often did Syrian CAP planning directives, issued to USCENTCOM, contain the following information: (4 = Always; 3 = Usually; 2 = Sometimes; 1 = Never)

OSD / JS Cohort   USCENTCOM Cohort

Q3: How often did Syrian CAP planning directives, issued to USCENTCOM, reference the following information: (4 = Always; 3 = Usually; 2 = Sometimes; 1 = Never)

OSD / JS Cohort   USCENTCOM Cohort

Q6: Syrian CAP options generated by USCENTCOM contained the following: (4 = Always; 3 = Usually; 2 = Sometimes; 1 = Never)
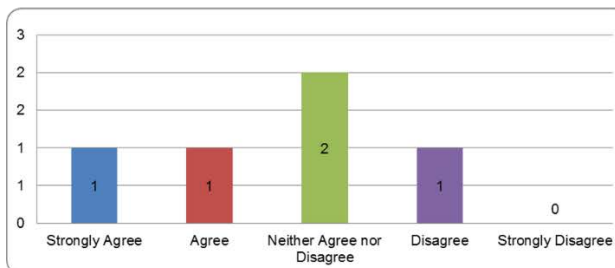
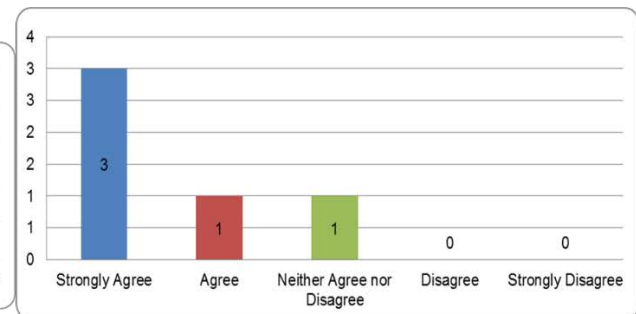OSD / JS Cohort   USCENTCOM Cohort

Q7: The Syrian CAP options, provided by USCENTCOM, were successful in meeting the expectations described in planning directives?

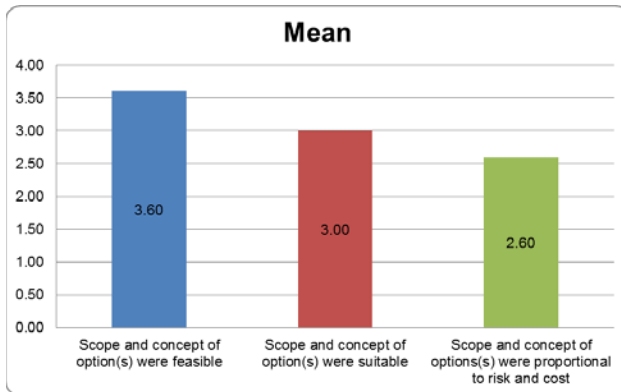OSD / JS Cohort   USCENTCOM Cohort

Q9: How often did planning guidance for your headquarters contain the following information: (4 = Always; 3 = Usually; 2 = Sometimes; 1 = Never)
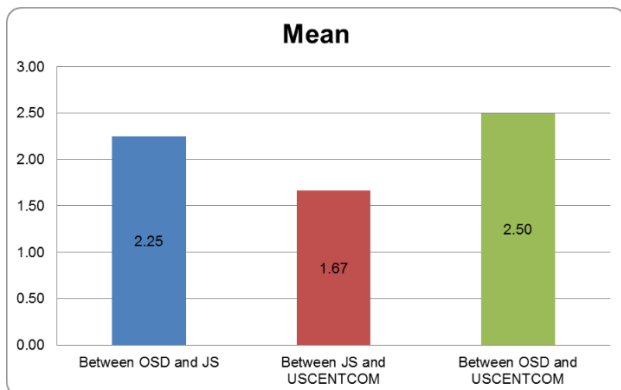

Q10: How often did Syrian CAP options, generated by USCENTCOM, contain the following: (4 = Always; 3 = Usually; 2 = Sometimes; 1 = Never)
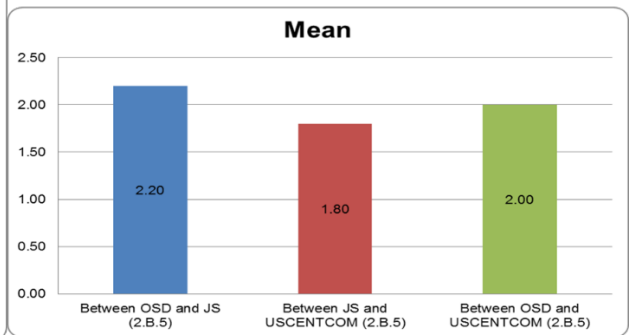

Q11: Given the unique nature, conditions of the conflict, doctrinal, and procedural expectations, was collaboration between the OSD, JS, and USCENTCOM generally: (3 = Unsatisfactory; 2 = Satisfactory; 1 = Exceptional)
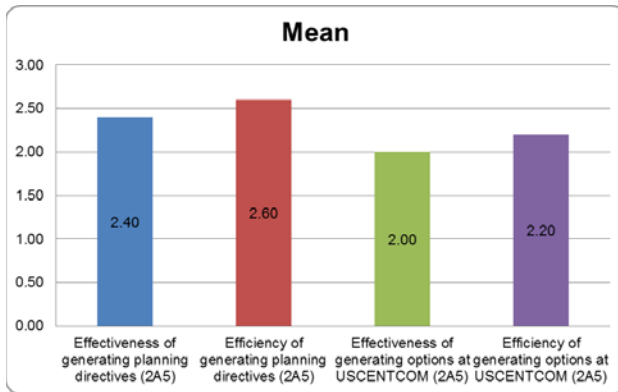
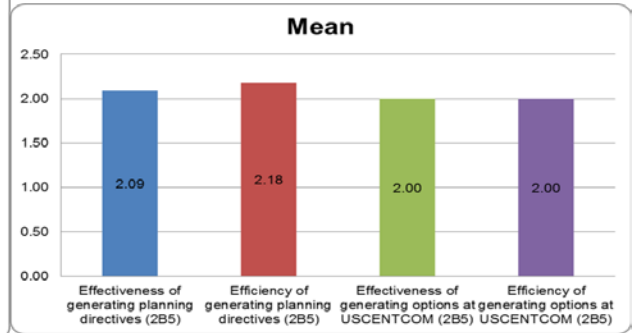OSD / JS Cohort   USCENTCOM Cohort

Q12: How efficient and effective was the Syrian CAP process in generating useful options for consideration by Strategic Leaders: (3 = Unsatisfactory; 2 = Satisfactory; 1 = Exceptional)

OSD / JS Cohort   USCENTCOM Cohort

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

I, MAJ Sean Carmody, am conducting research and request your participation. This form will describe the rights of you, the participant, and the responsibilities of myself, the researcher. The U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, Leadership Development and Education Department supports this research.

Purpose of the Research Study

The purpose of the research is to answer the question, how did planning directives and guidance influence options generated by U.S. Central Command during Syrian crisis action planning (CAP), 2011-2013? The research enables the completion of a Monograph for the School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army.

Procedures

The expected number of participants in the interview process is eight. The duration of your participation will be constrained to a 30 to 60 minute telephonic or video interview. There will be no experimental procedures administered.

Following your consent to participate, I will contact you to schedule a time and means of interview. The means available are Skype, Hangouts Video Conference, telephone, or in-person for anyone located in vicinity of Fort Leavenworth. The choice of means is left to you. During the interview, I will ask a series of questions relating to your experience with the Syrian CAP process and seek your responses. Following the interview, I will transcribe the conversation into a transcript. This transcript will be available for your review upon request. Following drafting of the research, I will contact you if I intend to use any direct quotations so you may review, clarify, or redact a particular statement.

There are no alternate procedures or pre-determined conditions to terminate the interview. You agree to keep comments unclassified and to avoid discussing potential violations of the UCMJ or criminal law. I will not ask any questions that intend to illicit a classified response.

Risks

The primary risk associated with participation is that a response could negatively harm your professional reputation or a relationship. While unlikely, to mitigate this risk, I will only cite participants by a reference code. Additionally, any direct quotations are subject to review by the you prior to publication.

Benefits

This is a research study and there is no expectation that you will receive any direct benefit from participation.

Compensation

Participants will not be compensated for their participation.

Confidentiality

I will maintain a personal copy of the transcripts identifying participants only by their predetermined code. The Human Subjects Protection Office or a DoD designee may inspect the records.

I will maintain a digital version of the transcript, stored on my personal computer. I will not document my coding system to ensure confidentiality. I will print and subsequently remove all consent forms from my system to reduce the risk of compromise. The local Human Protections Administrator will maintain copies of the consent forms for three years.

All data obtained about you, as an individual, will be considered privileged and held in confidence. You will not be identified in any presentation of the results unless you wish so. Complete confidentiality cannot be promised to subjects, particularly to subjects who are military personnel, because information bearing on your health might be required to be reported to appropriate officials.

Per DoDI 3216.02, all data related to this study will remain secured for a period of not less than three years from the approval date for the research study.

Contacts for Additional Assistance

If you require additional explanation of the procedures or expectations, contact the principal investigator. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, contact either the local Institution Review Board member or Human Protections Administrator.

1. Principal Investigator: MAJ Sean Carmody, sean.t.carmody2.mil@mail.mil, 734-330-5578.

2. Institution Review Board: Dr. Dale Spurlin, dale.f.spurlin.civ@mail.mil, 913-684-4770.

3. CAC LD&E Human Protections Administrator: Dr. Maria Clark, maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in a research study is voluntary. Anyone who is asked to be in a research study may say no. No one has to become a research subject. If you start a research study, you may stop at any time. You do not need to give a reason. No one can discriminate against you or treat you differently if you choose not to be in a research study or later decide to stop your participation.

Statement of Consent

I have read this form and its contents were explained. I agree to be in this research study for the purposes listed above. All of my questions were answered to my satisfaction. I understand I will receive a signed and dated copy of this form for my records.

_____   ____/____/____

Signature of Research Subject Date

_____

Printed Name of Research Subject

_____   ____/____/____

Principal Investigator Signature   Date

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