

## THE INTERAGENCY COORDINATION PROCESS: WHAT WE CAN DO NOW

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE INTERAGENCY COORDINATION PROCESS: WHAT WE CAN DO NOW**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The intent of the U.S. Government's interagency national security coordination process is to ensure national security issues are addressed in an organized, systematic, efficient, and effective manner. An emerging argument is for a "Goldwater-Nichols-type" law that would force government to improve the interagency coordination process. An initiative of this magnitude could take years to realize, may not be necessary, and cannot guarantee progress. In the absence of a congressional mandate, grass root initiatives for coordination should continue to be developed and implemented between the national security agencies. This paper will review ongoing initiatives to standardize the development of national security professionals, identify and review current programs designed to maximize the interagency coordination process, and make recommendations on how to improve interagency coordination.



## THE INTERAGENCY COORDINATION PROCESS: WHAT WE CAN DO NOW

The current interagency coordination process for national security issues involves bureaucracies, and hence can be inherently characterized as slow, stove-piped, and encumbered by cultural differences. Many professionals throughout government and civilian institutions argue that there is a critical need for a "Goldwater-Nichols-type" law that would force government to improve the interagency coordination process. There are a myriad of efforts underway designed to improve interagency coordination on the scale enjoyed by the Department of Defense (DoD) following the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and its mandates for inter-service coordination.<sup>1</sup> These efforts are valuable and necessary as they may result in both immediate and long-term improvements. However, passage of a law and realization of any subsequent improvements could take years, not least because oversight and funding responsibilities of individual national security agencies fall under multiple congressional committees. In the absence of a congressional mandate, national security leaders must continue to develop and implement initiatives across the elements of national power in order to improve the coordination abilities of the system's center of gravity. In the case of the interagency national security coordination process, the center of gravity is human capital in the form of our national security professionals, defined for the purpose of this project as "policymakers and professionals within governmental departments and agencies, both civilian and military, who are responsible for protecting and advancing the interests of the United States."<sup>2</sup> This paper will review ongoing efforts to standardize the development of national security professionals, identify and review current programs intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the



interagency coordination process, and make recommendations on how to improve interagency coordination.

Laws and policies provide direction for improvement; however, it takes skilled and seasoned professionals to make the possible a reality. The interagency coordination process is no exception. The challenge is knowing how and when to interact and gaining and maintaining a useful level of proficiency. Proficiency is the ability to represent the position of a particular agency while simultaneously achieving the common national objectives. Most national security professionals, whether they are military or civilian, lack the opportunity or often the incentive to become proficient in the interagency coordination process. This is directly attributable to the magnitude of the system, cultural differences between agencies, lack of knowledge of the responsibilities and competencies of other agencies, and stove-pipes in some cases established by leaders. Under the current professional development system, it is a wonder how our senior national security professionals ever reach proficiency. It is arguable that based on interagency actions during the stabilization efforts in Afghanistan and the rebuilding of Iraq that many senior national security professionals lack proficiency or perhaps choose not to use their proficiency toward common national objectives, choosing instead to remain mired in their own cultural bias. While it may be too late to overcome completely most of the cultural biases ingrained in current senior national security professionals, there is a target of opportunity among today's mid and junior level officers and officials. How will they learn to work outside their respective agency or experience base? How will they gain proficiency now so that when called upon they can lead? In today's global society, there is great risk in waiting for national security professionals to

gain proficiency through on-the-job training. In order to achieve the tipping point in the interagency coordination process, national security professionals at all levels must actively pursue improvement in their ability to work across all interagency cultures.

President George W. Bush issued his first directive, National Security Presidential Directive 1 (NSPD-1), on 13 February 2001. NSPD-1 established President Bush's architecture for the National Security Council, using the National Security Act of 1947 as the basis, and setting forth the interagency coordination process for his administration.<sup>3</sup> Neither this directive, nor any that followed, established accountability for a cabinet or sub-cabinet official not conforming to the President's vision of interagency coordination, nor did the administration institute a system to ensure officials achieve and maintain proficiency as National Security Personnel.

Successfully bringing together multiple agencies and departments to establish common objectives is not an easy task. Success in interagency coordination requires close and sincere cooperation among U.S. Government agencies in order to integrate all instruments of national power toward satisfaction of national objectives.<sup>4</sup> The National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism (NMSP-WOT) describes the process well, stating, "The GWOT requires a joint, interagency effort in support of a sustained global war plan. DoD needs to achieve unprecedented levels of coordination (at both the strategic and operational levels) to effectively deal with this complex requirement and accompanying interdependence. This effort also requires an end to unilateral "stove-piping" of actions within departments, agencies, and staff directorates."<sup>5</sup> As implied in the title, this statement is specific to the War on Terror, but the emphasis on interagency interdependence and the imperative for coordination has

clear application across the spectrum of national security challenges and opportunities requiring integration of the diplomatic, information, military, and economic elements of national power.

How the interagency coordination process will evolve is difficult to predict, but what is clear is the epistemological premise that we can and must learn from our recent mistakes in order to prepare for the future. An excellent illustration of that process is in the short story “The Defence of Duffers Drift.” British Major General Sir Earnest D. Swinton wrote this story under the pseudonym, Lieutenant Backsight Forethought, while still a Captain and soon after his service in South Africa. Published in 1905, the short story concerns a British lieutenant serving in the Boer War.<sup>6</sup> The Lieutenant and his party of 50 Non Commissioned Officers and men receive a mission to defend Duffer’s Drift, an important river crossing. The protagonist dreams of a disastrous initial defense due to lack of preparation and understanding of the situation. The Lieutenant then dreams of finding himself back in the same location with no recollection of the failed mission except for the knowledge of lessons learned. In all, the Lieutenant has six dreams and twenty-two lessons learned before successfully defending the Drift. The preface to this book gives incredible insight into the process of preparing for the future through vulnerability analysis. In the preface, Captain Swinton writes:

The dreams are not anticipations, but merely a record of petty experiences against one kind of enemy in one kind of country only, with certain deductions based thereupon. But from these, given the conditions, it is not difficult to deduce the variations suitable for other countries, or for those occasions when a different foe with different methods of fighting and different weapons has to be met.<sup>7</sup>

The lessons we have learned over the last six years since 11 September 2001 are far from petty. Yet the simplicity of “The Defence of Duffer’s Drift” makes the problem

clearer; we must learn from past errors and anticipate future vulnerabilities. Future interagency coordination challenges will be anything but standard. Each challenge will have its own actors, its own nuances. Each will require just as much, if not more, integration of the elements of national power. The one aspect certain to remain constant is the need to work together to maintain our national security and status.

While there is a significant difference between 51 men defending a river crossing in Africa at the turn of the twentieth century and the interagency coordination process, there are also substantive similarities. Our nation's ability to adapt based on lessons learned and vulnerabilities identified will affect the number of dreams, or nightmares, we encounter. It is not only possible and desirable, but also imperative, that we identify and address weaknesses in the interagency national security coordination process. Many lessons learned from the past six years have already translated to initiatives throughout our government to reduce "stove-piping" and parochialism addressed in the NMSP-WOT.

Compounding the challenge in addressing the need to improve the interagency coordination process is its complexity. "Interagency Coordination" is as common today as the phrase "Revolution in Military Affairs" was in the 90s, and most references are oriented toward fixing the process. A recent Google search of "Interagency Coordination" provided about 142,000 hits, indicating substantial interest in the national security and academic communities (c.f. a search for "Revolution in Military Affairs" which resulted in about 93,600 hits).<sup>8</sup> Interagency coordination is a term widely discussed, yet there is little doctrinal reference to the term outside the Department of Defense. Joint Doctrine defines interagency coordination as "The coordination that

occurs between agencies of the US Government (USG), including the Department of Defense (DoD), for the purpose of accomplishing an objective.”<sup>9</sup> In today’s global society, this definition would fit just about any action taken to achieve any objective. The breadth of this definition and the potential variables that apply make it nearly impossible to achieve a seamless process. Therefore, it is imperative that all national security professionals continue to develop initiatives that incrementally move us toward success.

### Ongoing Efforts

#### National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals

The most significant and recent effort to improve the interagency coordination process originated from the White House. The President issued Executive Order 13434, National Security Professional Development, on 17 May 2007. This order reads that, “It is the policy of the United States to promote the education, training, and experience of current and future professionals in national security positions (security professionals) in executive departments and agencies.”<sup>10</sup> In this Executive Order, the President tasked the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHS/CT), in coordination with the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA) to establish a National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals.

Additionally, the Executive Order establishes the Security Professional Development Executive Steering Committee (ESC). The ESC is responsible for implementing the National Strategy through a National Security Professional Development (NSPD) Implementation Plan. The Director of the Office of Personnel Management chairs the ESC, which has a membership that includes all the major departments and agencies.

The resulting strategy, dated July 2007, “sets forth a framework that will enhance the ability of national security professionals to safeguard the Nation.”<sup>11</sup> In what is arguably a statement of the obvious the strategy later reads, “The integration of Federal operations cannot be improvised in the face of imminent threats or during a response; unity of effort – coordination and cooperation toward common objectives among individuals that are not necessarily part of the same command structure or organization – must be institutionalized.”<sup>12</sup>

The Executive Order and National Strategy, by themselves, are little more than new bark and no bite. However, the pending follow-on NSPD Implementation Plan may give the President’s Strategy teeth. As directed in Executive Order 13434, the ESC must submit this plan to the APHS/CT and the APNSA no later than 120 days after the approval of the National Strategy. The Implementation Plan was therefore due at the end of November based on a National Strategy date of July 2007. As of 15 January 2008, this plan had not made it out of staffing.<sup>13</sup> The inability of agencies to execute a presidential order exemplifies the inefficiency of our interagency coordination process.

The Implementation Plan could provide the means for the current administration to answer the deafening calls for interagency coordination reform. In concept, it addresses many of the same issues found in the Goldwater-Nichols Act. The plan hinges future successful reform on some of the same areas that were a springboard for DoD’s 1986 joint reform; namely training, education, and professional development. It is unclear whether this plan will provide sufficient authority and pressure in two other areas critical to Goldwater-Nichols’ success: budget and promotions. One advantage to an administration-initiated directive, rather than a reliance on legislative action, is the

absence of congressional politics that could encumber its approval. However, it is undetermined whether a major reform such as the NSPD Implementation Plan, initiated by a lame duck president, will garner enough support to survive an administration change.

### National Defense University

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR) directed the transformation of the National Defense University (NDU) into a true National Security University, tailored to support the educational needs of the broader U.S. national security profession.<sup>14</sup> As the NDU staff evaluated this new task, they concluded that changing the University's name would not have a significant positive influence on preparing national security professionals. In fact, it could cause confusion about DoD's role in the process and elevate concerns across the interagency. Based on this assessment, the NDU President received approval from the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to forego the name change. The NDU staff did recognize the University's unique capability to achieve the QDR's intent and subsequently initiated a pilot program designed to qualify national security professionals.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to the pilot program, NDU developed the Interagency Transformation, Education and Analysis (ITEA) program. The ITEA is a DoD funded program that seeks to improve coordination among the executive departments and agencies responsible for crisis planning and response.<sup>16</sup> One venue ITEA uses to accomplish its mission is the quarterly Interagency Coordination Symposium. These symposia are for mid to senior grade government officials who conduct extensive interagency coordination. They are

open to representatives from non-governmental organizations, industry, and academia that frequently coordinate with the United States Government.

#### Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG)

The use of JIACGs by Combatant Commands began in October 2001. “The purpose of these organizations is to coordinate, facilitate, plan, and integrate operations, activities, and information sharing between other government agencies and the military in support of the Global War on Terrorism at a level below that of the Principles (sic), Deputies and Policy Coordinating Committees.”<sup>17</sup> The CJCS tasked NDU in October 2003 to develop a short course lasting two to five days that would assist JIACG members in their assignment. The program charter was to provide personnel the requisite knowledge and understanding of interagency culture, planning, and coordination.<sup>18</sup> The establishment of JIACGs and the training done by NDU is an excellent example that highlights the ongoing grassroots movement taken by Combatant Commands, Departments, agencies, and academia to coordinate the elements of national power.

#### Interagency Coordination Venues

There are many conferences like ITEA’s Interagency Coordination Symposia. So many in fact, it is nearly impossible for the average national security professional, engrossed in his or her day-to-day activities, to keep proper track. These conferences, while valuable for those who attend or those who can find the information posted to the sponsoring agency’s web site, are great sources of information and education. The multiple conferences and venues are both a curse and a blessing: a blessing when the information is available to a wide audience, but a curse if the conference ends with no



progress or plan to share valuable information. The challenge for the national security professional is finding the time to research the volumes of information and storage locations. One potential solution is to have the now overdue NSPD Implementation Plan direct the establishment of a one-stop interagency national security coordination web site. Until then the professional must depend on word of mouth and existing education sources.

Four conferences that highlight these issues are the Strategic Studies Institute's (SSI) Annual Strategy Conference, the Joint Staff J7 Joint Operational War Plans Division (JOWPD) Interagency Counterterrorism Planners' Conference, United States Special Operations Command's (USSOCOM) Combating Terrorism Executive Interagency Seminar (CbTEIS), and USSOCOM's semi-annual Global Synchronization Conference.

The Annual Strategy Conference is a SSI-led event held at the US Army War College over the past nineteen years. The 2008 conference is themed "Rebalancing the Instruments of National Power." While the conference web site is clear in stating that the conference title does not presuppose that an imbalance in the instruments of national power presently exists, it does note that the conference will be attempting to answer the questions "Are we as a country properly organized and equipped to conduct effective security strategy in the 21st century? Is the primary issue one of structure and process or is it perhaps more related to individuals and leadership?"<sup>19</sup> The premise of this paper is that while structure and process may be flawed, the primary issue in interagency coordination – or at least the issue that can be most expeditiously addressed -- relates

more to individuals and leadership as real or potential weaknesses, and hence the emphasis on preparation of the national security professional.

Another recent initiative is the Interagency Counterterrorism Planners' Conference. This conference is a J7 JOWPD-ran effort designed to enhance interagency coordination. The inaugural conference occurred in March 2007 in McLean, VA. Attending this conference were 156 individuals from eight Combatant Commands and eight U.S. government civilian agencies.<sup>20</sup> This two-day conference focused on identifying ways that DoD could more effectively interact with other national security agencies. The conference is specific to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT); however, the techniques and procedures are applicable across all interagency efforts.

The CbTEIS is a Joint Special Operations University (JSOU)-run seminar. Twenty-six executive-level personnel representing 14 Federal Government Agencies attended the first CbTEIS from 13 – 14 September 07 in Virginia. Three of the primary focus areas for these seminars are intelligence fusion, improving interagency collaboration, and interagency professional development challenges. This seminar is similar to the Interagency Counterterrorism Planners' Conference, though focused on senior national security professionals and facilitated by USSOCOM's academic institution.<sup>21</sup>

USSOCOM's Global Synchronization Conference (GSC) is a semi-annual conference run by the USSOCOM J35, focusing on synchronizing DoD's GWOT efforts. The purpose of this conference is to prioritize DoD GWOT efforts across DoD to include the Combat Support Agencies (CSA) and receive input from the non-DoD interagency partners critical to combating the GWOT. This conference, held at the USSOCOM headquarters, routinely draws over 500 participants. The May 07 conference had

representation from 22 DoD commands, 21 agencies, and 3 partner nations.<sup>22</sup> The evolution of the GSC epitomizes the value of hard working professionals who are unafraid to take the initiative. This event began as a quarterly conference with limited output and grew into an in-depth continuous process designed to prioritize DoD GWOT plans, resources, force management, and security cooperation activities. Additionally the process identifies and corrects gaps and seams in DoD's GWOT efforts by assessing ongoing activities and plans against current strategy.<sup>23</sup> The conference not only allows the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC), Joint Staff, and DoD CSA to provide input, it actively and effectively synchronizes across the entire interagency.<sup>24</sup>

These venues are just a few examples of ongoing initiatives designed to improve the interagency coordination process through a focus on professional relationships and competencies rather than advocacy of structural or process change. Some like the USSOCOM Global Synchronization Conference started out as a single event but grew into a continuous in-depth interagency process. Others like the SSI Annual Strategy Conference provide a venue for policy level discussion, ultimately affecting other events such as the GSC. Each is important and yet they do not define how the national security professional properly prepares to function in or at the venues. To significantly impact cultural differences and stove-pipes, new initiatives must focus on these issues. The following case study provides a review of a USSOCOM initiative undertaken to educate, train, and emplace professionals across the interagency in order to enhance USSOCOM's ability to conduct interagency coordination.

## USSOCOM's Interagency Partnership Program (IAPP): A Case Study.

Cultural differences between the military and the other elements of national power have gained significant exposure since 9/11. While most of these differences existed in some form, it was not until the attack on our homeland that they gained prominence. These cultural differences create impediments to achieving success in the interagency coordination process. Success depends on competent, open-minded, and aggressive strategic leaders and organizations that can develop and implement strategies that capitalize on these cultural differences. USSOCOM established one such strategy in 2006. The IAPP places senior grade military officers into Special Operations Support Teams (SOST) at numerous governmental agencies and organizations.

The 2006 Unified Command Plan (UCP) designated USSOCOM the lead Combatant Command for planning, synchronizing, and as directed, executing global operations against terrorist networks in coordination with the other Combatant Commanders.<sup>25</sup> The military and civilian establishments outside USSOCOM did not initially embrace the new USSOCOM role. Cultural differences ranging from "rice bowl" attitudes to concerns over information sharing techniques were evident as the USSOCOM staff worked to define the new mission. Unhappy with the progress made, Secretary Rumsfeld tasked General (Ret) Wayne Downing to conduct an independent study to analyze USSOCOM's effectiveness in its new role. Released in the spring of 2006, this classified study by the former USSOCOM Commander found that the government-wide national security bureaucracy did not respond rapidly and effectively to the new requirements of the counterterror campaign.<sup>26</sup>

In conjunction with the new USSOCOM role, and prior to the Downing report, LTG Dell Dailey, then Director for the USSOCOM Center for Special Operations (CSO) and

now Ambassador at Large, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, initiated a program designed to enhance the interagency coordination process.<sup>27</sup> This program known as IAPP places full-time USSOCOM personnel at DoD and non-DoD agencies where USSOCOM has a permanent relationship to plan and synchronize mutual aspects of the Global War on Terrorism. IAPP creates a synergistic network of USSOCOM personnel working with each other and their assigned agencies to accomplish mutually assigned tasks in the President's National Implementation Plan.<sup>28</sup> Initially this program suffered much the same resistance as the USSOCOM overall GWOT mission, even though the UCP states that USSOCOM “will provide military representation to national and international agencies.”<sup>29</sup> Senior leaders at USSOCOM worked with the Joint Staff to obtain its support for IAPP. This work, combined with the release of the Downing report and the UCP authority, garnered senior level support from the Joint Staff. In September 2006, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the USSOCOM plan to provide Special Operations Forces (SOF) GWOT representatives to several of the key national agencies to enhance liaison and coordination.<sup>30</sup> This approval provided legitimacy for those SOSTs embedded during the coordination phase, lowered the cultural shields of a few agencies, and softened the hearts, albeit only a little, of some who still opposed the concept.

The cultural differences that impeded IAPP success are as numerous as the agencies themselves. In the case of one non-DoD agency, the SOST Chief could not gain access reportedly because of agency dissatisfaction with a DoD CSA employee who had not played well with others. It took over a year for the assigned SOST Chief to build the organization’s trust, and then only after an agency leadership change.<sup>31</sup> In

some agencies, SOST Chiefs began work without a memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the agency and USSOCOM, while in others a MOA was required before the SOST Chief could enter the door. Some agencies did not want senior officers in their organization, preferring instead company or field grade officers. Each of these challenges was a result of clashes of agency culture and the agency's perception of the USSOCOM culture and motivations.

Overcoming these cultural differences required different strategies. However, two enduring strategies are evident in each success story. The first theme is that personalities matter and the second is that standardized training must occur before the SOST members enter their assigned agency.

The single most important strategy is placing the right person in the right job. It was the actions of competent, open-minded, and aggressive strategic leaders from all organizations that broke the cultural barriers. For example, the Department of Homeland Security SOST Chief was able to articulate that he was not there to spy, but rather to serve as a go-between for the agency to USSOCOM. A go-between that could look for nuggets of information that might otherwise fall to the way side, but combined with information already known at USSOCOM could lead to deterring future attacks on our homeland. This SOST Chief quickly moved into an office with space available for the rest of his team.<sup>32</sup> At the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) USSOCOM placed a mobilized reserve Colonel who was a DEA agent on a leave of absence. The Colonel's understanding of the DEA culture facilitated a smooth entry. In another case, a senior leader at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was a classmate of a senior USSOCOM officer. This coupled with the SOST Chief's extensive

background as a Civil Affairs Officer with previous experience working with USAID minimized cultural differences. Selecting the SOST Chiefs thus became the key strategy in achieving success. Currently the Director, CSO handpicks each SOST Chief. In addition, a USSOCOM Colonel serves as National Capital Region (NCR) Office Chief, linking the Chief Interagency Division to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Staff, as well as assisting the SOST Chiefs as required. The NCR Office Chief reports directly to the Director, CSO.

Training is the second strategy used in overcoming cultural differences. In each IAPP success, the SOST Chiefs clearly understood the USSOCOM mission. The SOST Chief's ability to articulate how that mission could help the gaining agency was essential in brokering the partnership. If the SOST Chief did not fully understand cultural differences before entering the agency, the chance for success significantly diminished. One tool used to train SOST members was the JSOU Special Operations Forces Interagency Collaboration Course (SOFIACC). This five-day course addresses the cultural differences, coordination processes, and organizational dynamics of the interagency team partners and other relevant organizations. The course ends with an interactive problem-solving exercise in which students role-play members of a working group tasked to develop a concept for employment of SOF with other government agencies to mitigate growing instability in a foreign country.<sup>33</sup> All SOST personnel are required to attend this course. In many cases, the SOST Chiefs have been able to get agency counterparts to attend. To date JSOU has held seven SOFIACC's. Of the 212 students attending, 75 have been from 11 non-military departments or agencies.<sup>34</sup>

Another training strategy implemented to reduce cultural differences is the SOCOM Combatant Command Course taught by JSOU at the USSOCOM headquarters. This course covers in detail USSOCOM's GWOT role. All SOST personnel are required to attend this course to ensure they are able to articulate USSOCOM's mission to their gaining agency. All agency representatives assigned to USSOCOM also attend this course.

#### Project Horizon: A Case Study.

Effective interagency coordination initiatives are not specific to DoD. In fact, the U.S. Department of State (DoS) is also actively developing initiatives to improve the interagency coordination process. One such initiative is Project Horizon. In 2005, the State Department's Office of Strategic and Performance Planning, together with the Homeland Security and Defense departments as well as several other agency partners, initiated Project Horizon.<sup>35</sup> Project Horizon brought together senior executives from across the U.S. Government departments, agencies and National Security Council staff to explore ways to improve U.S. Government interagency coordination. The Project's primary analysis tool was scenario-based planning.<sup>36</sup> The basis of this initiative is the idea that while agencies share highly interrelated goals, they lack coordinated plans to achieve them.<sup>37</sup> This creates both strategic vulnerabilities and operational inefficiencies similar to those we have experienced in the recent past. This project exemplifies how motivated leaders, from across the interagency, have the ability to improve the interagency coordination process.

The purpose of the project is to develop strategic interagency capabilities the U.S. Government should consider investing in, provide participating agencies with a



scenario-planning toolset, and provide a starting point for an institutionalized interagency planning process.<sup>38</sup> The use of scenario-based planning methodology allowed the team to accomplish its purpose. This methodology uses the fundamental premise that since it is not possible to predict the long-term future, strategic planning should consider a range of possibilities.<sup>39</sup> Based on this methodology, Project Horizon created five plausible alternative future operating environments or scenarios. The basis of these scenarios was research and interviews with approximately 200 senior executives from the participating agencies as well as global affairs experts from academia, think tanks, and the private sector.<sup>40</sup>

Project Horizon then organized planning workshops consisting of interagency planning teams. These teams further developed the five scenarios by identifying the strategic interagency capabilities considered most critical to its scenario. Each of these capabilities was then “stress-tested” in each of the five scenarios.<sup>41</sup> This process resulted in ten distinct capabilities emerging as the most robust across all of the scenarios.<sup>42</sup> Not surprising all ten capabilities directly related to the interagency coordination process with three of the ten calling for sweeping change. Those three are the need for a Quadrennial Strategic Review, improved government-wide information sharing, and interagency fusion groups.

The national security personnel involved in this project clearly believed that a Quadrennial Strategic Review could increase interagency unity of effort, reduce duplication of effort, and better align investments with priorities by establishing a formalized interagency strategic planning process. The idea that an Interagency Strategic Plan, developed every four years, could link the President’s National Security

Strategy as well as other National Strategies, Budget Submissions, and Performance and Accountability Reports is an idea that deserves further action.<sup>43</sup> For this type of government wide initiative to achieve success, significant improvement must occur in information sharing. There are striking similarities between the Project Horizon recommendations on improving government-wide information sharing and the initiatives found in the National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals signed by the President in July 2007.

The measurement of effectiveness for Project Horizon's success is apparent in the number of participating departments and agencies that now use its toolset to support internal strategic planning processes. These departments and agencies include DoS, DoD, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Treasury, and the U.S. Commission on Helping to Enhance the Livelihood of People (HELP).<sup>44</sup> The work done on Project Horizon highlights the art of what is possible when leaders take action rather than standing by for others, such as congress, to act. In the case of Project Horizon, it was Rudolph Lohmeyer III, Senior Advisor to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Office of Strategic and Performance Planning Bureau of Resource Management (RM/SPP) with the support of his boss, Deputy Assistant Secretary Sid Kaplan, that took an idea and made it reality.

The efforts and venues presented in this paper alone are not enough to fix the interagency coordination process. The following recommendations are a few ways that national security professionals can make a difference now.

## Recommendations

### Lead by Example, Do What's Right.

This phrase is the core of effective leadership and is the phrase that can most affect the interagency coordination process. Leaders at all levels, must wherever and whenever possible, search out ways to interact with their professional peers from other departments and agencies. It should not take a law or a policy to provoke a professional to do the right thing. The success of an IAPP or Project Horizon-type initiative is reliant on aggressive leaders and subordinates who demand that the process works.

### National Security Professional Definition

The pending NSPD Implementation Plan must clearly define what constitutes a national security professional. This definition must clearly articulate eligibility to become a national security professional as well as the education, training, placement, and promotion potential it provides. Leaving this definition to each separate department and agency could create additional cultural stove-pipes and confusion. Regardless of who defines what constitutes a national security professional, it is imperative that it include the military professional. If the intent is to allow each department and agency to define eligibility, DoD should define a national security professional as a civilian in pay band 3 and 4 and all military personnel in the grade of 04 – 10. Leaving the military professional out of the definition will result in further galvanization of an already solid stovepipe.

### Civilian Attendance at Senior Service Colleges (SSC)

DoD should aggressively seek to increase the number of civilians that attend military education venues designed for pay grades 04 thru 06. Currently only 20% of

students attending the six primary SSCs are civilians and only 8% are non-DoD civilians. The National Defense University's two colleges account for 69% of all non-DoD civilians and 68% of all civilians. The numbers of interagency civilians attending military education venues designed for military pay grade 04 is significantly less.<sup>45</sup> Of the services intermediate level education programs (pay grade 04), 2.4% of the current classes are civilians.<sup>46</sup> One solution is to equalize the existing distribution of interagency civilians across all SSCs. The existing imbalance does not maximize interaction amongst the interagency senior leaders (DoD and other). Additionally, the DoD education system is the most thorough and advanced national security professional development program in the nation. As such, DoD should significantly increase the number of civilians who attend the programs.

A common argument against increasing the number of civilians is availability. Many departments and agencies cannot afford to send their most precious commodity (personnel) away for a yearlong school. Departments and agencies must overcome this mindset if any education system, to include the one described in the National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals, stands a chance at working. One possible solution to the shortage caused by sending a civilian employee to a DoD school is for DoD to provide a military officer of similar grade to the agency in a fellowship status for that period. This officer should follow the fellowship with attendance at a SSC or pay grade 04 equivalent, thereby bringing his interagency experience to the classroom. This would provide both DoD and the department or agency sending the civilian to school with a better educated national security professional. This of course

merely shifts the personnel issue from the non-DoD element to DoD. However, DoD is in a better position than most departments and agencies to absorb this cost.

#### Linking National Security Professional Qualification to Promotion

If the NSPD implementation plan is approved, DoD should specify in its subsequent plan that all officers be qualified as national security professional before becoming eligible for promotion to Brigadier General. DoD should model this requirement after the current joint qualification requirement and outline it in conjunction with the NSPD implementation plan. The requirements to be designated a DoD national security professional should be easier to obtain than that required to be joint qualified, primarily due to the potential availability of multiple venues for military officers at the grade of O5 and O6.

#### SSC Interagency Civilian Noon Time Lectures (NTL)

Each SSC should implement a NTL series that encompasses department or agency briefings by civilian students. These briefings would be similar to the U.S. Army War College International Fellowship NTL series. For those departments or agencies that do not have students in the school but have professionals on the staff they too should provide a NTL.

#### Conclusion

The development of programs like IAPP and fora such as ITEA's Interagency Coordination Symposia serve to bring the elements of national power together at one table. It is conceivable that these programs are a small portion of what the 9/11 Commission had in mind when they noted, "The massive departments and agencies

that prevailed in the great struggles of the twentieth century must work together in new ways, so that all the instruments of national power can be combined.”<sup>47</sup> Ultimately, the Nation needs proficient national security professionals working under the direction of proficient leaders willing to hold the national security apparatus accountable.

Developing those professionals is a critical task and must be the focus of all levels of our national security apparatus. Whether that development occurs at a grand scale because of the President’s Executive Order establishing a National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals or on a small scale through greater interaction at DoD’s Senior Service Colleges, ultimately it must occur if we are to organize the elements of national power into one cohesive group. It is imperative that we do what we can now.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For more information go to *The Project on National Security Reform Home Page*, available from <http://www.pnsr.org>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2008 and *The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Home Page*, available from <http://www.csis.org/isp/bgn>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Harry R. Yarger, *Strategy and the National Security Professional* (Greenwood Publishing Group, not yet published), description available from <http://www.greenwood.com/catalog/C34849.aspx>; Internet; accessed 28 February 2008.

<sup>3</sup> George W. Bush, *National Security Presidential Directive 1* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 13 February 2001).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism* (Washington, DC: The Pentagon, 1 February 2006), 6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>6</sup> E.D. Swinton, *The Defence of Duffer’s Drift* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), available from <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/resources/csi/Swinton/Swinton.asp>; Internet; accessed 21 September 2007.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, preface.

<sup>8</sup> Google search engine, available from <http://www.google.com>; Internet; accessed 8 December 2007.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations Vol I*, Joint Publication 3-08, Volume I (Washington, D.C.: The Joint Staff, 17 March 2006), vii.

<sup>10</sup> Executive Order No. 13434, *National Security Professional Development*, Title 3, p. 1 (17 May 2007).

<sup>11</sup> George W. Bush, *National Strategy for the Development of Security Professionals* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, July 2007), 1.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> L. Erik Kjonnerod, Assistant Professor, Special Assistant to the President, National Defense University, telephone interview by author, 17 January 2008.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 6 February 2006), 79.

<sup>15</sup> Erik Kjonnerod, telephone interview by author, 17 January 2008.

<sup>16</sup> *The Interagency Transformation, Education, and Analysis Home Page*, available from <http://www.ndu.edu/ITEA>; Internet; accessed 17 December 2007.

<sup>17</sup> Terry R. Sopher, *Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs), A Temporary Solution to a Long Term Requirement*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks; U.S. Army War College, 3 May 2004), 3.

<sup>18</sup> National Defense University Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Strategic Gaming Center, "Interagency Transformation, Education and After-Action Review (ITEA) Program," available from <http://www.ndu.edu/ITEA/storage/538/ITEA.ppt>; Internet; accessed 17 December 2007.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, "Rebalancing the Elements of National Power," available from <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/conf/index.cfm>; Internet; accessed 13 June 2005.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, J7, Joint Operational War Plans Division, *Interagency Counterterrorism Planners' Conference Initial Report* (Washington D.C.: Joint Staff, J7, 2007), 1.

<sup>21</sup> Homer Harkins, Interagency Education Division Chief, Joint Special Operations University, e-mail message to author, 26 October 2007.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Special Operations Command briefing, Global Synchronization Process, COL Craig Nixon, USSOCOM CSO, 10 July 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Special Operations Command, *USSOCOM Posture Statement, 2007*, (Tampa: U.S. Special Operations Command, 2007), 3.

<sup>26</sup> Thom Shanker, "U.S. Study on Fighting Terrorism Finds Flaws," *International Herald Tribune*, 17 March 2006 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/03/17/news/forces.php?page=1>; Internet; accessed 13 October 2007.

<sup>27</sup> For biography on Ambassador Dell L. Dailey (U.S. Army retired), see *U.S. Department of State Home Page*, available from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/biog/87639.htm>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2008.

<sup>28</sup> Col Patricia K. Coomber, J54, USSOCOM, e-mail message to author, 31 January 2008.

<sup>29</sup> Col Patricia K. Coomber, J54, USSOCOM, e-mail message to author, 11 October 2007.

<sup>30</sup> USSOCOM Posture Statement, 6.

<sup>31</sup> Col Patricia K. Coomber, J54, USSOCOM, telephone interview by author, 12 October 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> *Joint Special Operations University page*, Courses and Schedules, Special Operations Forces Interagency Collaboration Course Information, available from <https://jsoupublic.socom.mil/courses/sofiacc/index.php>; Internet; accessed 13 October 2007.

<sup>34</sup> Grisel Mundo, Course Director, Joint Special Operations University SOF Interagency Collaboration Course, 6 December 2007.

<sup>35</sup> Rudolph Lohmeyer III, "Project Horizon, A Scenario-Based Approach to Future-Oriented, Interagency Strategic Planning," briefing slides with commentary, Carlisle Barracks, U.S. Army War College, 24 January 2008.

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Project Horizon Progress Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, Fall 2006), 1.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Project Horizon Interview Summary Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, Fall 2005), 1.

<sup>39</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Project Horizon Progress Report*, 1.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.



<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>44</sup> Lohmeyer, "Project Horizon."

<sup>45</sup> The data is a result of e-mail and telephone conversations with the Army War College, Air Force War College, Navy War College, Marine Corps War College, National War College, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. The figures were determined by using a total population of U.S. Students and the number of total civilians enrolled in the current resident class. The total civilians was further broken down by DoD and non-DoD civilians.

<sup>46</sup> The data is a result of e-mail and telephone conversations with the Army Command and General Staff College, Air Command and Staff College, College of Naval Command and Staff, and Marine Corps Command and Staff College. The figures were determined by using a total population of U.S. Students and the number of total civilians enrolled in the current resident class. The total civilians was further broken down by DoD and non-DoD civilians.

<sup>47</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), xvi.