

## FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR ORGANIZING A JOINT FORCE STAFF

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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## **ABSTRACT**

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This paper proposes foundational principles for understanding and organizing a joint force staff. The traditional staff structure of j-coded staff directorates and the functional organization of a joint force staff are mutually supporting constructs. Both are necessary in order to form an effective joint force staff. Joint force staffs must operate in three event horizons in order to maintain a proper balance between and focus on current, mid-term, and long-term staff and mission requirements. The use of planning groups to manage planning teams allows the joint force staff to maintain focused planning efforts across and within these three event horizons. Cross-functional working groups and teams are the basic integration method of disparate staff capabilities and inform the efforts of the planning teams. No single staff procedure can adequately capture the multiple, simultaneous planning, estimate, and assessment tasks required of the joint force staff. Instead, the joint force staff battle rhythm is the basic integrating logic of how the staff operates and how it allocates its capabilities.



## FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR ORGANIZING A JOINT FORCE STAFF

This paper proposes foundational principles for understanding and organizing a joint force staff.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps no military subject consumes more organizational energy and generates more debate year in and year out than that of how to organize properly a military staff. This is especially true of a joint force organization where the success or failure to organize properly has strategic implications. Current joint doctrine<sup>2</sup> states, "The preferred option is to form a joint task force headquarters around a combatant command's service component headquarters or the service component's existing subordinate headquarters . . ."<sup>3</sup> Other options are to "designate the standing joint force headquarters (core element) as the core [joint force] headquarters element and augment it with additional service functional experts" or to "deploy a combatant command assessment team, or like organization, as the joint task force core element."<sup>4</sup> Regardless of which method, joint doctrine states that "the capabilities and composition of the joint task force headquarters must be a function of careful analysis that has determined the span of control . . . and required expertise the joint task force headquarters must possess."<sup>5</sup>

What joint doctrine does not offer is that this preferred option is anything but simple in terms of conceptualization and execution. In fact, this preferred option is the least difficult of several difficult choices. The obvious problem with this preferred option is that, in actual historical experience, it requires the joint force commander to form an effective headquarters at the very same time that commander is seeking to understand the operational environment and design and implement a solution to the derived strategic and operational problems.

The experience of the United States Army's V Corp in the spring of 2003 in Iraq is a powerful example of the weaknesses of this approach. In *On Point II*, General (retired) Jack Kean stated:

I still remain very disappointed by it [the decision to designate V Corps as Joint Task Force 7 and assign responsibilities for execution of Phase IV in Iraq May 2003] because I think we did not put the best experienced headquarters that we had in charge of that operation. That operation, in terms of dealing with Phase IV, with an insurgency, was going to be one of the most challenging things the Army had ever taken on and we just needed absolutely the very best people involved in it. It took us months, six or seven or eight months, to get some semblance of a headquarters together so Sanchez could at least begin to function effectively.<sup>6</sup>

The assessment of the decision to use V Corps to form the core of Joint Task Force 7 is beyond the scope of this paper, but two things stand out in General (retired) Keane's remarks: first, the implication that a corps headquarters was not experienced enough to serve as a joint force headquarters; and two, that it took over six months to form a reasonably capable joint force headquarters. By this measure, most of the allegedly joint force capable headquarters in the United States' defense establishment would be of suspect ability to serve under any but the simplest conditions. At a minimum, General (retired) Keane's remarks highlight the importance of "careful analysis" of the ability of an organization to serve as a joint force headquarters.

Joint doctrine also does not state, beyond the factors of span of control and required expertise, on what basis the combatant commander is to make this "careful analysis." In fact, this analysis must derive first from an understanding of how a joint force staff organizes and operates. Specifically, this paper proposes five basic principles that provide a foundation for this understanding. These principles are:

1). The traditional staff structure of j-coded staff directorates and the functional organization of a joint force staff are mutually supporting constructs. Both are necessary in order to form an effective joint force staff.

2). Joint force staffs must operate in three event horizons in order to maintain a proper balance between and focus on current, mid-term, and long-term staff and mission requirements.

3). The use of planning groups to manage planning teams allows the joint force staff to maintain focused planning efforts across and within these three event horizons.

4). Cross-functional working groups and teams are the basic integration method of disparate staff capabilities and inform the efforts of the planning teams.

5). No single staff procedure can adequately capture the multiple, simultaneous planning, estimate, and assessment tasks required of the joint force staff. Instead, the joint force staff battle rhythm is the basic integrating logic of how the staff operates and how it allocates its capabilities.

The first of these principles establishes the limitations of using simple organizational models to solve the problem of describing and employing successfully the joint force staff. The remaining four principles establish functional means to overcome this limitation and in doing so provide a standardized framework for thinking about how joint force staffs actually do and should operate. This paper concludes with recommendations for refining and further developing joint doctrine as it relates to the development and description of the joint force staff.

## Staff Organization

The traditional staff structure of j-coded staff directorates and the functional organization of a joint force staff are mutually supporting constructs. Both are necessary in order to form an effective joint force staff. The traditional staff structure has endured with only minor change in its basic features for over one hundred years. These basic features are the grouping of staff responsibilities under areas of special expertise and sub-grouping even more specialized areas under the larger groups. This methodology has produced in modern terminology the coordinating staff system of directorates.<sup>7</sup> This model of directorate, division, branch, section, and cell is widespread and, with minor variations in terminology, used consistently in United State's flag officer headquarters. Indeed, this model is used in nearly every military establishment in the world and many non-military organizations.

What has changed in the traditional staff is the size and complexity of the groupings and sub-groupings within the coordinating staff structure. In General (retired) William E. Depuy's famous article "Concept of Operation: The Heart of Command, The Tool of Doctrine," he describes the growth of battlefield functions over the past two hundred years.<sup>8</sup> DePuy lists eleven functions at the time of Napoleonic warfare, twenty in World War II, and thirty in the era of the United States Army's AirLand Battle doctrine. One would not be hard pressed to list fifty or more functions coordinated by modern joint force staffs. It is largely this growth of functions that has revealed the limitations of the traditional staff structure and motivated the search for more effective models.

Despite these limitations, the traditional staff structure has two enduring and significant strengths. First, it establishes clear responsibility for capabilities within a staff. That is, a joint force commander or chief of staff can readily identify responsibility

for operations, logistics, or intelligence. This is equally true within a staff directorate: the operations director can just as readily identify responsibility for current operations or fires or information operations. The second strength of the traditional staff structure is that it can accommodate new capabilities or constructs within its existing framework. The development of information operations as a division within the operations directorate is a good example of this process.

The enduring weakness of the traditional staff structure, of course, is its compartmentalization and the fact that the staff's organizational diagram only describes one small aspect of the staff's actual behavior. In an understated comment (written in the 1950s), Peter M. Blau, in *Bureaucracy in Modern Society*, wrote, "When we examine sufficiently small segments of bureaucracies to observe their operations in detail, we discover patterns of activities and interactions that cannot be accounted for by the official structure."<sup>9</sup> This is a point of view that even the newest member of a joint force staff shares and it is inevitably a source of continual frustration for staff members seeking to understand their role in what actually takes place.

Instinctively, commanders and staffs seek to organize more, if not exactly, like they actually function. Recent attempts serve to illustrate the limitations of this approach. One attempt is the model of the standing joint force headquarters element as developed by the United States Joint Forces Command. This model builds a staff organization consisting of functional administrative groups of command, plans, operations, information superiority, knowledge management, and logistics.<sup>10</sup> While there is no inherent requirement for this organization to use a particular planning model, it is premised on the use of effects based planning and operational net assessment as

analytical models for understanding an operational environment and developing plans to meet mission requirements. Significantly, reference documents for this organization do not fully indicate what the internal structures of these groups are.

A second attempt is that of the reorganization of the United States Army Europe as a deployable component command capable of functioning as a joint force headquarters. As described in the *Seventh Army Headquarters Operational and Organizational Concept for Coordination*, this organizational model uses six functional staff directorates: operational intelligence; operational maneuver; operational effects; operational protection; operational command and control information networks; and operational sustainment.<sup>11</sup> This organizational model also addresses the difficult task of echeloning elements of the headquarters by establishing a main command post, three operational command posts, and two early entry command posts.

This Seventh Army document contains two telling and significant remarks. The first is,

When co-located, the staffs of the main command post and operational command post 1 are integrated much like the G3 operations section and the directorate of plans, training, and mobilization at large bases in the continental United States. The G3 of the large installation will synchronize their activities during peacetime, but in the event of a contingency the two staffs seamlessly split.<sup>12</sup>

The second remark is simply that "Seventh Army will utilize boards, bureaus, cells, centers, and working groups as appropriate."<sup>13</sup> Annex D of the document lists some forty-seven of these entities along with their office of primary responsibility.<sup>14</sup>

Interestingly, the list does not include planning teams.

A more recent attempt to organize along functional lines is that of the United States Southern Command. Its staff consists of five directorates: partnering; policy and strategy; resources and assessments; security and intelligence; and stability.<sup>15</sup>

The relevant observation is that none of these three attempts to organize on a functional basis ameliorates the requirement to develop a system of interaction within the staff directorates. Indeed, no single organizational chart exists that could capture all of the relationships between any chosen set of groupings. Two conclusions are important at this point. First, it is difficult to imagine (and perhaps counterproductive to attempt) using a single organizational diagram to describe both the capability groupings of a joint force staff and its functional relationships to the processes used by the staff. It is certainly arguable that there are better or worse ways to design the directorates of a joint force staff, but such design changes will only go so far concerning simplifying the joint force staff organization. The second conclusion is that organizing a joint force headquarters is less about describing its basic organization and more about understanding the basic principles of how it will function. The remainder of this paper describes and argues for four basic principles to use when organizing and directing a joint force staff.

### Planning Horizons

Joint force staffs must operate in three event horizons in order to maintain a proper balance between and focus on current, mid-term, and long-term staff and mission requirements. This principle for understanding and properly organizing a joint force staff seeks to understand how the staff supports the commander's ability to think in time. This aspect of joint force staff operations directly affects the commander's

ability to plan adequately and to set conditions for successful operations. General (retired) Gary Luck, in his role as senior mentor at the United States Joint Forces Command, routinely coached joint force commanders to think in terms of "three event horizons:" what is, what if, and what next.<sup>16</sup> He also made the insightful comment that "for every five minutes an operational commander spends on current operations, he should spend fifty-five minutes with his planners."<sup>17</sup> Inherent in this coaching (and often explicitly stated) was the implication to organize staff processes to reflect these event horizons, especially planning processes.<sup>18</sup>

These two simple observations mask one of the most difficult challenges facing a joint force staff: projecting assessments and planning activities far enough forward in time to set conditions for successful operations. Current joint doctrine reflects General (retired) Luck's influence by linking the event horizon's of "what's next" to the long-term planning of the J-5 future plans division, "what if" to the mid-term planning of the J-35 future operations division, and "what is" to the current operations of the J-33 current operations division.<sup>19</sup>

The relevant conclusion is that the requirement to think in time based on a concept of long-term, mid-term, and current operations must directly influence every aspect of joint force staff organization and processes. The unique contribution of functional elements in a joint force staff (such as boards, groups, and teams) is the ability to address directly this requirement to think in time and to relate the staff's processes to these three event horizons. This paper will discuss further this integration in the section on the joint force staff's battle rhythm. Before doing so, though, this paper

describes the two functional building blocks of the entire process: planning teams (aggregated into planning groups) and working teams (aggregated into working groups).

### Planning Groups and Planning Teams

The use of planning groups to manage planning teams allows the joint force staff to maintain focused planning efforts across and within these three event horizons. Two additional insights regarding how a joint force staff organizes enable this division of labor to function effectively. The first insight is that maintaining this "event horizon" division of labor requires sufficient planning capacity at each of the three event horizons. From this perspective, it is useful to think of not one, but three broad groups of planning capability to manage planning with a joint force headquarters.<sup>20</sup>

Making three separate planning groups is not consistent with joint doctrine's use of the term joint planning group. Joint doctrine assigns responsibility for the joint planning group to the J-5 planning directorate.<sup>21</sup> Joint doctrine does not address the role or responsibility of an operational planning group. Interestingly though, one of the charts in Joint Publication 3-33, *The Joint Task Force Headquarters*, does list planning teams under the J-3 operations directorate and another chart shows both an operations planning group and a joint planning group.<sup>22</sup> Observation and experience establish that as an actual matter of practice many joint force headquarters use both a joint planning group (associated with the J-5 planning directorate) and an operations planning group (associated with the J-35 future operations division of the J-3 operations directorate). This actual behavior and the observed planning activities of effective joint operations centers is consistent with the description of three planning groups as stated above and described hereafter.<sup>23</sup> Using terminology derived from joint doctrine, it is convenient

(although a little cumbersome) to label these three broad groups as the future plans planning group, the future operations planning group, and the current operations planning group.

The future plans planning group is what joint doctrine describes as the joint planning group. Joint doctrine ascribes the following purposes to the joint planning group: conducting crisis action planning, assisting in operational plan and operational order development, and performing future planning.<sup>24</sup> The planning directorate provides the chief of the joint planning group (or in the terminology of this paper, the future plans planning group) and the director of planning supervises the group. Put in the simplest terms, the future plans planning group performs long-term planning regardless of whether this is contingency planning, campaign planning, planning for the next phase, or planning for a potential major operation.

The purpose of the future operations planning group (again, consistent with the terminology of this paper) is to perform mid-term planning. In this model, the J35 future operations division chief of the J3 operations directorate is the chief of the future operations planning group and the director of operations supervises the group. Put in the simplest terms, the future operations planning group performs mid-term planning regardless of whether this is branch planning, crisis action planning, planning an adjustment to a major operation, or completing a plan initiated by the future plans planning group.

As previously stated, the current operations planning group has no anchor in joint doctrine and admittedly, many practitioners would recoil at the idea of such a group. It is interesting though that arguably the best-resourced joint force staff in the world, the

Joint Staff, had a chief of current plans (J33) during the 1990s. The joint operations center as described in joint doctrine is synonymous with the current operations planning group. This may also seem cumbersome at first, but in fact, it is vitally important members of the joint operations also understand themselves to be a current operations planning group.

Beyond the basic framework of the event horizon, the complexity of the planning problem is also relevant to the division of labor between current operations, future operations, and future plans and their associated planning groups. Although in broad outline the three planning groups use the same joint planning process to conduct planning, they will inevitably bring different perspectives and even temperaments to the planning effort. Experience shows that, the current operations staff will not bring the nuance necessary to make a major adjustment to a campaign plan even if it is an immediately required effort. In such cases, the commander or chief of staff of the joint force will invariably enlist the planning capabilities resident in the future operations and future plans groups.

This pulling forward of future planners into current operations produces the commonplace observation that all of a joint force staff is focused on current operations at the expense of long-term, or even mid-term, planning. It is equally common for there to be tension (even outright hostility) between the current operations, future operations, and future plans groups. To a degree, some of this tension is inevitable. Rather than invalidate the proposed model, though, this experience clearly illustrates the point of the argument: regardless of how the staff organizes, it must have sufficient planning capacity available from the current operations to future plans. Even the briefest

experience with a joint force staff will demonstrate that it will face multiple, simultaneous planning problems. New planning problems will arise in everything from the conduct of current operations to the strategic direction of senior political leaders.

Understanding that even in the simplest operations joint force staff will face multiple, simultaneous planning problems leads to the second key insight: planning groups do not plan, they manage planning teams and planning teams plan. A planning team is simply a cross-functional group of staff members that use the planning process to develop a plan for a single problem. A planning team has a starting point, the identification of a planning requirement, and an end point, the completion of the mission executed to meet the planning requirement or the hand-off of the planning requirement to a new planning team.

In this context, the description of a joint force staff's three planning groups provides another perspective on a planning group: it consists of a changing number of planning teams. That is, a planning group simply manages planning teams within its event horizon or planning problems that demand a greater degree of analysis and coordination based on the complexity of the planning problem.

### Working Groups and Teams

Cross-functional working groups and teams are the basic integration method of disparate staff capabilities and inform the efforts of the planning teams. In contrast to the purpose of a planning team, a working group is a cross-functional team that informs other staff activities, such as planning, assessments, and coordination. The strengths of the working group model are its flexibility and ability to integrate broadly a number of perspectives. Current joint force staffs contain working groups that are as diverse as a

counter-improvised explosive device working group, rule of law working group, economic development working group, or a lethal targeting working group. One can imagine the membership of these working groups ranging from American military officers to coalition and partner officers to other United States government agency officers and even non-governmental organizations. These types of working groups have provided important contributions throughout operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The important question for is what is the basic purpose of a working group and how does it support larger staff processes. This paper argues that the basic purpose of a working group in a joint force headquarters is to support planning teams through the use of the estimate process. Current joint doctrine provides this definition of a working group, but inadequately describes their use and relationship to the larger joint force staff.<sup>25</sup>

Dissecting one section of *Joint Publication 3-33: Joint Task Force Headquarters* serves to illustrate this lack of clarity in current joint doctrine. This manual's chapter on the operations directorate includes a description of a joint force staff's protection working group. The office of primary responsibility for this working group is the force protection element (although figure VII-1 shows force protection to be a division of the operations directorate).<sup>26</sup> The joint force protection officer chairs the working. Joint doctrine describes up to twenty-two members of the working group ranging from intelligence to safety officer representatives. Joint doctrine provides the following purposes of the working group: 1) protection policymaking body; 2) support planning; 3) identify risks to missions; 4) coordinate staff actions; 5) input to orders and plans; 6) monitor and disseminate information; and 7) review protection assessments.<sup>27</sup> Joint

doctrine provides for inputs to the protection working group as 1) commander and planning team guidance and 2) major subordinate command input and doctrine provides outputs (products) as 1) assessments; 2) staff estimates; and 3) plans and order input.<sup>28</sup>

All of this looks reasonable. Closer analysis reveals several problems. One is simply clarity. For example, three of the stated seven purposes of the group are a redundant: make policy, support planning, and input to orders and plans. Two (arguably all) of the three of the products are redundant: staff estimates and plans and orders input. A review of other discussions of working groups in *Joint Publication 3-33: Joint Task Force Headquarters* reveals similar discrepancies.<sup>29</sup>

More than parsing words, this kind of confusion in joint doctrine suggests a lack of a common understanding of the function of a working group. In other words, despite the wide range of subject areas working groups address, are their internal mechanisms and external relationship to the joint force staff that different? Building on the earlier discussions of the contribution of the traditional staff, event horizons, planning groups, and planning teams, this paper argues that they are not.

Quite simply, a working group performs a role identical to what specialists in a staff traditionally performed before staffs grew so large and complex that they required a group effort to accomplish their work. That is, the working group expertly manages information related to a specific capability and relates that information to assessment and planning efforts. To use an Army centered example, the force protection officer of a battalion, who singly manages the expert knowledge related to this capability as an additional duty, becomes a full-time officer at the brigade level, becomes a cell at the division level, and finally becomes a division with subordinate branches and teams at

the joint force level. All capabilities and specialties within these various staffs follow the same model and either actually or functionally behave as working groups by coordinating with related and supporting activities to perform the functions of the staff.

That this model is so prevalent speaks to its clear ability to provide meaningful structure to the staff's activities. Although, joint doctrine does not provide for such a tool, it is useful to think of subsets of working groups as working teams. Consistent with the description of other joint force staff functions, the purpose of a working team is to provide input from a working group to a specific planning team. That is, a working team provides a staff estimate in support of a particular planning team's process.

### Battle Rhythm

No single staff procedure can adequately capture the multiple, simultaneous planning, estimate, and assessment tasks required of the joint force staff. Instead, the joint force staff battle rhythm is the basic integrating logic of how the staff operates and how it allocates its capabilities. Current joint doctrine defines battle rhythm as "A deliberate cycle of command, staff, and unit activities intended to synchronize current and future operations."<sup>30</sup> Like many definitions in joint doctrine, this definition hints at the logic of battle rhythm, but does not give enough detail to anchor fully the concept into a working model of a joint force staff.

The discussion of battle rhythm in *Joint Task Force Headquarters* occurs in the context of a description of the commander's decision cycle. This cycle is the traditional one of monitor, assess, plan, and direct. This is an important anchor for understanding the function of the joint force battle rhythm: at its essence, the battle rhythm reflects the joint force staff's support of the commander's decision-making. *Joint Task Force*

*Headquarters* also provides a second critical anchor by stating that one of the critical functions of the battle rhythm is to synchronize centers, groups, bureaus, cells, offices, elements, working groups, and planning team activities.<sup>31</sup>

However, joint doctrine does a disservice to practitioners by not explaining fully the complexity of the battle rhythm. The clearest example of this is the depiction of the commander's decision cycle as a single cycle with four phases.<sup>32</sup> This is too simplistic. Even a short examination of a joint force staff in action would leave the observer hard pressed to equate the staff's actions to this simple model in any meaningful sense, let alone the joint force commander's actions. As previously noted, the fact of multiple, simultaneous assessment, planning, and execution tasks is the dominant feature of joint force staff operations.

Here, the principle of event horizons and the fact of multiple planning problems need to reassert themselves. That is, the model for and logic of the joint force staff battle rhythm should be more than a single sequential cycle. A more useful model and mental picture is to view the battle rhythm as a composite of three commander's decision cycles reflecting a division of labor based on the same three event horizons described in the description of planning efforts.<sup>33</sup> The framework for the outer circle of the battle rhythm is the commander's decision cycle as it relates to long-term planning; the middle circle of the battle rhythm is the commander's decision cycle as it relates to mid-term planning; and the inner circle of the battle rhythm is the commander's decision cycle as it relates to current operations.

The second disservice of joint doctrine in understanding the complexity of the staff battle rhythm is its failure to relate staff activities, in other than the most generic

sense, to the force that propels the decision cycle forward. Each part of the cycle, monitor, assess, plan, and direct, in fact represent a set of processes with their own logic and energy.

Joint doctrine correctly captures the location of the monitor function by stating "Although staff sections monitor their individual staff functions to maintain current staff estimates, the preponderance of the joint task forces' monitoring function is conducted by the joint task forces centers . . .<sup>34</sup> Missing from the description is the logic of monitoring data based on measures of performance and measures of effectiveness as a function of current operations in order to connect the monitoring function of the commander's decision cycle to the assessing function. It is the choice of specific measures of performance and especially measures of effectiveness that fulfill the need of operating in the three event horizons.

The assessing function of the commander's decision cycle reflects the full division of labor for the joint force staff. In this function, the logic that propels the cycle forward is the comparison of analyzed data from the monitor function to specific objectives for a campaign. The resulting analysis identifies problems and these problems become planning tasks. Again, this function represents the logic of three event horizons with campaign assessment occurring in support of future plans planning, decision point assessment (as they relate to branch and sequel plans) in support of future operations planning, and warnings and indicators, measures of performance, and measures of effectiveness in support of current operations planning (fragmentary orders).

The logic of the planning function of the commander's decision cycle is quite simply and obviously the joint planning process. For a particular planning problem, this

process propels the decision cycle forward from situation development and mission analysis to concept development and course of action development and then continuing on to the product of an order. This portion of the commander's decision cycle is widely understood. It is worth repeating though that the complexity of this portion also only becomes apparent in light of addressing multiple, simultaneous planning problems.

The direct function represents the control tasks of the joint force staff. Here the commander's decision cycle converges on the single event horizon of current operations through the issuing of orders from the joint operations center. Although, it is not too much of a stretch of the imagination to appreciate that in effective joint force's some, if not many, of the directed tasks issued by the joint operations center are in fact preparatory actions associated with actual or potential future operations and plans.

This combination of understanding the joint force staff battle rhythm as a operating in the three event horizons and being propelled by an internal logic and processes provides for a much more nuanced understanding of the battle rhythm. In this regard, it allows for understanding both broad and specific staff capabilities and actions within a larger model. In a very direct sense, it translates the staff schedule of recurring activities back into a model that provides the staff purpose and direction and allows the commander to relate his specific activities to their actions.

### Conclusions and Recommendations for Joint Doctrine

Building and operating a joint force staff is a complicated endeavor; describing its activities is equally complicated. The first conclusion is that it is premature to proclaim the obsolescence of the traditional staff. Far more likely, the officer who abandons fully this model in search for a true functionality is likely to revert to the traditional staff model

or find the joint force staff regrouping in ways that mimic the traditional model. It is equally clear that the size of a joint force staff demands functional tools to make the staff effective. This paper argues that planning groups and working groups are the brick and mortar of these functional tools. Joint staff boards and centers are more widely understood and firmly established, but it is their relationship to planning teams and working teams and their associated processes that provide foundations for them to function.

In this sense, the traditional and functional staff structures are both important and mutually support each other. Their relationship is analogous to the relationship of service organizations to joint force organizations.<sup>35</sup> That is, it is useful to think of the traditional j-coded staff system of directorates and forming the coordinating staff as providing trained and ready capabilities to the task organized functional organizations of the staff. Joint doctrine should specifically address this mutually supporting relationship and expressly recognize the strengths of the traditional staff structure and their enduring value.<sup>36</sup>

A second conclusion is that there are a significant number of best practices in the actual conduct of joint force staff operations. A number of these best practices share similarities and common logic, but various commands describe them with a bewildering (and ever changing) array of terminology. Joint doctrine should standardize this terminology and based on detailed examination of actual best practices and principals establish a full working model for a joint force staff. This effort would have incalculable benefits for the understanding, organizing, and training of all future joint force staffs.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> All of the basic ideas in this paper stem from the author's experience as an observer / trainer on the Deployable Training Team at Joint Forces Command's Joint Warfighting Center from 2003 to 2005. This team, consisting of about thirty officers, performed the mission of training and assisting joint force staffs in the performance of their duties. Three individuals bear special mention as the source and inspiration of many of the ideas and judgments in this paper: General (retired) Gary Luck, Joint Forces Command Senior Mentor; Colonel Charles Webster, observer / trainer; and Lieutenant Colonel John Washburn, observer / trainer. Where the ideas in this paper stem directly from one of these individuals, the author notes this in the paper. In many cases, however, the ideas reflect frequent and lengthy collaboration amongst the members of the team and the author. Errors in interpretation of other team member's views are entirely the author's own

<sup>2</sup> While at Joint Forces Command, the author and Lieutenant Colonel John Washburn developed a briefing to formalize many of the ideas in this paper in order to provide input to joint doctrine. In several cases the doctrine writers who produced *Joint Task Force Headquarters*, Joint Publication 3-33, February 16, 2007 (cited throughout this paper) used only slightly modified versions of the figures provided in this briefing. Figure II-3 (on page II-13 of this joint publication), which describes the basic working group model, is a good example. In other cases, joint doctrine writers used phrases and text from the briefing in *Joint Publication 3-33*. The various definitions beginning on page II-10 are likewise a good example of this.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*, Joint Publication 3-33 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 16, 2007), II-1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Donald P. Wright, and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 146.

<sup>7</sup> James D. Hittle, *The Military Staff: Its History and Development* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole, 1961).

<sup>8</sup> William E. Depuy, "Concepts of the Operation: The Heart of Command, The Tool of Doctrine," *Army* 38, No. 8 (August 1988): 25-40.

<sup>9</sup> Peter M. Blau, *Bureaucracy in Modern Society* (New York: Random House, 1956), 53.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Joint Forces Command, *Doctrinal Implications of the Standing Joint Force Headquarters* (Suffolk, VA: U.S. Joint Forces Command Joint Warfighting Center, June 16, 2003), 8.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Army Europe, *Seventh Army Headquarters Operational and Organizational Concept for Coordination* (Heidelberg, Germany: U.S. Army Europe, November 18, 2005), 52.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., D-1 to D-3.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Southern Command, "Leadership/Staff," <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/pages/leadershipStaff.php> (accessed February 1, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> Personal observation of the author.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*, IX-11.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume I, Planning and Procedures*, CJCSM 3122.01A (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 16, 2007), III-57.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*, IX-10.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., VII-4 and VIII-3.

<sup>23</sup> Personal observation of the author.

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*, IX-10.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., II-12.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., VII-4.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., VII-9.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., VII-13.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., GL-7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., IV-4.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., IV-2.

<sup>33</sup> General (Retired) Luck referred to this model as the "process tornado."

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*, IV-2.

<sup>35</sup> Lieutenant Colonel John Washburn provided this insight. See end note 1.

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*, II-10. Joint doctrine hints at the mutual relationship of the traditional and functional staff models (particularly in figure II-2) but quickly moves into a discussion of the functional components of the staff without explicitly addressing the continuing benefit of the traditional staff. This is an interesting oversight for a

doctrinal manual that organizes its chapters along the lines of the traditional command and staff models.