Deployed Interagency Operations-'Operationalising' the Comprehensive Approach

BY
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Deployed Interagency Operations – 'Operationalising' the Comprehensive Approach
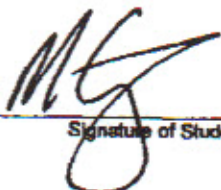
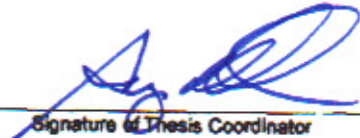A Thesis

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DEPLOYED INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONS – 'OPERATIONALISING' THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

by

Mark Armstrong

"The Comprehensive Approach is not an end in itself but a means to an end. The aim is not to build new structures and hierarchies, but to achieve better outcomes and to resolve a crisis in a sustainable way."

Comprehensive Approach Seminar, Helsinki, 2008[1]

INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive approach can be broadly defined as an attempt to harness and apply the resources available to the state in response to a crisis in order to achieve political objectives. Although a comprehensive or whole of government (WoG) approach is a conceptually simple aim for peace support operations it is has proved problematic in practice to arrange an integrated response across the range of civil, political, military, economic resources.[2] The desire to implement a comprehensive approach is impeded by the difficulties in designing operations for the complex, often chaotic environments, requiring this type of intervention and the often short time frames in which international response is demanded. These factors means that the military is often the best positioned to lead the response due to its expeditionary capabilities, manpower, planning orientation and ability to protect itself. For these reasons the military have traditionally been the lead planners and by default, the initial leaders of international peace support operations. In contrast, the Other Government Agencies

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[1] Crisis Management Initiative 2008, *Comprehensive Approach: Trends, Challenges and Possibilities for Cooperation in Crisis Prevention and Management*, Comprehensive Approach Seminar 17 June 2008, Helsinki, http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/YSAR-7LPT6W/$file/comprehensive-approach.pdf?openelement (accessed 8 October 2010), p.9.

[2] Christopher Schnaubelt, 2009. Complex Operations and Interagency Operational Art, *Prism*, 1(1), p. 37.

(OGA) ability to respond is generally limited by lack of expeditionary doctrine, common processes, stove-piped functionality and limited latent capacity to rapidly deploy prepared human resources.

Whilst the military is best positioned to be the primary agency in the design, planning and leadership of deployed interagency operations this is usually a sub-optimal outcome. Military planning processes and core concepts, while well developed for warfare, have significant shortcomings when applied to an inter-agency response. Military organisations are versatile and flexible forces but are limited in effectiveness and are inefficient when utilised for activities outside of the provision of security. Many civil actors will be reluctant to cooperate or even coordinate with the military due to substantial organisational cultural and ideological boundaries. On the other hand, OGA tend to lack the organisational structures to support deployed operations. In particular, the lack of a conceptual 'operational' level to bridge policy (strategy) and projects (tactics) within a deployed environment is a shortcoming.

Scope. This paper will argue that the design, planning and leadership of deployed interagency operations should not be a simple extension of military processes. It will suggest a new approach for interagency operations that will 'operationalise' the comprehensive approach.

PROBLEMS WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE/WoG APPROACH

The comprehensive approach to an operation is a concept that recognises and articulates the multi-dimensional relationships between the various organisations operating in an environment in response to a crisis. According to Australian Defence Force doctrine, it includes the broad subsets of Whole-of-Government (WOG), whole of nation (industry and community) and whole of coalition.[3] However, while conceptually simple the comprehensive approach has proved extremely difficult to implement quickly and effectively. The differences in the characteristics of the elements of national power and the activities necessary to bring them collectively to

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[3] Australian Government 2009. *Joint Military Appreciation Process, Australian Defence Force Publication* 5.0.1, Department of Defence: Canberra, p. 1-3.

bear in a deployed environment pose particular planning and coordination challenges. One particular challenge is to achieve both organic hierarchical and external stakeholder integration of response across all levels of national power.[4] Even if policy, resource and bureaucratic impediments can be resolved, it remains a conundrum about how to effectively synchronise the activities performed by the military, civilian agencies, private sector, international and non-government organisations (NGO) into something that resembles a common, synergistic effort. These problems are often classically complex or 'wicked' (i.e. they have a non-linear solution, it is novel, no stopping point, uncertainty, no right or wrong, solution may create more problems, requires collaboration and needs leadership to resolve).[5]

It is important to broadly define the type of operations that demand a deployed interagency response. The majority of catastrophes resist categorisation into those that require only military (hard power) responses and others that only require humanitarian assistance.[6] At one end of the scale are Humanitarian Assistance/ Disaster Response (HADR) operations which are typically responsive, civilian led, aid orientated, military supported and conducted in permissive environments. On the other end of the scale is concurrent state-building and nation-building during conflict or its immediate aftermath such as in Afghanistan. State-building can be described as being the practical task of establishing or strengthening state institutions, with nation-building being more concerned with the reinforcement of a national identity and the shaping of the key relations between the state and it's population.[7] In the context of this paper, both state and nation building are used in the sense of an external intervention (rather than from within). Clearly, nation-building for an external party will be a difficult task given typical issues like underlying unresolved disputes,

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[4] Christopher Schnaubelt, 2009. *op.cit.,* p. 38.

[5] Keith Grint 2008. *'Leadership, Management and Command – Rethinking D-Day'*, Palgrave Macmillan: New York, pp. 11-12

[6] Anthony Bergin and Bob Breen, 2009. *Rudd's Army: A Deployable Civilian Capacity for Australia, Policy Analysis No. 43*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Canberra, p. 1.

[7] Mark Shephard 2009. *Australia's Nation-Building: An Assessment of its Contribution to Regional Security in the Pacific, and a New Policy to Guide its Future*, Working Paper No. 413, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University: Canberra, p.3.

historical antipathy, cultural factors and community disintegration that must be dealt with. History abounds with failed state-building efforts. However, the US success in post-World War II Germany and Japan are positive examples (albeit in a set of particular circumstances: at the end of an enormous war of attrition resulting in unconditional surrender, massive US investment and long term occupations).

State-building is also difficult, particularly where there remains underlying, unresolved nation-building issues along with a lack of resources and infrastructure. For these reasons Governments have been reluctant to commit to these types of operations. Indeed, in the 2000 US election campaign even George W. Bush reportedly promised that he would not commit the US military to nation-building projects overseas.[8]   Despite this reluctance and the obvious risks, external intervention into so-called failing or failed states has been a feature of the last two decades.   This is because both states have come to regard state-failure as a global or regional threat to national security; rather than just a humanitarian issue.[9] Importantly, most of these recent interventions have not been United Nations (UN) led. About two-thirds of the current peace building missions are carried out by entities other than the UN including regional bodies, coalitions, organisations and individual states.[10]   These interventions have not had the institutional mechanisms and processes of the UN available to them. The intervening states and coalitions have had no choice but to replicate them or build new ones.

The US experience in the occupation of Iraq demonstrates the difficulties that accompany a civil-military mismatch of purpose, authority and priorities.   The civilian component (led by the US State Department) did not have the existing capacity, culture, resources or operational acumen to exercise the control expected of it. The various OGAs represented in the civilian component all worked hard to

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[8] Thomas Ricks 2009. *The Gamble: General Petraeus and the Untold Story of the American Surge in Iraq, Penguin Group: New York, p.293.*

[9] Joanne Wallis 2006. 'A 'Helpem Fren' in Need… Evaluating the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', *Security Challenges*, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 82.

[10] Michael Fullilove 2006. *Testament of Solomons: RAMSI and International State-Building*, Lowy Institute, http://www.lowyinstitute.org/Publication.asp?pid=351 (accessed 8 September 2010), p.12.

achieve progress but often in uncoordinated and ineffective ways. Studies suggest that the only effective and actionable planning occurred within the military headquarters. Any inter-agency synergy achieved was usually the result of close, informal relationships between individuals rather than as a function of formal coordination mechanisms. The result was that many Multi-National Force- Iraq plans were incomplete or difficult to operationalise due to the institutional weaknesses of the civilian component. This issue became decisive after the major combat operations concluded and much of the required adaptation to the challenges of state building lay in the civilian rather than military sphere.[11]

In contrast to the difficulties experienced in Iraq and Afghanistan by US led coalitions the Australian led operations in the Solomon Islands and East Timor (the later as part of a larger UN mission) have been described as outstanding successes. Indeed, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development selected the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands (RAMSI) as a case study as part of a pilot study of principles for good international engagement in fragile states.[12] In April 2003, with his country descending into lawlessness, the Prime Minster of the Solomon Islands wrote a letter to the Australian Prime Minister requesting help. Within 3 months RAMSI had commenced as a major state-building operation. This, Australian Federal Police (AFP) led, mission saw over 2000 military, police and development advisors deploy from countries including Australia, PNG, Tonga, Fiji and New Zealand initially deployed.[13]   There were many successes; within weeks the lawlessness had been suppressed at a rate so rapid that it surprised the planners, more than 3700 illegal firearms were confiscated and over 4100 criminals or belligerents arrested. The Royal Solomon Island Police Force (RSIPF) was reformed with the removal of corrupt officers, new training programs and recruitment processes in place. The

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[11] Thomas Mowle 2007. *Hope is Not a Plan: The War in Iraq From Inside the Green Zone*, Praeger Publishers: Westport, p. 1.

[12] Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development 2005, *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States*, April, OECD: Paris.

[13] Elsina Wainright 2005. *How is RAMSI Faring?: Progress, Challenges, and Lessons Learned*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute: Canberra, http://www.aspi.org.au/publications/publication_details.aspx?ContentID=68&pubtype=6 (accessed 29 September 2010), p.2.

government was bolstered with external advisors and the economic decline was halted. Given this early success it is no wonder that it was cited as a successful intervention. However, in 2006 there were notable setbacks in both the Solomon Islands and East Timor. Widespread civil unrest spawned from underlying, unresolved community issues required major reintervention efforts. Powles attributed these setbacks to the mistaken approach of attempting of state-building without the complementary nation-building effort required to resolve underlying issues.[14] Despite the setback there are many notable features of RAMSI including: it was police led, deployed significant numbers of police and civilian advisors in the first wave and unity of command. Importantly, despite it's success RAMSI highlighted many institutional shortcomings that triggered a bureaucratic restructure for the Australian Government including the formation of the Australian Civilian Corps (ACC) and the Australian Federal Police International Deployment Group.[15] This is similar to the response of other countries: the US Government which established the Department of State Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilisation (S/CRS)[16], the United Kingdom set up a Stabilisation Unit[17] and Canada a Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force.[18]

Shortcomings of the Military Approach to Planning and Design

Given the complex challenges involved in international interventions and the substantial challenges in planning and integrating a comprehensive response it is easy

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[14] Anna Powles 2006. 'Mission Creep: Statebuilding from Honiara to Dili', *Security Challenges*, Vol. 2, No. 2, July, p.9-10.

[15] Elsina Wainright 2005. op.cit., p.7.

[16] Nina Serafino 2010. *Peacekeeping/Stabilisation and Conflict Transitions: Background and Congressional Action on the Civilian Response/Reserve Corps and other Civilian Stabilisation and Reconstruction Capabilities*, Congressional Research Service: Washington DC, p. 9.

[17] Government of the United Kingdom 2010. *Stabilisation Unit Overview*, http://www.stabisationunit.gov.uk (accessed 21 October 2010).

[18] Thomas Reich 2010, *A Deployable Civilian Force for Reconstruction and Stabilisation: S/CRS and the Civilian Response Corps*, *Common Defense Quarterly*, http://www.commondefensequarterly.com/CDQ7/civilian.html (accessed 21 October 2010).

to see why the military tend to dominate the planning and leadership of these operations. However, this reality is often counterproductive in achieving long term responses to a crisis. The reasons for the shortcomings in military planning for interagency operations will now be examined.

The Operational Level of War and the Operational Art

A key war fighting concept for the military is that of the 'operational level'.[19] This refers to an intermediate phenomenon between discrete tactics and wider strategy. This concept was conceived in the work of the continental strategic theorists, articulated by the Russians and later refined by the US military. The concept was born from the challenge of managing very large armies and to ensure that individual battles were ultimately linked to a strategic objective. A fundamental premise is that the operational commander is given resources, objectives to achieve and some autonomy about how to achieve them. The achievement of operational objectives within a campaign (or multiple campaigns) in various theatres will ultimately result in strategic victory.

An important related concept is that of the 'operational art'. The term operational art refers to the way generals or their senior staffs achieve operational success.[20] The Australian Defence Force defines operational art as "the skilful employment of military forces to attain strategic goals through the design, organisation, sequencing and direction of campaigns and operations."[21] It requires the commander to identify military conditions (or an end state) that constitute their given strategic objectives, to decide upon operational objectives and order a sequence of actions (utilising the military resources allocated) that leads to the fulfilment of the operational objectives. The design process is focused on defeating the enemy by attacking his 'centre of gravity' (COG). The COG idea is derived from the influential German military philosopher Clausewitz. Activities and milestones are sequenced along 'Lines of

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[19] B.J.C. McKercher and Michael Hennessy (eds). 1996. *The Operational Art – Developments in the Theories of War*, Praeger Publishers: Westport, p. 20

[20] B.J.C. McKercher and Michael Hennessy (eds). 1996. *op. cit*., p.1.

[21] Australian Government 2009, *op.cit*., p. 1-21

Operation'. While western militaries have detailed, rational processes to support operational planning it also has an important qualitative and creative aspect; i.e. the 'art'.[22]
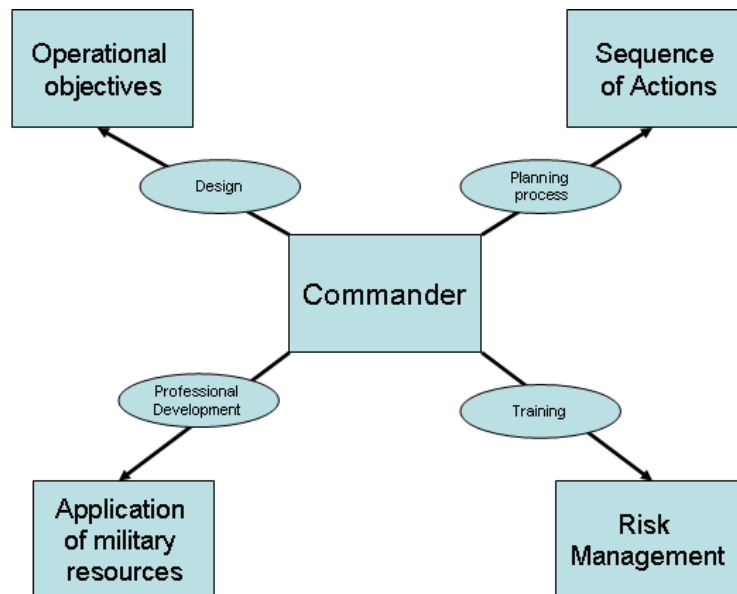

Figure 1. A representation of the components of the operational art according to Australian Defence Force doctrine[23]

The concept of the 'operational art' was reinvigorated by US writers in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. US Army leaders were struggling to understand the implications of a conflict where they won the battles but lost the war.[24] Despite the Vietnam War being largely a counter insurgency, the US army focussed its review on the ground combat aspects and embraced the notion of the 'Clausewitzian battlefield' where non-military actors were marginal in the prosecution of operations.[25] The operational art

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[22] Bradley J. Meyer 1996 in McKercher, B.J.C. and Hennessy, M.A. (eds), 1996. *op.cit*., p.44.

[23] Australian Government 2009, *op.cit*., p. 1-3.

[24] Richard Swain 1996 in McKercher, B.J.C. and Hennessy, M.A. (eds). 1996. *The Operational Art – Developments in the Theories of War*, Praeger Publishers: Westport, p.147.

[25] Richard Swain 1996, *op.cit*., p. 156.

was integrated in US doctrine by the late 1980's and seemingly validated by the battlefield success of the US in the Gulf War in 1991. Other western militaries, including Australia, have generally embraced the concept and included it in their doctrine.

However, a succession of military failures and indecisive humanitarian interventions after the Gulf War led to questions of the logic of extending a nineteenth century, land centric concept to the modern joint battle-space and peace support operations.[26] There has also been a creep to extend the operational art to include interagency aspects with the argument that a counter-insurgency (COIN) campaign cannot be successful without them. Kelly argues that the operational art is now inappropriately used as a panacea to respond to the whole spectrum of warfare. He believes that it is naïve to extend this concept because it ignores the limitations and origins of the original thinking.[27]

Melton contends that the key question in modern warfare now is not how to annihilate opposing armies but rather how to topple enemy governments (including their ideology) and establish more acceptable forms of governance for their populations.[28] The military operational design process of identifying an enemy centre of gravity and developing linear lines of operation (with conceptual origins in a line of march by foot soldiers) to defeat him in order to achieve a military end-state is clearly not suited to this task. Likewise a hard power-centric emphasis on deploying overwhelming force within a narrow mission-set may have prevented military failures but this has often not translated into long term success.[29] Moreover, the operational art, as a key component of the profession of arms, may have actually impeded the military from making the "institutional adaptations" required to deal with the multi-jurisdictional

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[26] B.J.C. McKercher and M.A. Hennessy (eds). 1996. *op.cit.*, p.5.

[27] Justin Kelly and Michael Brennan 2010. 'The Leavenworth Heresy and the Perversion of Operational Art', *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 56, p. 115.

[28] Stephen L. Melton. 2009. *The Clausewitz Delusion*, Zenith Press: Minneapolis, p.19.

[29] Thijs W. Brocades Zaalberg 2006. *Soldiers and Civil Power*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, p. 417.

arrangements required of interagency operations.[30] In this sense, the operational art is part of the problem, not the solution for interagency operations.

Command and Control. The central role of the commander runs deep in military thinking and can be problematic for interagency operations. The Commander is the primary decision maker who has the authority (invested by military law) and support systems to exercise singular control over a military force. Military command is heavily hierarchically orientated and exercised through a rigid 'chain of command'. Military planners strive for unity of command, which is often an issue in interagency environments. An important related concept is that of control. Implicit in military planning doctrines and training is that you only plan for the resources that you control (i.e. those allocated by higher headquarters) and only if you control them can they be synchronised. This is manifested in the reluctance of military planners to incorporate the activities of other agencies that are not under military control, into their plans. In particular there is a lack of clarity about the application of the integrated approach in practice and the role of certain actors, especially NGOs, who generally want to coordinate with, but not be coordinated by, other agencies.[31]

Mastery of combat. The military is amongst the most highly specialised institutions of the state. They are organised and equipped very specifically to win wars. The inability of the US military to secure victory in Vietnam led to the influential Weinberger-Powell doctrine. This enshrined the requirement for overwhelming force, a clear mission and a focus on the prosecution high intensity state-on-state conflict. An assumption in this thinking is that, if forces are prepared for high intensity conflict, they can more easily step down for other tasks than the other way around. The major consequence of this is that that military forces are primarily trained, organised and equipped to fight battles rather than engaging in peace support operations. The units deployed on short notice contingencies are therefore optimised for warfighting. If a unit is reorganised for a peace support operation it becomes an

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[30] Justin Kelly and Mike Brennan 2009. How Operational Art Devoured Strategy, http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/ (accessed 13 Aug 2010), p.93

[31] Matt Waldman 2008. *Caught in the Conflict – Civilians and the International Security Strategy in Afghanistan*, A Briefing Paper for the NATO Heads of State and Government Summit, 3-4 April 2009, p. 17-18.

ad-hoc organisation. Processes remain optimised for warfighting and only ad-hoc amendments are made to adjust for peace support operations. The narrow specialisation of military forces means that they are rarely cost effective for any task where the application of (or the threat of) violence is not required.[32]

Modern western doctrines are based on a 'manoeuvre approach'. This theory seeks to defeat an enemy by pitting strength against weakness, achieving a higher tempo of operations and decisions superiority in order to shatter his will to resist. However, while effective for war fighting this thinking is often not appropriate for peace support operations where doing things fast might not be practical or even an advantage.

Threat focused. Given the focus on war fighting it is no surprise that military processes are focussed on defeating an enemy. Information collecting and processing capabilities are designed for developing intelligence on threat forces. The Intelligence staff attempt to identify the enemies 'Centre of Gravity' so it can be attacked. Much less attention is given to understanding the 'white' (civilian) or 'green' (neutral forces) context (red being the colour designating the enemy and blue the friendly forces). For example, Australian Defence Force (ADF) planners have been conditioned by extensive training and doctrinal guidance to target the red COG so it retains primacy even in a COIN environment like Afghanistan where arguably it is more important to focus on the population.[33]

The Profession of Arms. Military officers belong to 'the profession of arms'. This profession has traditionally been defined as responsible for the ordered management of the application of violence, on behalf of the state, within a nation's military.[34] Yet with the military primarily engaged in operations that are not conventional war there is debate about how far should the domain of the profession of arms extend, i.e. does

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[32] Hugh White 2009. *A Focussed Force: Australia's Defence Priorities in the Asian Century*, Lowy Institute Paper 26, Longueville Media: Double Bay, p. 11.

[33] Andrew Dahl 2010. Information Operations in Adaptive Campaigning, *Small Wars Journal*. Vol. 6, No. 3. April, p. 25-26.

[34] Eliot Cohen. 2002. *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime*, The Free Press: New York, p. 244-245.

it extend to interagency operations? Evans predicts a coming crisis in the profession of arms where the military risks surrendering its predominance in expertise through the dilution of its core role.[35]

Culture. Military officers have a relatively homogenous background with similar career profiles, age cohorts and institutional indoctrination. This is reinforced with extensive progressive professional development in common processes and doctrine. This is in stark contrast to most civilian organisations, who recruit laterally from a variety of backgrounds candidates with dissimilar training and professional development. The military invests substantial resources into developing doctrine (a 'body of knowledge'). This provides guidance to military planners and in the execution of military operations. Part of doctrine is a common lexicon, which facilitates effective communication even in conditions of crisis, stress and fatigue. This culture features a strong institutional identity (sometimes arrogance) that can increase the barriers to effective integration with other agencies.

The Provincial Reconstruction Team Experiment. An attempt to create a unified civil-military organisation has seen the development of 'Provincial Reconstruction Teams' (PRT) in Iraq and Afghanistan.[36] A PRT is a civil-military organisation that is able to operate in unstable and dangerous areas due to the security provide by its military component.[37] These organisations, created by many countries share a common name but have very different make-ups and methods of operations. Some are civilian (such as the US PRT in Al Muthanna province, Iraq in 2007); some are completely military, with most somewhere in between. The military component is necessary to provide security for the civilian element and retain the capacity to achieve effects in hostile territory in a way that purely civilian agencies cannot. While a pragmatic attempt to integrate civil and military elements, these organisations

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[35] Michael Evans 2010. Presentation to Australian Command and Staff College, 28 April 2010, Australian Defence College: Canberra

[36] Carter Malkasian and Gerald Meyerle 2009. *'Provincial Reconstruction Teams: How Do They Work?*', Strategic Studies Institute, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/ (accessed 10 Aug 2010), p.vii.

[37] Carter Malkasian and Gerald Meyerle 2009, *op.cit.,* p.6.

have attracted considerable criticism particularly from the humanitarian community. The objections are generally centred on the encroachment of the 'humanitarian space' by organisations that do not operate within the bounds of a humanitarian charter.[38] This 'militarisation' of aid has put NGO workers at risk of being targeted by insurgents. Many aid workers believe that development should be conducted solely for humanitarian purposes (not as a means of defeating an insurgency or the furthering of political ends).[39] They assert that, where the security situation permits humanitarian actors to operate; the military should refrain from conducting activities in the development or humanitarian space.[40]

The label of PRT is not a useful one given the immense variety of organisations that it has been used to describe. Some PRTs are little more than large tactical Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) teams whose sole aim is to further the military mission. Others, while led by civilians, are far more focussed on tactical CIMIC like projects that give the illusion of capacity building but are little more than inconsequential public relations tasks. Indeed the very label of reconstruction is problematic. It implies that there is something to reconstruct (rather than create) and implies physical building when many of the actions required are less tangible i.e. governmental, human resource or process focussed.

Shortcomings of the Civilian Approach to Planning and Design

In contrast to the military most civilian OGA are not designed to deploy; let alone deploy quickly. There are a number of shortcomings to their approach which impede interagency operations. The key shortcomings will now be discussed.

Lack of a Common Planning Approach. Western militaries have planning processes that, while not identical, are similar (e.g. the Australian Joint Military Appreciation Process, US Military Decision Making Process and the NATO Operational Planning

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[38] Stewart Patrick, 2009. Impact of the Department of Defense Initiatives on Humanitarian Assistance, *Pre-hospital and Disaster Medicine*, Vol. 24, No. 2, July-August 2009, pp. 241.

[39] Carter Malkasian and Gerald Meyerle 2009. *op.cit.* , p.2.

[40] Matt Waldman 2008. *op.cit.*, p. 5.

Process). There is nothing like this commonality for civilian agencies where there is usually no unifying experience or process base to facilitate planning (compounded by a limited redundancy in staff to facilitate contingency planning). Individual departments and organisations will have different approaches dependent on the backgrounds of their staff. The planning in OGA tends to be responsive rather than proactive and relies on assessment of a situation before planning commences. However, the nature of responsive planning makes it difficult to move beyond crisis mode and can be problematic when attempting to synchronise the actions of multiple agencies. Civilian partners tend deal in high level outline plans that often lack the detail or direction required for specific military operational style planning.[41] During the early stages of RAMSI considerable differences in operational planning processes between the military and police were noticed. The police tended to plan operations at short notice or 'on the run' with internal guidelines as a basis. Military planning tended to be more deliberate following the doctrinal appreciation process.[42]

Deployment Preparation. OGA personnel are not usually ready and prepared to deploy quickly and when they are, it is as individuals rather than formed bodies. In addition, they are not routinely equipped to support and protect themselves when deployed into a dangerous environment. For this they rely on contracting enablers or on other agencies; especially the military. Personnel rotation is ad-hoc with different agencies deploying individuals for different periods. Mission preparation is therefore hap-hazard and not conducted in teams or alongside the other agencies.

Human Resources. OGA are generally structured and resourced for baseline domestic requirements. There is little surge capacity of latent talent available to deploy quickly or to sustain an expeditionary activity. This is not a new issue. A number of studies have noted the inconsistent quality of UN civilian personnel deployed in the past.[43] In practice this has seen the US forced to deploy those available rather than those best

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[41] J.C.R Lacrois 2009. *Application of the Whole of Government Approach, Theatre Lessons Report 03/09*, Headquarters Canadian Joint Task Force Command: Kandahar, p. 6.

[42] James Watson, *A Model Pacific Solution? A Study of the Deployment of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands,* Working Paper No. 126, Land Warfare Studies Centre: Canberra, p.20.

[43] Michael Fullilove 2006. *op. cit.*, p.13.

suited when it tried to bolster the civilian component of its stabilisation operation in Iraq. This came at a cost as inexperienced and poorly qualified civilian staff were often not up to the demanding tasks of state building. Australia faced a similar challenge for RAMSI. One author noted that, as more civilian personnel were required, they tended to be younger and less experienced. They often lacked the aptitude and training to successfully conduct the sensitive task of mentoring their Solomon Island counterparts. Capacity building was further hampered by their limited appreciation of local culture and relatively short deployment periods.[44]

Means. Public Managers develop and execute plans as part of a policy cycle. There are a number of models that are essentially similar. The Hewlett and Ramesh model is typical and consists of: agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, policy implementation and policy evaluation.[45] This cycle is similar to many decision making frameworks, including ones used by the military such as John Boyd's OODA (Observe, Orientate, Decide, and Act) loop.[46] The difference with the military is that these various approaches to public policy development articulated in the theory are frameworks rather than methods. They tend to be applied inconsistently and policy therefore remains an art rather than science.[47]

The civilian equivalent of operational art is policy implementation. In practice the civilian agencies tend to focus on tactical activity or projects often with the work carried out by contractors. They achieve progress through 'indirect' application of resources (vs. the military direct application). A criticism is that civilians, who are all trying to do their best, lack the doctrine and guidance to meaningfully contribute to strategic outcomes. They may be conducting extensive tactical activity but it may not

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[44] Anna Powles 2006. 'Mission Creep: Statebuilding from Honiara to Dili', *Security Challenges*, Vol. 2, No. 2, July, p.12.

[45] Sarah Maddison and Richard Denniss 2009. *An Introduction to Australian Public Policy: Theory and Practice*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p.85.

[46] Grant Hammond 2001. *The Mind of War: John Boyd and American Security*, Smithsonian Books: Washington, p. 123.

[47] Owen Hughes 2003. Public *Management and Administration (3rd edn.),* Palgrave Macmillan: New York, p. 122.

add up to progress towards the strategic end-state.[48] Interestingly the theory for policy implementation features many of the same issues and approaches as military operational art and design. It describes the benefits of a top down approach (design) and a bottom up approach (adaptation) and the ultimate goals of attempting to harness the benefits of both.[49]

Evaluation of policy implementation should play a central role in a policy cycle process. Measurement and feedback provide the opportunity for improvement and adjustment. However, in a political charged situation, as any stabilisation operation is likely to be, honest evaluation can also provide information to domestic political opponents.[50] In addition, many stabilisation activities are notoriously difficult to measure and are often ignored at the expense of easily quantifiable results (for example projects completed or arrests made).[51] Consequently effective policy development is frequently retarded by poor, suppressed, compromised or incomplete evaluation systems.

Lack of Doctrine. While processes for military operations have been well documented the OGA understanding of how to produce political change and how to create economic growth is vague (let alone the additional cultural factors). The timelines are often wildly inaccurate and not based on historical analysis (or experiment). For example, while there has been extensive research into a desired 'boots on the ground' ratio of security forces to civilian population to defeat an insurgency[52] there is not an equivalent guide for numbers of civilians required to develop governance. Consider that Australia currently has about 1500 troops

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[48] Justin Kelly and Michael Brennan 2010. *op.cit*., p. 116.

[49] Sarah Maddison and Richard Denniss 2009. *op.cit*., p.175.

[50] Sarah Maddison and Richard Denniss 2009, *op. cit.,* p.179.

[51] Sinclair Dinnen and Abby McLeod 2008. The Quest for Integration: Australian Approaches to Security and Development in the Pacific Islands. *Security Challenges*, Vol. 4, No. 2, Winter, p.34.

[52] Peter Krause 2007. Troop Levels in Stability Operations, *Audit of the Conventional Wisdom*, MIT Centre for International Studies, February 07-02.

deployed in Afghanistan and only 50 civilians; [53] what might the impact be of deploying 1500 civilians devoted to governance building efforts? By way of comparison, RAMSI, which deployed into a permissive environment, peaked at 1800 military personnel, 300 police and 150 civilian advisors. While the military drew down to about 70 personnel the police and civilian advisor numbers have remained relatively constant.[54]

A risk that doctrine can help mitigate is one highlighted by Hughes.[55] He points out that the public management process employed by modern western governments are often quite different to those in developing countries set up on a public administration foundation (often modelled on colonial governance regimes). He also notes that the application of elements of new public management on a public administration system may not be appropriate and do more harm than good if not done as part of an overall reform program. This is a particular issue, as many young public servants from western countries will not have any direct experience with operations in an old-style public administration model.

Management. Civilian agencies often deploy in the absence of the coherent management framework that exists in their domestic settings. Civilian staffs typically operate in a Westminster orientated politico-corporate environment where ultimate legal responsibility is held by Ministers. They are the ones accountable to Parliament for the administration and outputs of their departments.[56] Even when deployed, these OGA departmental stovepipes and multiple reporting chains can remain. Among the civil actors there is often a strong desire to coordinate with others but a resistance to

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[53] Australian Government 2010. '*Increased Civilian Effort in Afghanistan'*, AusAID website, http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/topic.cfm?ID=215_9134_95_9547_8567 (accessed 25 August 2010).

[54] Michael Fullilove 2006. *op.cit*., p.8.

[55] Owen Hughes 2003. *Public Management and Administration (3rd edn.)*, Palgrave Macmillan: New York, p. 235.

[56] J.C.R Lacrois 2009. *op.cit*., p. 4.

being coordinated.[57] This issue is often magnified by military involvement and its command and control orientation.

Culture. OGA feature a variety of cultures that have substantially different anchors to military staff. This can lead to a suspicion of the military and be a barrier to communication. Departments and organisational cultures often remain in the deployed environment as civilian staff are organised according to each department's preferences and priorities. Members regularly retain strong links to domestic departments as well as approval and reporting requirements. There are also often internal fundamental differences in operational and business practices. An individual's training and experience is usually fundamentally different from another's meaning that any deployed civilian element will have a unique culture not necessarily conducive to interagency operations.

The ultimate result of these shortcomings is that, in practice, the military process and standard operating procedures (SOPs) dominate and often overwhelm the civilian partners due to differences in numbers, absence of a common language, process, procedures and actions.[58] Yet, in a comprehensive response, the military piece should only be a contribution to a larger plan.

A New Approach is Required to Operationalise the Comprehensive Approach

Justin Kelly and Michael Brennan have challenged the simple extension of the military operational art to encompass interagency operations. They think that a term like 'strategic art' would better represent the broader bureaucratic effort required resolve complex problems inherent in a crisis response.[59] However, perhaps what is missing is an operational level (or perspective) for interagency operations in a deployed environment. This concept, readily understood by military leaders may help provide a conceptual framework for the development of interagency specific process,

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[57] Matt Waldman 2008. *op.cit.*, p. 18.

[58] J.C.R Lacrois 2009. *op.cit.*, p. 10.

[59] Justin Kelly and Michael Brennan 2010. *op.cit.*, p. 116.

doctrine and organisation. This would help bridge tactical activity (purposeful action) and strategy in the field. It would also assist the upwards guidance required for the formulation and adjustment of good strategic policy. This upwards advice could also help ensure that the required political will exists to deal with the inevitable unintended consequences of peace operations; such as the substantial implications on imposing rule of law in another society.[60] Kelly and Brennan note that 'political leaders are no longer routinely students of war'.[61] This indicates a declining competency in strategic matters amongst the politicians in western nations. This deficiency can affect the quality of the strategic direction given to military leaders. This shortcoming could also be extended to observe that political leaders are not students of international development either. The difference for the military is that they have senior leaders with a lifetime of experience and professional development aimed at preparing them to provide strategic advice. This is not as true for the civilian aspects of a WOG approach.

In fact, the lack of an operational perspective for deployed interagency ventures may be contributing to the so-called 'compression' of the operational level of war (for the military) in which the strategic level is criticised for intrusion into the operational and tactical.[62] The logic of this argument is that the civilian strategic level lacks an intermediate level and therefore can only intervene at the tactical level thereby dislocating the military component's operational perspective.

<u>A Framework for a Deployed Interagency Organisation</u>. The interagency organisations that are deployed (apart from the military elements) tend to be ad-hoc organisations made up of disparate departments and agencies. As Khosa notes, in challenging circumstances like these, it requires the development of 'shared attitudes, values, practices and goals that transcend and integrate individual entities into a

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[60] Thijs W. Brocades Zaalberg 2006. *Soldiers and Civil Power*, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, p. 424.

[61] Justin Kelly and Michael Brennan 2010. *op.cit*., p. 114.

[62] Justin Kelly and Michael Brennan 2010. *op.cit.*, p. 116.

consolidated whole'.[63] The nature of government arrangements mean that stove piping and internal competition apparent domestically in government agencies tends to be replicated in a deployed environment. It follows that the ad-hoc nature of these operations contributes to their complexity.[64] Indeed, the processes conventionally employed by the bureaucracy in a domestic setting are often inappropriate or dysfunctional in a deployed setting. What is needed is a framework organisation and supporting doctrine for an organisation designed to operate effectively in a deployed environment (The Australian Government has a 'Civil Assistance Mission' concept that reflects many of these features). This would include the key enablers required including intelligence (focused on the 'white picture'), communications, security, logistics support and equipment.[65] A key element would also be a 'peace building'/ 'conflict resolution'/ reconciliation unit to help deal with the underlying issues that have derailed many other state building efforts.[66]

A modular structure would allow graduated responses and provide appropriate plug in points for non-aligned civil actors such as NGOs. A standard structure would facilitate planning, help build trust amongst key players, clarify roles and responsibilities, identify and resolve inconsistencies and synchronise overall interagency activities.[67] There is also opportunity to exploit technology enablers like 'blinded databases' as a way for disparate agencies to coordinate input without being compelled and to minimise waste and duplication. The development of a common conceptual framework would need to be underpinned by doctrine and a common lexicon.[68] An established example is the UN 'Integrated Mission' framework which seeks to provide a consistent, scalable structure to overcome the difficulties of

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[63] Raspal Khosa 2010. *"Australia's Commitment in Afghanistan: Moving to a More Comprehensive Approac*h", Paper 67, Australian Strategic Policy Institute: Canberra, p. 4.

[64] Richard Weitz 2006. 'Interagency Problems and Proposals' in Carafano, J.J. *Mismanaging Mayhem: How Washington Responds to Crisis*, Praeger Security International: Westport, p. 3.

[65] J.C.R Lacrois 2009. *op.cit*., p. 4.

[66] Anna Powles 2006. *op.cit*., p.13.

[67] Hans Binnendijk and Stuart E. Johnson. 2004. *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, National Defense University: Washington, p. 10.

[68] Richard Weitz 2006. *op.cit.,* p. 5.

melding disparate civilian and military elements and individuals into a functioning whole.[69]

Doctrine. There is a distinct lack of doctrine for a comprehensive approach. Doctrine is a guide representing a body of knowledge for the planning and conduct of military operations.[70] Much of the doctrine that is utilised is military in nature and has been expanded to include interagency operations but has significant shortfalls. An example of the need for new doctrine was faced on RAMSI by the AFP. When they operate domestically they operate as an instrument of the Australian Commonwealth Law but when they deployed they operated as an instrument of government foreign policy.[71] Confusion of this difference sometimes led to friction with OGA as the AFP fell back on internal domestic guidelines for direction (appropriate in Australia but not the deployed environment) rather than an approach consistent with the broader mission.[72]

Interagency Leadership Model. The nature of organisational politics predicts that there will be competition for power and scarce resources amongst individuals and groups in an administration. An example of this in Iraq was the competition for 'bureaucratic primacy' amongst agencies and officials observed during coalition operations in Iraq. This saw individual OGA apparently compelled to deploy ever-more senior leaders in order to enhance their own organisation's agenda; a kind of bureaucratic trump-card.[73] The military are generally unequivocal when it comes to leadership; a commander is required. However civil agencies tend to be less hierarchical and more comfortable with 'matrix' management structures. A compromise has been trialled by the Canadians in Afghanistan. Here they have introduced the role of Representative of Canada (RoCK) as the civilian counter-part to the military commander, a structure replicated at the PRT level with a civilian

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[69] Peace Operations Training Institute, 2008. *Civil-Military Coordination (CIMIC) Course*, Peace Operations Training Institute: Williamsburg, p. 34.

[70] Thomas Mowle 2007. *op.cit*., p. 2.

[71] John McFarlane, The Thin Blue Line: The Strategic Role of the Australian Federal Police, *Security Challenges*, Vol. 3, No. 3, August 2007, pp. 105.

[72] James Watson, *op.cit.*, p.20.

[73] Thomas Mowle 2007. *op.cit*., p. 5.

Director.[74] Other example cited as a success was for RAMSI.   Here a Civilian Special Coordinator oversaw all aspects of the operation and reportedly avoided much of the "overlapping, duplication, confusion and turf wars" apparent in other state building missions.[75] However, a leader is not enough and there must be appropriate supporting mechanisms created for formal and non-formal integration at the operational and tactical level to ensure a coordinated whole of government response to crises.[76] Concepts such as the 'dominant narrative' could be used as a means to communicate the operational objectives of the campaign for all participants.[77] These could include leadership councils like the ones employed in Afghanistan in conjunction with the host-nation government. There is also the opportunity to facilitate these with technology such as voting/collaboration systems to facilitate group decision making and planning.

Training for Leaders and Planners. Civilian agencies generally lack comprehensive, continuing professional education programs comparable to the military. However given the development of a new process and doctrine there is the opportunity to develop a common training continuum for interagency planners. This would build on rather than replace existing experience and training. It would prioritise interpersonal skills and require the ability to influence (rather than command) that many military officers are unused to applying in a traditional military context.[78] It could also be expected to delve into pro-active planning and design techniques at a level not consistently experienced in government agencies.

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[74] J.C.R Lacrois 2009. *op.cit*., p. 3.

[75] Elsina Wainright 2005. *op.cit*., p.8.

[76] Australian Army 2009. *Adaptive Campaigning – Army's Future Land Operation Concept*, Army Headquarters: Canberra, p. 72.

[77] Australian Army 2009, *op. cit*., p. 41.

[78] Christopher Schnaubelt, 2009. Complex Operations and Interagency Operational Art, *Prism*, 1(1), p. 48.

A Common Process. Given the limitations of current military and non-military planning processes for interagency operations one potential solution is to create a new process. This will help encourage participation from an equal basis into a process designed specifically for the problems it is trying to solve. The US Government is working on a "collaborative design program" that requires staffs to work in a truly concerted fashion during planning.[79] This potentially allows the problems of interagency coordination, at least potentially, to be managed as part of the campaign as a whole instead of a problem delegated to deployed leaders in the field. Such a process would need to acknowledge that many non-war fighting activities do not require performance in a sequence. Many important non-security outcomes such as political accommodation, conflict resolution and enhanced governance are more likely to be intangible and fleeting.[80] This process would therefore need to move beyond traditional methods and be designed to deal with 'wicked' problems.[81]

Appropriate Resources. Recent operations have proven that restoration of a secure, self sustaining society after a crisis is both manpower and resource intensive. It demands coherent mechanisms for strategic management that can cross functional boundaries, prioritise the application of limited resources and enforce unity of effort at every level.[82] The civilian component needs to be able to deploy sufficient human and financial resources to stabilise a civil environment and support governance rebuilding. It is important to note the large bureaucracies and budgets required to maintain domestic government systems when considering the resources required to rebuild a governance system after crisis. There is also the necessity to build an "expeditionary mindset", like the military, within OGA .[83] The Australian

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[79] Christopher Schnaubelt, 2009, *op. cit*., p. 48.

[80] Christopher Schnaubelt, 2009, *op.cit*. p. 40.

[81] Martin Dempsey 2010. 'A Campaign of Learning- Avoiding the Failure of Imagination', *RUSI Journal*, June/July 2010, Vol. 155, No. 3, p. 9.

[82] Thomas Mowle 2007. *op.cit*., p. 6.

[83] Raspal Khosa 2010. *"Australia's Commitment in Afghanistan: Moving to a More Comprehensive Approach"*, Paper 67, Australian Strategic Policy Institute: Canberra, p. 5.

Government's announcement of the formation of the 'Australian Civilian Corps' is an example of an attempt to develop a deployable pool of civilians.[84]

Standing Lead Agency. Binnedijk & Johnson noted that the evolving nature of conflict is such that no one government department or agency has sufficient resources, expertise or authority to cope unilaterally with all of the requirements of a crisis response.[85] On the other hand an approach of absolute inclusiveness or complete consensus (in an environment of inter-departmental, power-based competition) may not be appropriate when planning a response to a crisis or emergency, especially when time is short. The domestic bureaucratic cultures tend to interfere with interagency coordination because, amongst other factors, government culture rewards bureaucratic self interest i.e. allocation of extra resources and prestige. This leads to a situation where deployed elements are dominated by individual agency cultures rather than a common interagency culture.[86]

Wietz suggests that the best way to overcome disparate agency cultures is to create an organisation that resembles an "interagency combatant command" that would have a permanent interagency operations centre.[87] In the Australian context a similar suggestion has been a permanent multi-agency response group residing inside Joint Operations Command.[88] This would be a body that could be responsible for interagency doctrine, training and contingency planning. It would form the nucleus of the organisation that would deploy and its initial leadership. It would be the lead planners and incorporate and guide the contribution of the various elements of national power. This organisation would also be responsible for providing advice to

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[84] Australian Government 2010. 'Australian Civilian Corps', AusAID website, http://www.ausaid.gov.au/acc/ (accessed 25 August 2010).

[85] Hans Binnendijk and Stuart E. Johnson. 2004. *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, National Defense University: Washington, p. 95.

[86] Richard Weitz 2006. 'Interagency Problems and Proposals' in Carafano, J.J. *Mismanaging Mayhem: How Washington Responds to Crisis*, Praeger Security International: Westport, p. 11.

[87] Richard Weitz 2006, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

[88] Anthony Bergin and Bob Breen, 2009. *Rudd's Army: A Deployable Civilian Capacity for Australia, Policy Analysis No. 43*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, Canberra, p. 4.

government to assist the development of strategic objectives. It would also facilitate the rehearsal of the comprehensive intervention under simulated operational conditions.[89] This establishment would provide for the development of an inter-agency culture through the application of professional standards, enhanced institutional memory, shared experiences and values.[90]

In summary what is needed to operationalise the comprehensive approach is:

- The development of an operational level concept for deployed interagency operations
- Doctrine developed from scientific analysis of historical interventions
- Training for leaders and planners
- A common planning process
- A framework organisation and enablers
- A leadership model
- Mechanism for ensuring that appropriate numbers of trained and prepared people are ready to deploy quickly
- Resources to support the civil component
- An independent, dedicated lead agency

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[89] Bob Breen 2008. *Struggling for Self Reliance – Four Case Studies of Australian Regional Force Projection in the late 1980s and the 1990s*, ANU Press: Canberra, p. 171.

[90] Laurence E. Lynn, Jr. 2006. *Public Management: Old and New*. Routledge: New York, p.29.

CONCLUSION

Although a comprehensive or whole of government approach has been widely accepted as a requirement for peace operations it is nevertheless extremely rare to find the requisite levels of political, military, economic and civil resources being successfully integrated into the required effort. So while there is a consensus that a comprehensive approach is required for complex operations it has proven difficult to implement. The reasons for this are varied and multi-faceted. While the military is an organisation that often is the best positioned to respond to crises due to its expeditionary focus, latent resources and self supportability it is often a poor choice for longer term outcomes. This is due to its war-fighting focus, limited ability to support governance capacity building and reluctance of many civilian actors to cooperate with the military. On the other hand the civilian component of the whole of government response is often under resourced, hampered by lack of internal coordination, possess insufficient human resources and lack processes that they require to vertically and horizontally integrate plans to lead an effective interagency effort in conditions that are often dangerous, complex and ambiguous.

Given the challenges it is no surprise that some propose to expand the military's role in interagency operations as an expedient measure and consider that the operational art concept can be extended to include interagency operations. However this is flawed logic given the operational art's foundations in land combat and the primary war-fighting role of the military. Some of these weaknesses can be seen in the civil-military hybrid PRTs which have been employed in Iraq and Afghanistan and attracted considerable criticism. On the other hand, the civil component in many interventions is ill equipped for a leadership role in planning, deployment or operations given a lack of doctrine, staff and conceptual frameworks. The ultimate result is many people trying to do their best, with what they have in difficult circumstances. Unfortunately, even extensive activity at the tactical level often does not necessarily add up to strategic outcomes.

What is needed to operationalise the comprehensive approach is the development of an operational level concept for deployed interagency operations; doctrine, training for leaders and planners, a common planning process, a framework organisation and

enablers, an interagency leadership model, a mechanism for ensuring that appropriate numbers of trained and prepared people are ready to deploy quickly; sufficient resources and an independent, dedicated lead agency.   This concept would make the best use of military and civilian capabilities and should enable a coherent and rapidly employable whole of government approach.

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