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One of the most eloquent reflections on the nature of the profession of arms was provided by General Douglas MacArthur in his farewell address to the Corps of Cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point on 12 May 1962. MacArthur eloquently captured the essence of the relation between the professional soldier and the state in a speech that has justifiably won a place in most anthologies of great speeches, as well as in the canon of Western military thought. In his twilight years MacArthur reflected on the rapid technological and social changes, which were starting to shake the foundations of the United States in the 1960s. Yet he affirmed the immutable nature of certain virtues of soldierly conduct, especially sacrifice. And significantly he emphasised the proper subordination of the military professional to the civil authority (parliament). His words echo down the years and are worthy of quoting at length:

You now face a new world—a world of change. The thrust into outer space of the satellite, spheres, and missiles mark the beginning of another epoch in the long story of mankind. In the five or more billions of years the scientists tell us it has taken to form the earth, in the three or more billion years of development of the human race, there has never been a more abrupt or staggering evolution. We deal now not with things of this world alone, but with the illimitable distances and as yet unfathomed mysteries of the universe. We are reaching out for a new and boundless frontier…And through all this welter of change and development, your mission remains fixed, determined, inviolable: it is to win our wars.

Everything else in your professional career is but corollary to this vital dedication. All other public purposes, all other public projects, all other public needs, great or small, will find others for their accomplishment. But you are the ones who are trained to fight. Yours is the profession of arms, the will to win, the sure knowledge that in war there is no substitute for victory…

Others will debate the controversial issues, national and international, which divide men’s minds; but serene, calm, aloof, you stand as the Nation’s war-guardian, as its lifeguard from the raging tides of international conflict, as its gladiator in the arena of
battle. For a century and a half you have defended, guarded, and protected its hallowed traditions of liberty and freedom, of right and justice.

Let civilian voices argue the merits or demerits of our processes of government; whether our strength is being sapped by deficit financing, indulged in too long, by federal paternalism grown too mighty, by power groups grown too arrogant, by politics grown too corrupt, by crime grown too rampant, by morals grown too low, by taxes grown too high, by extremists grown too violent; whether our personal liberties are as thorough and complete as they should be. These great national problems are not for your professional participation or military solution.

MacArthur of course spoke from conviction born of experience. He had been relieved of command in the Korean War by President Truman on account of his unwillingness to implement the legitimate policies of his civil superiors. At stake was not the effective prosecution of the war as the proper subordination of armed forces to the civil authority. This principle has been the foundation of the legitimacy of the armies of parliamentary democracies since the great English Constitutional settlement of 1688.

The individual soldier enters a contract of unlimited liability with the nation. He or she may in the course of their duty be expected to lay down their life. This implies a willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice and sets the profession of arms apart from all others.

This, however, is not the limit of the soldier’s sacrifice. He or she foregoes some of the normal liberties enjoyed by other citizens. Prominent among these is the right to engage in public criticism of the elected government of the nation or to become involved in public political agitation while on duty. There are deep historical reasons for this and they benefit rather than hinder the armed forces.

The soldier serves the nation and all its citizens. The enormous esteem that the Australian Army enjoys from the Australian people is based on their confidence that we serve the national interest and not any sectional interest. They feel secure in the knowledge that the Army is not used for political purposes within Australia. The Australian Army is a true symbol of national unity. This has been amply demonstrated by the public honours paid to our mates who have been killed on active service in recent years.

Since 1688 the maintenance of standing armies in nation of the Westminster tradition has been tolerated only on the condition of this strict political neutrality. This is one of the greatest strengths of our system of government and of military culture. It ensures that men and women of all classes, races, and religions (or none at all) are willing to serve in the Australian Army. This makes us truly representative of the nation. It is vital to our effectiveness. In recent months this fundamental principle has been questioned in some quarters. Quite properly the leadership of the Australian Defence Force and the Army have firmly insisted that it be upheld without qualification.
In particular, an intense debate over the war in Afghanistan has raged outside the Army. This is a sign of the health of our democracy. No doubt some within Army feel that the views expressed by some participants in this debate are ignorant or misinformed. Every soldier regardless of rank has a right to that opinion. But none of us has the right to engage in this debate at the public level.

The same must be said of the controversy over the charges laid against members of 1 Commando Regiment in relation to operations in Afghanistan. The Chief of the Army recently felt obliged to insist that all ranks maintain public silence in relation to this matter. He did this both in the interests of fairness and justice for the soldiers concerned, but also to preserve the integrity of the system oversight of the armed forces in a nation such as ours. As the custodian of Army’s enduring values and interests he could do no less.

As MacArthur observed, we are the ones who are trained to fight. Our monopoly on the organised use of lethal force on behalf of the nation carries with it an enormous responsibility. It is subject to civil oversight and regulated by strict laws and conventions. Again this is absolutely proper and in both the interests of the nation and the Army.

The debate over the war in Afghanistan has demonstrated the high regard in which the Australian Defence Force is held by our political leadership and the public at large. It has also reminded the Army that a long and arduous contest lies ahead. This year has been very demanding and we have suffered more casualties than in any year since the conflict began. The performance of our soldiers, sailors and air force personnel inspires confidence that this sacrifice is achieving real improvements for the people of Afghanistan and contributing directly to the security of Australia.

As 2010 draws to a close we should pause to reflect on the sacrifices of mates who have been killed and wounded in Afghanistan. In particular, the Army family extends its sympathy to the families and loved ones of those who have paid the supreme sacrifice. Their sense of loss will be even more acute at Christmas—a time for traditional family gatherings.

As the long vacation approaches and we prepare to celebrate Christmas it is timely to remember our mates on operations overseas and their families at home. On behalf of the Australian Army, the Australian Army Journal extends its sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of Private Nathan Bewes, Trooper Jason Brown, Private Tomas Dale, Private Grant Kirby and Lance Corporal Jared MacKinney who died during active service in Afghanistan. Their sacrifices are contributing to the peaceful enjoyment of our way of life that characterises this time of year. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our readers.

The Editor and Board of the Australian Army Journal
In the second half of 2009, two Australian officers served at the Headquarters of the United States Marine Corps 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (2d MEB) in Southern Helmand Province, Afghanistan. During this period the 2d MEB conducted significant offensive and counterinsurgency operations. This article focuses on one of these operations—EASTERN RESOLVE II—to act as a snapshot of 2d MEB activities and to draw lessons from the USMC experience for Australian Army audiences.

In August 2009 the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (2d MEB), United States Marine Corps (USMC) conducted an operation to seize key terrain in the Now Zad District of Helmand Province, Afghanistan. The operation brought together a unique task-organised force structure from within 2d MEB and attached elements from other government agencies to achieve brigade objectives within one of the battle group areas of operation. The operation, named EASTERN RESOLVE II, was notable for its diverse objectives, aggressive insertion methods and the swift achievement of its mission.
Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II seized key terrain, disrupted a well established opium production and distribution node and facilitated the establishment of local officials immediately prior to the 2009 Presidential Elections. It demonstrated that, with sound intelligence preparation, appropriate air cover and indirect fire support, conventional forces can utilise insertion methods normally associated with Special Forces. The battalion (-) airmobile assault proved the effectiveness of surprise and the potency of offensive action.

BACKGROUND

Helmand is one of the most volatile provinces in Afghanistan, and it remains one of the most hotly contested areas of operation between the resurgent Taliban and Coalition forces. Prior to July 2009 there had been no permanent presence in much of the district south of the provincial capital Lashkar Gar. In early July 2009 the USMC reinforced its presence in the north with the deployment of the 2d MEB, also known as the Marine Expeditionary Brigade – Afghanistan (MEB-A), with its headquarters established at Camp Leatherneck.¹

The USMC doctrinally only deploys packaged combined arms teams, known as Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF). The MEB-A consisted of a potent combination of an Infantry regiment (Australian brigade equivalent), a Combat Logistics Regiment and a Marine Air Group consisting of utility, lift and attack helicopters, fixed-wing lift and attack aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles.² From 2 July 2009 the MEB-A deployed approximately 4000 Marines and 650 Afghan troops into the area of operations as a part of Operation KHANJAR or Operation STRIKE OF THE SWORD. The operation was the largest Marine offensive since the Battle of Fallujah in 2004 and was the biggest offensive airlift by the Marines since the Vietnam War.³

The Marines pushed into three significant areas along a 75-mile stretch of the Helmand River valley south of Lashkar Gah. Two Marine infantry battalions and one Marine Light Armored Reconnaissance battalion spearheaded the operation. In the north, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines (2/8) pushed into Garmsir district. In central Helmand, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines (1/5) pushed into Nawa-I-Barakzayi to the south of Lashkar Gah and 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion deployed to the Khan Neshin district.

The operation was the largest Marine offensive since the Battle of Fallujah in 2004 …
Taliban began a series of exchanges that saw the civilian population displaced to other cities and towns throughout Helmand. From 2006 the Coalition had deployed company-sized forces from the United Kingdom, Estonia and the United States which rotated through the forward operating base in the centre of Now Zad. At the same time, Taliban forces began systematically seeding the town with improvised explosive devices (IED) and reinforcing small villages and irrigation systems in the ‘Green Zone’—the vegetated area next to the seasonal waterway known as the Eastern Wadi. Over several years a standoff had developed, with neither group able to generate the combat power to clear the area, displace established bases or ensure freedom of movement.

OPERATION EASTERN RESOLVE II

Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II sought to break this stalemate by seizing key terrain, clearing a key drug bazaar and disrupting enemy command and control. MEB-A planning staff, in conjunction with the Marines of Golf Company 2nd Battalion 3d Marine Regiment (G Co.2/3), identified the key terrain in this area as the Dehanna Pass: a critical junction of two knife-edged ridges that dominated the eastern side of the Now Zad area. The seasonal river bed of the Eastern Wadi ran through the Dehanna Pass and its dry banks provided a key movement route for Taliban supplies and reinforcements into the Green Zone.

The Taliban controlled this choke point by establishing check points to tax locals and had dug defensive positions to secure the Pass. A number of Soviet 12.7 DSchK heavy machine guns were known to dominate the Pass and its approaches, and the perennial threat of IEDs threatened any ground movement.

The second piece of key terrain was identified as the Salaam Bazaar, an area several kilometres south of Dehanna, known for its trade in opium, home made explosives and a suspected Taliban command and control node. This bazaar was one of many in the Helmand Province; however, this particular location influenced the Now Zad area because the sale of illicit drugs provided essential finance to local Taliban leaders, and the distribution of home made explosives directly threatened Coalition and civilian movement on all of the road and track systems in the area.

Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II simultaneously targeted these two objectives, and sought to undermine the enemy’s centre of gravity by:

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… this particular location influenced the Now Zad area because the sale of illicit drugs provided essential finance to local Taliban leaders …
• Denying the ability to concentrate reinforcements;
• Dislocating enemy ground defensive structure based on dug in positions and routes seeded with mines and IEDs;
• Disrupt enemy command and control;
• Disrupt Taliban drug funding sources;
• Clear the Salaam Bazaar;
• Seize Dahanna Pass; and
• Control Dehanna Village.

The critical aspect of the operation was simultaneity. On H Hr, Marine HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System) and Marine aviation assets targeted identified command and control nodes, while two reinforced company-sized groups conducted airmobile assaults to secure and clear their objectives. This approach targeted the enemy’s situational awareness and undermined their ability to concentrate reinforcements. The method of insertion dislocated the enemy’s defensive structure and achieved a high degree of tactical surprise.

The insertion of G Co(-) 2/3 was particularly notable. During the staff planning process the only secure landing zones identified were roughly two to three kilometres from the township of Dehanna. These sites would need continuous unmanned aerial vehicle surveillance and air cover from AH-1 Cobras. Each site provided a secure landing zone, but an insertion at either or both of these locations required an approach march that would have been easily identified and enabled an enemy withdrawal. This course of action is likely to have exposed the advancing Marines to enemy indirect fire, IEDs and direct attack. As a result, it was assessed that different courses of action needed to be considered. After much discussion, it was decided that G Co.2/3 should insert on the objective, thus maximising surprise, eliminating the enemy’s ability to withdraw or organise local defence, and swiftly securing the key terrain in the township.

Landing troop-laden helicopters immediately inside a known enemy village obviously entailed significant risk, but the planning staff mitigated this risk by the insertion of a reconnaissance platoon to provide overwatch, by the provision of on call fires from Marine HIMARS, 81mm and 120mm mortars, and by Marine fixed- and rotary-wing assets. Furthermore, the insertion was to occur before first light, making the best use of coalition technology while targeting the enemy’s lack of night fighting capability.
G Co. 2/3’s insertion was remarkably successful. The first wave landed no more than 50 metres from the local Taliban commander’s compound and had secured this initial objective within minutes. The landing received limited and uncoordinated small arms fire; however, the aggressiveness of the Marine response and the speed at which the Marines were able to close with the enemy and secure the key terrain denied the enemy the ability to organise resistance.

This action enabled subsequent heli-borne troops to land in safety and provided a secure base for the ground convoy to deploy into the Dehanna Pass and village. The ground insertion comprised additional forces attached to G Co. 2/3 as well as a company (-) of Afghan National Army (ANA). The ground convoy inserted with engineer bulldozer assets, which carved a new track to the Dehanna Pass to counter the threat of IEDs. Once in location, G Co. 2/3 (reinforced) secured the ground dominating the Pass, established defensive works and a vehicle control point, constructed a barrier across the stretch of the Eastern Wadi and occupied the Dehanna Village. The attached ANA Co.(-) was an essential aspect of this phase of the operation and, with their assistance liaising with locals and informing them of their new security, the immediate phase of the operation concluded.
Throughout the insertion and during the following three days, significant contact occurred between the Marines and local insurgents. Although not well coordinated, Taliban forces continued to engage Coalition forces in the Dehanna area and from dominating terrain. Marine air/ground teams engaged heavy machine gun and recoilless rifle positions in mountainside cave systems with precision artillery, helicopter, attack aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicle munitions. On 13 August 2010, a Taliban rocket propelled grenade ambush resulted in the death of a Marine. By the end of the third day, USMC and ANA forces had captured or killed a significant number of insurgents, cleared the area, established checkpoints and secured the town. Fundamental to this success was the surprise achieved by the initial insertion, which had enabled the capture of key leaders and disrupted the enemy’s ability to concentrate resistance.

At the Southern Oasis, a Task Force Raider—comprised of Alpha Company, 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion and personnel from other government agencies including US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) officials—landed by helicopter at the same time as G Co.’s initial launch. This group swiftly secured their objectives and cleared the Salaam Bazaar, seizing hundreds of gallons of sulphuric acid and acetic anhydride and thousands of pounds of drug lab components.\(^6\) They seized and destroyed tens of thousands of pounds of poppy seed and significant amounts of wet opium. Taliban in this area offered limited resistance, engaging Marines with small arms and accurate mortar fire from frequently changing locations. The Taliban also aimed to respond asymmetrically, and the Marine commander narrowly avoided significant friendly and civilian casualties when a vehicle-borne suicide bomber was detected by ground troops and destroyed by AH-1 Cobras close to the bazaar.

Within a period of 34–72 hours Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II had achieved all of its immediate objectives: The Dehanna Pass had been secured, the Dehanna village occupied and controlled by USMC and ANA forces, the Salaam Bazaar had been cleared, and significant amounts of contraband material had been seized or destroyed. The operation also achieved its effect on the enemy leadership, directly targeting key leaders thus undermining their ability to deploy a coordinated response to either area and significantly disrupting their command and control structure. The timings of these effects were particularly notable as Taliban throughout the region had a clearly identified intention to disrupt the August 2009 Presidential and Provincial elections.
AUSTRALIAN LESSONS

Two Australian officers, Major Richard Barrett and Captain Michael Mudie served as embedded staff at the headquarters of 2d MEB, joining 2d MEB as individual reinforcements from exchange postings with the USMC. The experience provided a unique exposure to the conduct of warfighting and counterinsurgency operations in a combined arms and services brigade sized formation. Both officers identified a number of lessons relevant to an Australian Army context. In particular, Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II provided a succinct example of battle group offensive and security operations in a brigade setting.

In the Australian Officer Training Continuum several courses use tactical scenarios based on battle group activities in a brigade setting. Usually, these tactical scenarios are used as a part of the learning process to develop effective staff procedures and assess individual participation in the Military Appreciation Process (MAP). This training structure provided embedded Australian officers with a solid understanding of the MAP and a sound foundation for adaptation to the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP). The Australian version of the MAP and

Figure 2.
the United States MCPP essentially share the same structure, significantly assisting combined and joint planning capabilities. A key point of difference, however, was the absence of decisive event planning in the MCPP. For a number of operations, including EASTERN RESOLVE II, the inclusion of decisive event planning proved critical to the development of a feasible intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance collection plan and as a means to prioritise and allocate competing national, brigade and battle group information requirements.

Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II provided an interesting example of the relationship between a battle group and the brigade. The operation crossed a number of planning and physical boundaries between battle group and brigade activities, tasking battle group sub-units, deploying the Brigade Reserve and using other government agencies to achieve brigade objectives. 2/3 Battalion’s areas of operations included the Now Zad District, and its battalion headquarters maintained a set of operational priorities that did not include an activity to seize the Dehanna Pass or raid the Salaam Bazaar. This situation highlighted the fact that different levels of headquarters identify different priorities within the same battlespace. Consequently, brigade staff needed to carefully manage the tasking of G Co. 2/3, the deployment of Task Force Raider and the management of brigade battlespace issues within a subordinate headquarters’ area of operations.

The final lesson of Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II was the bold use of conventional forces to seize key terrain. Both G Co. 2/3 and Task Force Raider utilised conventional forces to achieve MEB-A objectives, and both used heli-borne insertion techniques most often associated with Special Forces. In an organisational environment that is increasingly preoccupied with the quantification of risk, landing conventional forces on the objective was a bold and dangerous undertaking. A staff process using Australian military risk management structures would have had to classify it in the extreme category, requiring National Command or Commander Joint Operations approval. In the case of Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II, the plan was recommended by the 2/3 Battalion Operations Officer and approved by the Brigade Commander. This level of command authority facilitated the development of an aggressive plan that was quickly executed. The force of the insertion achieved complete surprise, dislocating any insurgent capacity to repel attack, deploy IEDs or organise coherent resistance. The bold plan—aggressively executed insertion—achieved the mission, limited Marines’ exposure and actually reduced risk.

This situation highlighted the fact that different levels of headquarters identify different priorities within the same battlespace.
CONCLUSION

G Co. 2/3 and the ANA Co.(-) established a company outpost in the Dehanna area. Its presence denied the Taliban the ability to use the Eastern Wadi as a key movement and resupply route through the Now Zad District. The operation set the conditions for further Coalition action in the district, and facilitated the return of Afghan locals and district officials to repopulate the Now Zad township. Task Force Raider’s activity disrupted the supply of opium and IED materials and proved to be the first of several operations aimed at eventually closing down the Salaam Bazaar.

Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II was a tactical success due to the willingness of USMC commanders to develop bold plans and to accept risk. The level of surprise and shock action achieved by a heli-borne insertion on the objective, as well as the conduct of simultaneous action on two dispersed locations, dislocated the enemy’s ability to prepare a coordinated response and targeted their command and control capacity. The bold and high risk course of action not only achieved a high degree of tactical success but also proved to be the safest.

ENDNOTES

THE AUTHOR

Lieutenant Colonel Richard Barrett is currently serving as the Chief Instructor of the Royal Military College (RMC) of Australia. He is also an infantry officer with regimental experience in 1 RAR, 2 RAR and 6 RAR and instructional experience at RMC. He served in the G35 (Operations/Plans) cell of HQ 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade (2d MEB) in Helmand province, Afghanistan and was the lead planner for Operation EASTERN RESOLVE II. Lieutenant Colonel Barrett holds a Masters of International Affairs (ANU) and a Masters of Strategy and Planning (UNSW).
As the battle to contain the insurgency in Afghanistan continues, it is important that the current generation of soldiers, and their leaders, thoroughly understand the principle of distinction and the legal concepts that makes one person a legal target and another not. Current international law recognises only two categories of persons with respect to conflict: combatants and civilians. This article analyses relevant international law and clarifies what has become a confused and often misunderstood area of law. This article also demonstrates that current international law is more than capable of supporting both humanitarian and human rights imperatives while also maintaining the legitimate need for security and justice in the face of contemporary insurgency, terrorism and conflict.
Few wars have been so well chronicled as that now desolating America. Its official narratives have been copious; the great newspapers of the land have been represented in all its campaigns; private enterprise has classified and illustrated its several events, and delegates of foreign countries have been allowed to mingle freely with its soldiery and to observe and describe its battles. The pen and the camera have accompanied its bayonets, and there has not probably been any skirmish, however insignificant, but a score of zealous scribes have remarked and recorded it.

In 1866, the chronicling of the American Civil War provided non-combatants a previously unimagined view of conflict. In 2010, the transparency of modern conflict is presumed and the intermingling of combatants and civilians is profuse. Political warriors and their staffs now hotly contest the wars of perception, adding their flair and turn to all matters political and otherwise. The perception of what violent actions are fair, proportionate and discriminate is carefully managed and vehemently argued by savvy legal chiefs in major cities around the world.

Prior to 2001, few people would have sat around the dinner table debating the merits, definitions and rights of unlawful belligerents, illegal combatants and enemy civilians. The events of 11 September 2001 changed the face of conflict and exposed mainstream audiences to what was previously considered obscure international law. Current international humanitarian law (IHL) recognises only two categories of persons with respect to conflict: combatants and civilians. This article will analyse IHL and clarify what has become a confused and often misunderstood area of international law.

The primary contention of this article concerns the status of persons engaged in armed conflict in Afghanistan and whether, in legal terms, these people should be regarded as combatants, non-combatants or as unlawful belligerents. This third category is confusing and unnecessary, a legally grey area that has created sufficient confusion to allow the United States to deny individuals their legal rights as either combatants who are prisoners of war (POW) or as civilians charged or being investigated for committing criminal offences.

**INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW**

As a precursor to any discussion, it is important to clarify the precise nature of IHL. Sometimes referred to as the Laws of Armed Conflict or the Law of War, IHL comprises the rules governing the appropriate conduct of war. IHL does not concern
itself with the legality of initiating war, but is based on the premise that conflict has already begun. While IHL contains elements of human rights law, it is separate to and distinct from this class of law. Once conflict has commenced, IHL provides the guidelines governing what constitutes acceptable conduct and, importantly, what does not.

As long as wars have been fought, laws have existed that attempt to limit the iniquity of armed conflict. The best known and most relevant body of IHL is the Geneva Conventions and the two additional protocols. Fundamental to the Geneva Conventions is the notion

... that the law can and should protect all persons caught up in war—making the difference between life and death, between humanity and inhumanity—whether they are civilians, prisoners of war, the wounded, the hors d'combat, or soldiers on the battlefield.

The relevance of IHL during armed conflict seems obvious, as does the relationship between the Geneva Conventions and IHL. Yet there are a number of irregularities in the interpretation of IHL, and these form the subject of the next section of this article.

THE ISSUES

The events of 11 September 2001 shaped not only the attitude of a generation towards its own security, but also the way that generation viewed its rights and responsibilities to remove ‘evil’ from the world:

For most Americans, hit for the first time with such violence within their own territories, and on such symbols of political power and authority, outrage remains the only serious ground for judgment. In the USA especially, political judgment has been powerfully shaped by an elemental ethic of revenge.

This acceptance of the need for revenge and the accompanying rhetoric has been particularly damaging to interpretations of and adherence to IHL. In his article in the Yale Journal of International Law William Taft has described the passions that are invariably aroused when personal and shared safety is at stake and explain how these have led to the misapplication and infringement of IHL.

However, the deliberate misinterpretation of IHL for political purposes, even for temporary security reasons, cannot be justified within the bounds of international law. The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCTL) is very clear on
pacta sunt servanda—the legal concept that treats all agreements as binding.\(^\text{11}\) The United States, along with over half the states of the world, has ratified the VCLT and remains legally bound to comply with it. Like any other state, the United States has an international legal obligation to adhere to treaties which it has ratified. The United States also ratified the four Geneva Conventions on 2 August 1952 and must comply with their terms.\(^\text{12}\) Such compliance is not a matter of political convenience; the Geneva Conventions apply at all times during armed conflict and are not negotiable.

The separation of legal and political considerations is fraught with difficulty and is clearly not an area mastered by US powerbrokers, although the link between domestic security and political success remains logical and reasonable. Scholars such as Hobbes, Machiavelli, Waltz and Mearsheimer have long argued for the use of drastic measures to achieve or maintain security. However, even they have rarely advocated the employment of methods espoused by certain members of the international community since 2001—including members who claim to be morally irrefutable and beyond reproach.\(^\text{13}\) In addition to the now-notorious extraordinary renditions, authorised methods of torture and covert operations, politicians and legal advisors alike have energetically pursued legal concepts that are fraught with irregularity in their treatment of the enemy. The most significant of these has been the categorisation of persons during armed conflict. This is not to suggest that the IHL definitions themselves are entirely unambiguous. Gabor Rona, for example, notes that:

... ‘unlawful combatant’ is an oxymoron, while the term ‘lawful combatant’ is redundant. A combatant is immune from criminal responsibility for lawful acts of belligerency, but may be prosecuted for war crimes such as targeting civilians or using prohibited means of combat, such as biological weapons or rape. In turn, a combatant may be targeted and detained without charge or trial for the duration of the armed conflict.\(^\text{14}\)

This article will avoid the moral arguments on insurgents in Afghanistan and transnational terrorism. These are emotive issues that have led to the political manipulation of what are essentially legal matters. Likewise, no comment is offered on how persons suspected of fighting against a democratically elected government in Afghanistan or engaging in illegal terrorist actions around the world should be pursued. However, it is important to emphasise that, until such time as a new legal system is introduced, compliance with existing laws is essential.\(^\text{15}\)
The United States and many of its allies interpreted the actions and statements of al-Qaeda’s members and leaders as declarations of war and thus considered themselves to be at war with al-Qaeda and those who provide its members support and sanctuary. Commenting on a different war, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia noted that,

Armed conflict exists whenever there is a resort to armed force between States or protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State.\(^{16}\)

The United States accepts that it is bound by IHL in its actions against enemy forces in Afghanistan, arguing that its response and continued actions are thus lawful and within the purview of international law.\(^{17}\) The initial response of the United States and its allies in the early stages of the War on Terror was generally accepted as reasonable and lawful. As the campaign continued, however, irregularities in the US interpretation of IHL led to a rapid and widespread reversal of opinion.

One of the most contentious issues has been the failure of the United States to recognise persons captured as either POWs or as civilians. The consequent creation of a new category of person with limited rights has stirred a maelstrom of criticism, particularly since this is contrary to the Geneva Conventions which enjoy near-universal ratification.\(^{18}\) Furthermore, IHL is now firmly rooted in customary international law and must be seen as applicable to all states, even those who have yet to accede to the Geneva Conventions. The United States accepts that the Geneva Conventions apply to its actions in Afghanistan and yet its interpretation of laws that are clearly written and easily comprehended has baffled many.\(^{19}\)

**COMBATANT VERSUS NON-COMBATANT**

*He who kills in peacetime may be sentenced to death or life imprisonment; he who kills in wartime is decorated while the band plays.*\(^{20}\)

It is generally accepted that the United States and its allies are in a lawful state of war with al-Qaeda and the Taliban, a conflict that is governed by IHL.\(^{21}\) However, whether members of the Taliban should have been accepted as combatants representing what comprised an Afghan national government and regular military organisation at the time, or whether members of al-Qaeda should have been accepted as
civilians committing criminal acts remains contentious. Under US policy, all parties are treated as neither civilians nor combatants and denied the privileges afforded by either status. This implies the creation of a third category of persons which has excited even more debate than the appropriateness of the original two categories.

THE TWO AND ONLY TWO CATEGORIES OF PERSONS

Never before has it been so difficult for the Soldier to distinguish between the targeted and the protected—the combatant and the civilian. Compliance with this concept of distinction is the fundamental difference between heroic Soldier and murderer.

The duties of soldiers in war are numerous and complex. It is essential for their sake and that of the civilians and combatants they encounter that the status of all persons is logical and readily identifiable. Perabo describes the principle of discrimination as discerning between two distinct groups: those who are combatants and those who are not. Those persons who fall into the latter category are to be granted immunity from the effects of war as far as practicable. The distinction between combatants and non-combatants is as old as it is important, and it is through this distinction that humanitarian considerations are infused into the fabric of violent conflict. However, even after centuries of conflict and accompanying agreements, treaties and conventions, there remains a degree of uncertainty concerning the respective specifications of combatants and civilians.

It has been argued that the distinction between the combatant, who is entitled to the privileges of a POW, and the non-combatant, who is not, could be made by a competent tribunal in accordance with Article 5 of Geneva Convention III. This opens the Pandora’s box of what constitutes a competent tribunal. This is an issue which, while beyond the scope of this article, has been discussed and critiqued by legal scholars and courts alike. Suffice to say, on the battlefield, the distinction between a combatant (a legitimate target) and a non-combatant is all too uncertain. This is both unfortunate and unnecessary as the Geneva Conventions provide a very clear test. Members of a regular armed force of a party to the conflict, volunteer corps or similar who fulfil all the criteria described in Article 4(2) of Geneva Convention III are entitled to POW status and the associated privileges. Those people who are not protected by Geneva Conventions I, II or III are regarded as civilians and protected in accordance with...
the provisions of Geneva Convention IV. Jennifer Elsea further contends that even those civilians who commit acts of belligerency retain their status as civilians and the relative protection provided by Geneva Convention IV.27

Given that one of the two fundamental principles of IHL is the necessary distinction between combatants and civilians, it is surprising that grey areas exist in the distinction between these two groups.28 Israel’s Supreme Court, sitting as the High Court of Justice, having considered this issue, clearly ruled that there is no third category of person:

That is the case according to the current state of international law, both international treaty law and customary international law. It is difficult for us to see how a third category can be recognized in the framework of The Hague and Geneva Conventions. It does not appear to us that we were presented with data sufficient to allow us to say, at the present time, that such a third category has been recognized in customary international law.29

This debate is critically important for several reasons, principal among these the fact that it must be clear who is to be afforded what rights and privileges during armed conflict. Combatants are legitimate targets during conflict, and have the right to take part in hostilities against an enemy. As a result, combatants are afforded the privilege of POW status if captured by an enemy and they are not liable to prosecution as long as they act in accordance with IHL. Conversely, civilians are granted immunity from attack, but do not have the right to directly participate in hostilities and lose their immunity from attack if they do so. Civilians are also liable to prosecution for any acts that constitute a crime, such as murder and assault, even if these are waged against an enemy force.30 The next section of this article deals with the complexities—and simplicities—of the two categories of persons: combatants and civilians.

### COMBATANTS

Simply put, combatants are those persons who ‘have the right to participate directly in hostilities’.31 While civilians certainly benefit from IHL, as a body of law IHL was created for the benefit of combatants and allows combatants to perform their duties—acts that would normally be illegal—with confidence that, as long as those acts do not exceed the permissible standards of IHL, they will be immune from prosecution.32 In this context, soldiers accept that they may be the subject of attack, while civilians are not.33

...it must be clear who is to be afforded what rights and privileges during armed conflict.

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The concept of freedom of action without prosecution for acts normally considered crimes is often taken for granted. However, with this right comes a degree of responsibility. While granted the right to conduct lawful acts of war, combatants are expected to comply with proportionality in accordance with the principle that the means and methods of warfare are not unlimited. Combatants are also expected to differentiate between those potential targets that are lawful and those that are not, principally: civilians, *hors de combat*, places of worship, education, cultural significance, and objects of indispensable importance to the survival of the civilian population. Combatants have a special status that protects them from prosecution as long as they comply with the laws of war.35

This, of course, means that combatants are targets themselves. As long as they remain members of the armed forces of a party to a conflict, they remain legitimate targets until such time as the conflict ceases or they are wounded or surrender.36 The Geneva Conventions consider combatants to be those

… [m]embers of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict as well as members of militias or volunteer corps forming part of such armed forces' and '[m]embers of other militias and members of other volunteer corps, including those of organized resistance movements, belonging to a Party to the conflict … provided that such militias or volunteer corps, including such organized resistance movements, fulfill the following conditions:
(a) That of being commanded by a person responsible for his subordinates;
(b) That of having a fixed distinctive sign recognizable at a distance;
(c) That of carrying arms openly; and
(d) That of conducting their operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war.37

Thus it is clear that those persons who are members of armed forces of a party to the conflict, in addition to others who are members of militias, volunteers corps and the like, who also meet the four additional criteria, are combatants. This category of person also retains the right—as long as they retain their status as a combatant—to be treated as a POW in accordance with Geneva Convention III.

CIVILIANS

Article 50(1) of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 defines a civilian as any person who is not a combatant.38 Dormann succinctly argues that in any conflict there are combatants or civilians—there is no grey area or third category as such.39 This is not to say that a civilian will never take part in combat; rather, that
a civilian participating in conflict will remain a civilian and thus not be afforded the rights and privileges of a combatant. Likewise, civilians who commit acts that are deemed unlawful may lose precious privileges.

Civilians who commit acts against any party to a conflict are liable to prosecution, as they do not enjoy the same immunity from prosecution as combatants. Indeed, a civilian who commits an illegal act against any party to conflict has committed a criminal act and should be treated as a criminal: investigated, questioned and, if appropriate, prosecuted and punished. Put simply, civilians do not have a legal right to participate in armed conflict. Regardless of the moral obligations civilians may feel, as non-combatants, they are expected to comply with their lawful duties as civilians, including refraining from active participation in hostilities. Civilians who participate in hostilities retain their status as civilians, but lose their immunity from attack and become lawful military targets for the duration of that participation.

They also remain liable for prosecution for the crimes they commit. Direct participation in conflict does not qualify civilians for the same immunity from prosecution that combatants enjoy. The Israeli High Court of Justice determined that:

... a civilian—that is, a person who does not fall into the category of combatant—must refrain from directly participating in hostilities. A civilian who violates that law and commits acts of combat does not lose his status as a civilian, but as long as he is taking a direct part in hostilities he does not enjoy—during that time—the protection granted to a civilian. He is subject to the risks of attack like those to which a combatant is subject, without enjoying the rights of a combatant, e.g. those granted to a prisoner of war. True, his status is that of a civilian, and he does not lose that status while he is directly participating in hostilities.

Violations of laws are a criminal matter, whether committed by combatants or civilians, and are properly the province of an appropriate court. The committing of a crime does not change a person’s status from combatant to civilian or civilian to combatant. During the Vietnam War, ‘a Vietcong was arrested while throwing a grenade into a downtown Saigon café and was handed over to the Vietnamese authorities for prosecution as a criminal’. Although this act was presumably motivated by the war, the person committing the act was, in fact, a civilian and was thus treated as a civilian, not a POW or any other ‘alternative’ category of person. To participate in hostilities without the right to do so is a violation of law. Practically, a civilian who attacks a combatant is guilty of the crime of murder, assault or similar.
Those found guilty of committing such crimes do not lose their civilian status and should be punished according to the law applicable to civilians.⁴⁴

Civilians are not lawful targets until they directly participate in hostilities. Any attack on civilians who are not participating in conflict is a crime punishable in accordance with IHL.⁴⁵ There is much ongoing discussion and debate about what constitutes ‘direct participation’ and the point at which this direct participation begins and ends. Whether civilians lose their immunity from attack only when carrying weapons en route to the attack and regain this protection when they arrive home and recommence farming the land is unclear.⁴⁶ What is clear, however, is that regardless of when this immunity from attack is lost and regained, these civilians retain their categorisation as civilians and their responsibility to abide by the laws applicable to civilians.

The application of this principle is particularly pertinent to the current conflict in Afghanistan. Insurgents and other criminal groups who fail to wear or display a fixed distinctive sign that is recognisable at a distance, carry their arms openly, or conduct their operations in accordance with the rule of law, are clearly not combatants and are thus civilians. This means that, while these civilians directly participate in hostile acts, they are violating Afghan law and committing crimes. As long as these civilians are participating in the conflict, they become legitimate military targets and lose their civilian immunity from attack. All other rights afforded to a civilian should be afforded to these criminals, including legal representation and appearance before an appropriate court. The uniqueness of the insurgent’s methods for committing criminal acts of murder, intentionally causing injury, making threats to kill and other similar offences, does not justify the creation of a new category of person. All these offences can, and should, be dealt with under existing Afghan domestic law.

Changing the status of people from civilian to combatant because of their engagement in criminal acts of belligerency potentially bestows on those people a level of legitimacy of which they are undeserving.⁴⁷ Furthermore, it changes the lawfulness of those acts and provides protection from prosecution that is not the intention of current international or domestic law. The act of belligerence means that a civilian may become the target of attack and may also be liable to prosecution for the commission of illegal acts; however, it does not entirely remove a person’s right to protection under Geneva Convention IV.⁴⁸ As in conflict-free zones, people reasonably suspected of committing an offence may be detained for questioning, investigated and ultimately punished should they be found guilty.⁴⁹

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As long as these civilians are participating in the conflict, they become legitimate military targets and lose their civilian immunity from attack.
COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW

The United States has argued that, while many countries use domestic criminal laws to deal with terrorists and insurgents, this is not possible in Afghanistan where the legal system is incapable of investigating, arresting and prosecuting these offences.\(^5\) This is not a reflection of the existing law, but of the political will and of a dearth of technical knowledge and experience that can only be developed through appropriate training and time. This should not be used as an excuse, however, to deny people their legal rights or re-categorise them as something they are not.

At the same time as acknowledging that it was engaged in an armed conflict in Afghanistan, the United States recognised al-Qaeda as a criminal organisation, further baffling analysts as to why al-Qaeda’s members were not then treated as criminals.\(^5\) Terrorist groups, regardless of the wickedness of their acts, are not so far removed from the legal spectrum that they require a completely new system to govern their actions. Traditional laws are appropriate and suited to dealing with current threats and ongoing conflict. The purpose and motivation of IHL is not inconsistent with current desires to defeat terrorism and manage modern conflict.\(^5\) Terrorists,

… retain their status as civilians, but they lose the special protection of the law of armed conflict. This means that the law of armed conflict does not protect terrorists against legitimate military counter-terrorist measures, i.e. military measures, which are in accordance with the right to self-defence.\(^5\)

CONCLUSION

Current IHL is effective and comprehensive. The present system of two categories of persons—combatants and civilians—is capable of supporting both humanitarian and human rights imperatives while also maintaining the legitimate need for security and justice in the face of contemporary insurgency, terrorism and conflict. There is no need for new categories of persons to be created. As with any rules, procedures and laws, however, they are only as effective as their adherence and compliance.\(^5\) IHL is no exception. All parties to conflict, especially those claiming to be morally virtuous, must ensure that IHL is properly implemented and obeyed. After all, the protection of human rights, the achievement and maintenance of security and the transition to peace with tomorrow’s neighbours remain paramount, particularly for those who are professional soldiers.
ENDNOTES

1  G Townsend, Campaigns of a Non-Combatant, Blelock & Company, New York, 1866, p. 11.
10  Not only is there no justification for the abuse and misinterpretation of IHL for political purposes, its misuse will ultimately weaken this body of law and endanger future generations involved in conflict. See H Gasser, 'Acts of Terror,' "Terrorism"


13 Investigations into the Abu Ghraib abuses determined that several policy decisions contributed to those regrettable events, beginning with a disregard for the Geneva Conventions. See De Nevers, ‘The Geneva Conventions and New Wars’, p. 374.


15 De Nevers argues succinctly that the Geneva Conventions are a positive tool in the fight against terrorism. See ‘The Geneva Conventions and New Wars’, p. 387.

16 *Tadic Appeals Case*, ICTY Appeals Chamber, The Hague, 2 October 1995, para 70.


18 De Nevers argues that IHL is not limited by geographic or political boundaries; it permeates all locations and all conflicts. See ‘The Geneva Conventions and New Wars’, p. 384.

19 Bellinger acknowledges that the United States is in armed conflict with al-Qaeda and that the Supreme Court (in the Hamdan case) recognised the relevance and applicability of the Geneva Conventions. See ‘Legal Issues in the War on Terrorism’, p. 743. One year earlier, Bellinger argued that ‘There is no question that armed conflicts between States Parties to the Geneva Conventions, including conflicts with terrorist-sponsoring States Parties, constitute international armed conflicts. The President’s February 2002 order recognised that the armed conflict with the Taliban was at that time an international armed conflict.’ See J Bellinger, ‘Legal Issues in the War on Terrorism: Reply to Silja Silja N U Vöneky’, *German Law Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 9, September 2007, pp. 871–78.


21 Bellinger, ‘Legal Issues in the War on Terrorism’, p. 736.


26 Dormann agrees that, while the Geneva Convention provides the framework for determination of one’s status, this may not be so obvious on the battlefield. See K Dormann, “The Legal Situation of “Unlawful/Unprivileged Combatants””, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 85, No. 849, 2003, pp. 45–74.


30 E Gillard, ‘Business Goes to War: Private Military/Security Companies and International Humanitarian Law’, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 88, No. 863, September 2006, p. 531. Gasser comments that, although combatants have immunity from prosecution for certain acts, the means and methods that may be employed in conflict are not unlimited, and any breach of IHL will constitute a crime and any combatant who has committed such acts will be prosecuted. The status of combatant or POW does not bring with it immunity from criminal prosecution for acts that are contrary to IHL. Likewise, nowhere in Geneva Convention IV is a civilian who commits violent acts granted immunity. Consequently, any civilian who has committed such acts will be prosecuted. See ‘Acts of Terror’, p. 560.

31 Dormann, ‘The Legal Situation of “Unlawful/Unprivileged Combatants”’, p. 45.

32 Art. 4 of Geneva Convention IV notes that, ‘Persons protected by the Convention are those who, at a given moment and in any manner whatsoever, find themselves, in case of a conflict or occupation, in the hands of a Party to the conflict or Occupying Power of which they are not nationals.’


37 As described in Article 13 of Geneva Convention I and Article 4 of Geneva Convention III. For a similar definition, see Hague Convention (IV) Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its Annex: Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land, The Hague, 18 October 1907. Art. 43(2), Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions (8 June 1977), states succinctly that ‘[m]embers of the armed forces of a Party to a conflict are combatants’.

38 Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977. Note that the United States is only a signatory to AP1 and as yet has not ratified it, unlike the 168 other signatory states. For a full list of states that have either ratified or acceded to AP1, see ICRC ‘State Parties to Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977’, <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/WebSign?ReadForm&id=470&ps=P> accessed June 2009. This site also lists those states that have signed, but not ratified or acceded to AP1. Dormann contends (correctly) that ‘a civilian is any person who does not belong to one of the categories of persons referred to in Article 4A (1), (2), (3) and (6) of GC III.’ Thus, a civilian is any person who is not a combatant. See Dormann, ‘The Legal Situation of “Unlawful/Unprivileged Combatants”’, p. 46.

41 Dormann, ‘The Legal Situation of “Unlawful/Unprivileged Combatants”’, p. 46.
42 *The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel v The Government of Israel*, HCJ, p. 22.
45 *The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel v The Government of Israel*, HCJ, p. 21.
46 What seems most reasonable and in accordance with legal principles is judging the *intent* of those civilians. The point at which civilians possess the *mens rea* associated with committing a crime that involves participation in hostilities, and take steps to equip themselves to commit such a crime, is the most reasonable time for those civilians to lose their protection from attack.
48 Dormann, ‘The Legal Situation of “Unlawful/Unprivileged Combatants”’, p. 73.
49 Sassoli and Olson, ‘The Relationship between International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law Where it Matters’, p. 616. In addition to imprisonment associated with criminal activity, both combatants and civilians may be interned for security reasons. POWs may be interned for the duration of hostilities in accordance with Article 21 of Geneva Convention III. Likewise, civilians may be interned if absolutely
necessary, ‘for reasons of security’, in accordance with Article 42 and Article 78 of
Geneva Convention IV.
51 Elsea, CRS Report for Congress: Treatment of ‘Battlefield Detainees’ in the War on
Terrorism, p. 11, referring to a White House press statement made on 20 February
2002.
52 S Vöneky, ‘Response – The Fight against Terrorism and the Rules of International
Law – Comment on Papers and Speeches of John B Bellinger, Chief Legal Advisor to
53 Ibid., p. 752.
54 Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, ‘Possible Need for Further Development
of the Geneva Conventions’, Guantanamo: Violation of Human Rights and International
Law, Opinion No. 245 of the European Commission for Democracy through Law,
adopted by the Venice Commission at its 57th Plenary Session, 12–13 December,
‘Points of View – Points of Law’ Collection, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg,
2003, pp. 95–106.

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SIZE MATTERS

TURNING TO SMALL TEAMS TO SUCCEED AT COUNTERINSURGENCY

SERGEANT P A DEHNERT

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the unconventional thoughts of H John Poole and his advocacy of small teams as the key to success in counterinsurgency conflict, and whether with modification they may find application in our own ongoing counterinsurgency effort in Uruzgan.

INTRODUCTION

The ADF is currently entering its ninth year of the ongoing campaign to eliminate terrorist safe havens and assist in the removal of a resurgent Taliban in order to create a democratic Islamic state in Afghanistan under the auspices of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). As it is well known, the foundations for today’s campaigns are a direct consequence of the actions of the Taliban-backed al-Qaeda network and the series of attacks that culminated with their 11 September 2001 strike on the United States mainland.

Nine years on, are we any closer to achieving victory in this campaign to rid Afghanistan of the Taliban and radical Islamic extremists? And is there a way to produce greater effects on the ground at the tactical level? The aim of this article is
to discuss possible ways forward at the combat team, platoon and small team level to take away the insurgents base among the people, while continuing to build a credible Afghan National Army (ANA).

THE CURRENT ISSUE AT THE TACTICAL LEVEL

This article came about as a direct result of my observations recorded throughout my deployment as part of the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) with the Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force 1 (MRTF 1). Always at the forefront of my thinking after returning from a patrol were the questions ‘What is happening now after I’ve left?’ and ‘What are the insurgents doing out there now that there are no coalition forces about?’ I would often look out beyond the Hesco and study the valley, and wonder what could be achieved if we had a more permanent presence on the ground, denying the insurgents the ability to reoccupy an area after we had departed. The ANA at that point were some time away from having the ability to conduct independent tasks by night, and at times would only reluctantly join partnered missions of extended duration for a variety of reasons, both logistic and capability related. When this was coupled with the lack of combat team presence for large portions of time within a particular piece of the area of operations, it affects ones ability to create lasting influence over that piece of the battlespace. From my perspective this was an issue that needed to be resolved, but in real terms it would prove both complex and difficult to apply quick fixes. By chance I came across the work Tequila Junction by H John Poole, a former US marine corps NCO and officer who writes extensively on small unit tactics. He had produced a work that focused on the emerging crisis in Latin America and how it ties into what is occurring in the Middle East. Though it is in parts idealistic, impractical and certainly agenda driven, there were some points worth taking away. The one that provided the most interest was the technique he had devised for countering insurgents in their own traditional safe areas, the so called 'Fire Team Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR)'

Our force in Afghanistan has replaced the previous MTRF organisation. This force is structured around an Infantry battle group and is charged with primarily building Afghan army capability through its operational mentoring and liaison teams, while on a separate line of operation providing limited protected reconstruction to the population. Though the new task force is now moving away from this

Though it is in parts idealistic, impractical and certainly agenda driven, there were some points worth taking away.
reconstruction aspect and is focusing more on the mentoring role, there continues to be an ongoing inability to generate anything more than short-term effects on the ground at the tactical level, as the presence of coalition forces is at best transitory. This issue is somewhat alleviated by the ‘ink spot’ approach of construction and garrisoning of patrol bases by the coalition in conjunction with the ANA, but it does not change the fact that the insurgents can still move relatively freely among the population when the ISAF forces are not ‘outside the wire’. Could the methods discussed by Poole in his dissertation of modern counterinsurgency operations possibly have some practical application on the ground in Uruzgan?

Poole advocates in his latest work the need for change at the tactical level in the way we conduct counterinsurgency operations. He believes there are inherent problems with the way we think about and approach counterinsurgency, and asserts that militaries such as those in the ABCA (American, British, Canadian, Australian) alliance are hamstrung in their methods of countering insurgents as we employ ‘top down’ decision-making structures, whereas insurgency needs to be confronted from the bottom up.

He believes we are too slow to adapt to changing situations at the tactical level, and need to be more flexible in our approach while altering our training methods and doing away with traditional infantry force structures if we are to beat insurgents at their own game on their turf. One example of this is a comparison he makes between Mexican drug cartels and American law enforcement agencies. A study carried out in 2006 suggested organised crime syndicates can often move through their own version of Boyd’s decision-making cycle up to six times before a federal agency has completed one. Therefore the government is permanently playing catch-up as they are only reactionary to the tempo and momentum maintained by the adversary.²

**FIRE TEAM TAOR CONCEPT**

Poole advocates a more decentralised approach to how we conduct counterinsurgency operations. He believes that in order to win at a tactical level, we must continue to empower junior leaders and give them increased autonomy while conventional force structures are not the optimum solution for fighting a well organised irregular opposition. His alternative is what he has termed the ‘Fire Team TAOR concept’.

Poole’s Fire Team TAOR concept revolves around evolving the traditional battalion or combat team structure into ‘combined action platoons’, consisting of an infantry platoon augmented by host nation police and military. They then flood an area of
operations with scores of fire team sized groups who live for extended periods in mutually supporting mini TAORs. These forces would focus less on kinetic effects and perform a role more akin to that of ‘beat cops’ within their respective locations. They would receive extra medical, engineering and unconventional warfare training. By virtue of living among the population for protracted periods, they would be better placed to disrupt and detect insurgent patterns of movement and methods of operating. Poole believes that a battalion employed in this manner may well produce effects on the ground out of proportion to their numbers, and that those conventional force elements, such as company and platoon size groups that we traditionally employ, are often not the optimum sizes or structures for fighting an asymmetric fight in complex terrain. His alternative, the flooding of an area with many small teams operating in a decentralised manner, is described as:

The pre-requisite then to 4th Generation Counterinsurgency is better training to all US infantrymen, then deploying them in small, semi-autonomous teams throughout a besieged population. Of course for the more risky situations the GI’s would need UW training. At least then throughout the contested peasantry there would be someone to counter the Islamic aggressor.⁢

At first glance it may seem his theories are impractical or possibly even dangerous given his emphasis on small force sizes and the level of autonomy under which they would operate. However, if we were to take Poole’s example and modify it to suit our own ends, it may prove to be a workable tactical level innovation that can help keep the initiative against the insurgents. Poole describes the employment of such groups as:

that means spreading lone rifle squads across some of the most volatile regions of several foreign countries. Besides advanced light infantry training these squads will need instruction on criminal investigative procedure. Then instead of filling the unpopular role of occupier, they can help local police and soldiers, (through combined action platoons) to maintain order...

He went on further to say:

finally each squad will need and engineer and medic attached to assist with the rebuilding of infrastructure. To succeed over the long term, a counterinsurgency effort must do more than just provide security. It must score commensurate gains across all 4th generation warfare (4GW) arenas: (1) martial/combat; (2) political/media; (3) economic/infrastructure; and (4) psychological/religion.⁴...

… it is after the combat team returns to base that the gains on the ground are lost.
Could the employment of dozens of small team size force elements among the rural areas of the Mirabad or Baluchi Valley for protracted periods prove to be a viable alternative to the current methods we are employing? By Poole’s logic it is not only a workable option but a necessity if we are to permanently dislocate the insurgents from the population. As previously discussed, the single biggest shortcoming of the current methods we employ at the tactical level is the limited duration our force elements remain on the ground and in touch with the local population. While an operation is being conducted we are able to project force at will wherever we choose; however, it is after the combat team returns to base that the gains on the ground are lost. It is a particularly frustrating part of counterinsurgency operations to know that within a short time of a coalition force lifting from an area, the insurgents will be back debriefing the population and attempting to undermine our efforts through a combination of propaganda, intimidation and coercion. The mere fact that they are able to return is proof to the undecided local population that ISAF cannot guarantee permanent security, providing the Taliban a free Information Operations victory without cost to themselves. As long as this impasse exists, the local population will remain hesitant to back the government, because while they can see all the good we are attempting to do, it is quickly undone after we depart their village. The result is an ongoing waiting game where the insurgents, by virtue of being born and bred in the area, will win if they have the willpower to outlast the coalition. As both we and the opposition are well aware, time is on their side.

**AN AUSTRALIAN ALTERNATIVE**

How can this be countered by the application of Poole’s techniques? If they were to be employed in an Australian context, we could see the employment of a platoon broken down into section sized groups within their own mutually supporting mini TAORs in the Mirabad or Chora valleys or elsewhere. They would be within range of the fire support assets located on the nearest patrol bases, while using these locations as their theatre rendezvous in the event of coming under sustained insurgent attack, while also offering a go-to location if a casualty is sustained or illness occurs. Their placement within the community in the immediate vicinity of the existing patrol bases would also allow for greater freedom of movement of the ANA and OMLT teams already in these locations. This second order effect is achieved by virtue of...
them being a semi-permanent fixture within the community, therefore providing a safer operating environment for the OMLT/ANA teams moving to and from their patrol bases. These teams would, through observation and deterrent patrolling, secure the ground behind or in advance of both large scale deliberate operations and day to day framework patrols carried out within their immediate TAOR by other friendly force elements. They would also inhibit local insurgents’ freedom of action by keeping them off balance, therefore denying sanctuary, while concurrently identifying newcomers into the local communities. Furthermore they would also restrict insurgent groups’ mobility and their ability of to plant improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or engage coalition forces with direct or indirect fires. This is made possible by the fact that the insurgents are never going to be sure of the coalition forces’ position, or when they will be targeted by the coalition forces living and operating around the clock in what were traditionally their safe areas.

Conducting partnered missions with the OMLT/ANA and denying known resupply and infil/exfil routes as often as possible will significantly hinder the insurgent ability to sustain their IED cells, maintain cache holdings and resupply fighters in location. It will also make it harder to rotate fighters into or out of an area of operations and conduct casualty evacuation activities. These are regular insurgent actions traditionally carried out under the cover of darkness when they are able to transit the battlespace relatively free from interference from ANA or coalition forces. A protracted presence within an area will also prove valuable with the seasonal nature of the conflict. The cold season exodus and spring-time reinfiltrating of fighters would prove significantly harder for the insurgents to manage when denied concealment amongst the population. As the insurgents do, we need to approach this campaign seasonally. Tarin Kowt should be relatively empty during harvest season as we attempt to flood the area of operations in order to keep the insurgents contained, while in winter we can scale back our footprint on the ground accordingly.

The Australian section on the ground with a Combat First Aider per call sign, Joint Terminal Air Controller and engineer located with platoon headquarters, supported by interpreters at section level with embedded Afghan National Police (ANP) liaison, could overmatch most insurgent groups with the weapon systems and individual soldier skills at their disposal. The field craft and marksmanship of the Australian soldier is superior to the insurgent, which has been proven time and again over the past few years. Our ability to break deadlocks with air or indirect fires is also a massive force multiplier in contact. Furthermore, if fixed and under pressure, a section could call upon the support of their neighbouring call signs to bolster their numbers or relieve them if the situation required, while the OMLT and ANA

As the insurgents do, we need to approach this campaign seasonally.
from the nearest patrol base can also be utilised as a quick reaction force if needed. There is also the indirect fire assets located on the patrol bases. The supporting effects provided from 81mm mortars are also an excellent force multiplier. The issue of using supporting fires requires careful consideration, given the tightening of restrictions by ISAF on the use of close air support and indirect fires, particularly in close proximity to populated areas; however, if the situation warrants, support can be provided—which is reassuring to those out on the ground.

A further method of dislocating the insurgents is the employment of satellite patrolling, which has also shown to be a very effective means of keeping the insurgents off balance. They have been reluctant to engage our patrols when unsure of the exact location of our call signs on the ground. This overloading of their spotter network via multiple call signs moving in the same area erodes their command and control and gives their commanders reduced situational awareness. The end result is they are reluctant to commit to direct fire engagements. The use of multiple section sized patrols in adjoining TAOR's for extended periods is an extension or enhancement of this principle.

Provided we do not fall into the trap of complacency and pattern setting, it is possible that an Australian section-sized group could dominate a small TAOR for a protracted period, given adequate support from neighbouring force elements and the resident patrol base in their immediate vicinity. The real advantage of this system is evident at night, where our sensors and night vision afford us a considerable advantage over the insurgent. The ability to interdict their freedom of movement and other actions traditionally performed during hours of darkness would cause significant disruption the way the insurgents operate, forcing them to take more risk when carrying out actions such as resupplying caches, laying IEDs and rotating fighters into and out of the area of operations. The forced change to their tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) or heightened chance of compromise in turn increases the ISAF’s chances of successfully capturing or killing these individuals.

As mentioned above, the need to avoid setting patterns and routines cannot be underestimated. The enemy is astute in their observation of our actions and activities and constantly evolve their own TTPs to counter ours. Our movements are reported via a well developed spotter network from the moment we leave the forward operating base. This is where a force element deployed for a longer duration on the ground
within these contested areas would be a valuable asset in denying the enemy situational awareness of our movements, and inhibiting their intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capability. This aspect goes hand in hand with the tactical employment of our sections on the ground, and the trust that would need to be placed in the tactical judgment of the junior NCOs in charge of these call signs. Some would say it is too much responsibility, but I believe our section commanders are more than up to the task. A further benefit of a longer term presence in the rural area is the ISR aspect and the shortening of the sensor-to-shooter link that currently exists. Most operations are intelligence driven; however, there sometimes exists a significant time lapse from when the information is sourced and corroborated, to then finally being acted upon. On numerous occasions we have launched operations based on the strength of word of mouth from a local source, then turned up empty handed. A section deployed for extended duration in an area would be well placed to observe, record and report any movement of persons of interest, shuras or attempts at infiltration into a given area and provide a more reliable source of ground truth for higher headquarters while enabling short notice or time sensitive information to be acted upon quickly. This could prove a useful addition to the F3EA (Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit and Analyse) targeting model currently successfully employed in theatre by TF66 and assist in increased interoperability and information sharing between the two organisations in order to achieve greater synchronisation of effects on the ground.⁵

These sections would be a constant presence out on the ground in the villages and would work closely with community leaders to continue to improve local living conditions through medical and minor works projects. Their presence would also allow greater access by both provincial reconstruction teams and enhance the ability of government and non-government aid agencies to reach out into these communities and interact with the population at a grassroots level. This aspect is crucial to help break down the traditional distrust of outsiders that the locals have and help overcome their negative perception of the central government’s ability to have an effect within rural areas. This traditional allegiance to tribe and clan rather than to an ideal of state or nation will continue to be an ongoing issue that will take time to overcome in areas outside of major regional centres.

While current force ratios in Uruzgan would make this concept difficult to successfully implement at present, a possible method of employing this approach could be as follows: a combat team held in Tarin Kowt for quick reaction force and other deliberate operations; a company broken down and deployed into half platoon...
groups to bolster the various patrol bases; support company providing the bulk of the OMLT; and the third rifle company providing the force element tasked with the ‘Fire Team TAOR’ or ‘area of operations saturation’ role. Each combat team, (except the OMLT) would rotate through the three tasks in one, perhaps two-month blocks. Given the demanding nature of this task, it would be necessary to experiment with the duration of this particular role in order to find the optimum timeframe for a call sign to be deployed without suffering excessive fatigue and performance degradation that could compromise safety and effects generated on the ground.

The concept outlined by Poole could be discounted or written off as impractical or possibly overly dangerous; however, the noted Australian counterinsurgency expert David Kilcullen also writes of the benefits of this decentralised approach in his essay ‘28 Articles’. From article 16 he states:

Practice deterrent patrolling. There are many methods for this, including flooding an area with numerous small patrols working together. Each is too small to be considered a worthwhile target, and the insurgents never know where all the patrols are, making an attack on any one patrol extremely risky.

While our current TTPs ensure we are not falling into the pitfalls detailed by Kilcullen and others, I believe there is still more that could be done at the tactical level to deny insurgent freedom of action within Uruzgan. Poole’s methods, adjusted to suit our requirements, may just be the answer. However, a change in tactics at the combat team level is only one aspect. We need to remain mindful of the fact that while the construction and garrisoning of patrol bases across the province has proved a positive move to date, it will not provide the ultimate tool at the tactical level to defeat the insurgency.

Kilcullen further reminds us of the dangers of becoming mired in a forward operating base or fortress mentality where coalition troops only sortie but in overwhelming numbers, are overly reliant on mobility platforms, and are only on the ground for short periods and therefore fail to engage with the local populace. His point 10 from ‘28 Articles’ reads in part:

…your first order of business is to establish presence. If you can't do this throughout your sector, then do it wherever you can. This demands a residential approach: living in your sector, in close proximity to the population rather than raiding into the area from remote, secure bases. Movement on foot, sleeping in local villages, night patrolling—all of these things seem more dangerous than they are. They establish links with the locals, who see you as real people they can trust and do business with.
The reoccurring theme among counterinsurgency experts is that the link with the population is key to successful prosecution of a counterinsurgency campaign. Decentralising our force structures down to the small team level could prove the most effective means to achieve this within our area of operations given the environment in which we are operating.

CONCLUSION

The opinions and possibilities presented by Poole and Kilcullen are but one line of operation in what is an exceedingly complex problem. History shows us numerous examples where innovation and winning at the tactical level does not equal defeating an insurgency. The ‘bush war’ fought by the Rhodesians is a great example of that. However, there is far more to resolving Afghanistan's current problems than a tactical level shift in how we operate. There continues to be a great deal that needs to be done in areas such as border control, governance, and eliminating nepotism and the endemic corruption that pervades the government from the lowest levels before Afghanistan is able to be held up as an example of a stable and progressive society that is moving forward, as opposed to the state of play that currently exists in the country.

Continuing to build a credible Afghan army and police force, provision of basic community services in the rural areas and extending rule of law outside of Kabul and the major regional population centres are examples of several of the massive challenges currently confronting ISAF in country. We need to remain adaptive in our campaign, and techniques such as those discussed here provide another option in the ongoing effort to maintain the initiative and set the tempo while ensuring what is a clever, resourceful and determined opponent is kept on the back foot. It goes without saying that in counterinsurgency one cannot win by being reactive or losing support of the population.

The platoon house method adopted by MTRF 1 in the Mirabad Valley in early 2010 is a good example of how decentralising operations can bring success if given the proper resources, planning and interagency support. Another key is knowing the battlespace. What has proven to be a workable option in Uruzgan does not work so well for the British and Canadians in Helmand and Kandahar. The value of knowing the operating environment and adjusting the methods used accordingly is not to be underestimated. The danger of providing cookie cutter solutions to counterinsurgency is a real risk we must be aware of the longer this conflict continues.

Poole’s methods are an example of a decentralised approach to counterinsurgency that may provide a tactical level solution that ensures we continue to set the tempo and keep the insurgents off balance in Uruzgan. The question is, are we as an army ready to accept the challenges of decentralising command to the lowest levels in order to defeat the insurgency in which we are currently engaged?
ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., p. 189.
3 Ibid., p. 183.
4 Ibid., preface p.xxviii.
7 Ibid., p. 105.

THE AUTHOR

Sergeant Paul Dehnert enlisted into the Australian Army in 1992, serving initially in Ordnance Corps. He transferred in 1996 to Infantry and has served with the 5/7th and 7th Battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment, and also as an instructor in Rifleman Wing at the School of Infantry. He has served operationally on numerous deployments, the most recent of which was to Afghanistan as a Platoon Mentor within the OMLT as part of the First Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force. He is currently posted to Adelaide Universities Regiment where he is an instructor for Army Reserve Initial Employment Training Courses.
Any suggestion of the employment of Australian tanks in Afghanistan is frequently confronted with the sentiment that tanks are not applicable in the counterinsurgency environment. This sentiment, however, is historically inaccurate. The experiences of the Canadians and the Danes in their employment of tanks in Afghanistan highlight the impressive effectiveness of tanks in the combined arms environment in a counterinsurgency. Regardless, the topic is plagued by multiple fallacious theories. As a result, this article dispels many of these myths, and discusses the means by which the employment of tanks as part of the combined arms team will appropriately contribute to the protection of Australian soldiers and the achievement of success in Afghanistan.

As important as infantry are to ensuring the security of armoured forces, so too are tanks vital to the protection of our dismounted troops. We should never plunge our dismounted soldiers into confrontation with the enemy without first taking every precaution to ensure their protection.

– Major T Cadieu.¹

¹ Australian Army Journal
**INTRODUCTION**

International consternation regarding the potential global security implications of insurgent and terrorist networks within Afghanistan has evoked a response which has included the actions of a wide range of coalition forces in Afghanistan. The aim is to deny a sanctuary to terrorists who threaten the stability of the global security environment and restore authority in an Afghanistan that does not harbour terrorism. Australian forces, deployed alongside many other nations, are involved in a complex counterinsurgency fight within Uruzgan province, employing a wide range of techniques and systems. Uruzgan is a physically tough, complex and demanding environment, complemented by an intricate and elusive system of societal networks.

This article will highlight the physical and human environment of current warfighting in Uruzgan, dispel many of the myths surrounding the contemporary employment of tanks, and espouse the employment of tanks as a part of the combined arms team to actively and appropriately contribute to the protection of Australian soldiers and the fighting effort.

**ENVIRONMENT**

**BATTLESPACE**

Uruzgan is characterised by distinct geographical features, with bare mountain ranges separated by discrete valleys and belts of arable land concentrated along the banks of perennial water courses (ruds). The population is generally dispersed across rural areas, located in small and often remote pockets of land. The restrictive mountainous regions canalise traffic and limit movement between urban centres. The terrain around the rivers is much closer and the agriculture, especially grape trellises, hinders movement and provides extensive cover. Affecting all human activity and of significance to military operations are the weather effects, including a very hot and dry summer (35–50°C) and exceptionally cold winter with sub-zero temperatures and snow.

The population is tribal and centred around villages and tribes without strong loyalty to central and in many cases regional governments. These considerations combined with religious Pashtun culture significantly affect the human terrain.

**THREAT**

A simplistic description of the threat environment is that it is an insurgency. This simple statement belies the complexity of Afghanistan’s social structures, the rise and fall of the Taliban, and the involvement of al-Qaeda and other terrorist organisations. In order to achieve its goal of returning to power, the Taliban, supported by other terrorist groups, must retain control of support bases and safe havens, and
facilitate expansion of influence in rural populated areas. Attempts to undermine Coalition forces are executed through the extensive use of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the conduct of small arms attacks and ambushes, and where possible the application of indirect fire attacks. The tactics, techniques and procedures fostered by the threat are synonymous with the historical context of an insurgency, aimed at avoiding any type of decisive combat and thus effecting functional dislocation of conventional forces.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

In general terms, an insurgency is characterised by a specific group, or multiple groups, of guerrillas who use the complexity afforded by their integration into societal networks and the confusion created by blending into the civilian population to offset the advantages imposed by the destructive nature of conventional military technology. The environment in Afghanistan is no different. The concept of the insurgency is by no means new, and hard-earned lessons drawn from fighting a counterinsurgency (COIN) are drawn from campaigns including the UK in Malaysia, the US in Vietnam and Iraq, and the Russians in Chechnya and Afghanistan. Similarly, there is nothing new about societal networks and cultural influence having profound effects on COIN operations. While the conflict in Afghanistan is a different environment, important lessons can be appropriately drawn from the past.

The key to success in a COIN environment is the acquisition and maintenance of popular support, and therefore ultimately the undermining of the insurgent’s legitimacy. In military terms, the support of the population is seen as the ‘centre of gravity’ or the pivotal focus of the campaign. A deceptively complex task, success in this environment entails a robust information operations campaign, a means of rapid assimilation of a changing tactical environment, and a means of discriminatory targeting. A conventional military force is often strained in this environment as it is not trained or equipped to achieve much of the desired effect on the insurgent while at the same time avoiding collateral damage and, importantly, protecting the local population. The information operations campaign is a strategic level line of operations which is intrinsically linked to the tactical level of conflict; however, a discussion of this point is outside the scope of this article.

Rapid assimilation of a changing tactical environment can only be achieved through the situational awareness gained from an effective intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance network and rapid distribution of information to achieve the
desired effects. Shortcomings in these areas will see a tactical team constantly reacting to insurgent successes, and therefore directing efforts to crisis management, rather than having an effect on the insurgent. The ability for forces to change tactics and techniques is also key to this type of campaign in that these changes force the insurgents to change their techniques, thereby potentially exposing their command and control networks, operational techniques and supply networks as they adjust.

The application of discriminating fires in the COIN environment is essential due to the insurgents’ propensity to operate in close proximity to civilians and civil infrastructure. The utility of a weapons system with the accuracy to destroy specific targets while leaving the target’s surroundings unblemished is vital (eg. application of fire into a specific room of a building without killing personnel in surrounding rooms or floors). Indirect fire systems are limited in these situations. Appropriate accuracy must be accompanied by a variety of ammunition types and weapon calibres in order not only to deliver precision in terms of accuracy, but importantly, to deliver the desired target effect. A fifty calibre machine gun, for example, will have a very limited effect on a thick mud-brick wall (such as an Afghan grape-drying hut), but rounds that miss will penetrate countless walls, vehicles and people in the beaten zone, well beyond the target. Furthermore, it is likely in many circumstances that in order to achieve a high level of discrimination to protect civilians (the centre of gravity), Coalition forces will need to close with insurgent groups, and therefore become more exposed to a variety of weapons systems. As a result, intimate force protection for soldiers is vital.

**CURRENT WARFIGHTING CONTEXT**

Canadian forces are currently using tanks as a part of their combined arms teams in Afghanistan. An analysis of the Canadian lessons and operational reports has shown that they have been effective in this environment conducting a wide range of tasks. While some of the terrain differs from that in which Australian forces are operating, many of the lessons have direct applicability for Australian operations.

Australian forces currently deploy as combined arms teams. These will often consist of infantry, artillery Forward Observers and Joint Terminal Attack Controllers, and engineers mounted in Protected Mobility Vehicles (PMV) and ASLAVs. While ASLAVs achieve excellence in cavalry, reconnaissance and surveillance tasks, they have significantly less protection, mobility and accuracy, compared to the current Australian tank: the M1A1 AIM SA. The ability for field commanders
to select M1 Abrams to undertake a range of tasks as a part of the combined arms team provides flexibility and the opportunity to more effectively combat insurgents in the Afghan COIN environment.

In order to analyse the conduct of operations in Afghanistan, some of the key considerations include weapons ranges, target effects, level of protection, mobility, ability to provide surveillance, and ability to enhance situational awareness and communications. Regarding these considerations, Figure 1 is a comparative analysis of dismounts, PMVs, ASLAVs and tanks.

![Figure 1. Force Element Comparison](image)

**MYTHS SURROUNDING TANK EMPLOYMENT**

There are many perceptions regarding the roles applicable to the employment of tanks, and to the capabilities provided. These perceptions are often flawed in that their origins are generally contrary to factual evidence and irrefutable lessons learned from historical tank employment. Several common myths will be dispelled with the intent of aligning the highlighted misconceptions with logical deductions.

**Terrain.** One of the most common allegations made with regards to the employment of tanks in Afghanistan is that the terrain is unsuitable for tank operations. To the contrary, tanks represent the pinnacle of land mechanised or mounted mobility. Australia has already deployed a variety of A and B vehicles in various roles in Afghanistan. The M1 Abrams has superior tactical mobility to any of the currently deployed systems and although terrain is certainly a limiting factor for ground
operations, its effects are less pronounced for tanks than other vehicles. Mission profiles for maximum benefit of this mobility will be discussed later.

**Infrastructure.** Many comments, particularly from personnel unfamiliar with tanks, suggest that the operation of tanks on anything other than hard packed earth is unworkable. Simple physics, however, dictates that because of the large surface area encompassed by the track of the tank, ground pressure, as highlighted in Table 1, is remarkably low. Obviously the pressure distribution changes when negotiating an obstacle and the application of hard turns on a soft surface will clearly cause disfigurement to the surface; however, the mass of the M1A1 AIM SA (61.3 T) does not automatically result in the destruction of roads. Conversely, the low ground pressure reinforces the enhanced mobility attributed to the operation of tanks which can assist in avoiding IEDs.

Table 1. Ground pressure comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Mass (kg)</th>
<th>Ground Pressure (PSI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Man⁵</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Bike⁵ (with rider)</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger Car⁶</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tank⁶</td>
<td>61300</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).** Like the current operations with ASLAVs, tanks require protection from IEDs in targetable locations which cannot be avoided. The Canadian experience in Afghanistan and the US experience in Iraq highlight the potential disruption caused by IEDs that are well sited and voluminous in composition. Australia’s experience with PMVs has also shown that predictable locations such as one of very few creek crossings available to a PMV are a lucrative target for IED emplacers. The ability to identify the likely channelling effect of a such a crossing, and therefore assess its vulnerability to IEDs, highlights the advantages gained by the possession of a level of mobility that enables far greater options in the selection of sites for crossing obstacles. Acknowledging that not all IED sites are predictable, the enhancement in crew survivability against IEDs provided by underbelly armour and slung seating (both part of the Tank Urban Survival Kit program⁷) promote confidence that in the contingency that a tank cannot avoid an IED strike, the crew has a superior expectation of survival. Finally, it should
be noted that repair of a separated track in the field is a crew task, and far more achievable than replacement of a wheel station on a four or eight wheeled vehicle.

**Combat Service Support.** The fact that the tank is a heavy Combat Service Support user is by no means a new concept, and should not be disregarded in considering the employment of the tank. Much like many tools of modern warfare including attack helicopters and fighter aircraft providing close air support, logistic bills are an integral part of operations, and not necessarily a limiting factor. It should be noted, however, that many allegations surrounding fuel usage rates are largely inaccurate. The operational tempo and indicative tasks identified in Table 2 are a realistic estimate of tank troop operations in Afghanistan. To extrapolate, a tank will therefore use an average of approximately 500L diesel per day (150L per hour of operation⁸) which, in comparison to a CH-47D using 1350L per hour of operation,⁹ is not extravagant. This usage rate is certainly achievable in terms of resupply from a forward operating base (FOB) given a robust resupply system. The fuel usage rate for the M1 in comparison to other fuel users (particularly aviation) is of such relative insignificance to both US Army and USMC that, although the M1 is more efficient using diesel, they run their tanks on JP5 or JP8 (av-gas), as the tank is the minor fuel user. Finally, of relevance is the fact that while conducting static tasks, the vehicle can maintain charge to its system using its External Auxiliary Power Unit (comparable fuel usage to running a small generator). As a result, fuel usage while on standby for quick reaction force (QRF) tasks in overwatch and in static security positions is minimal, while the tank continues to provide enhanced security and response.

**Recovery/Repair.** Contrary to common perception, repair and recovery during tank troop operations are well practised and efficient drills, and an integral part of planning for every mission. To facilitate efficient repair and recovery, the requirements for a troop and a squadron are equal, and a squadron A1 echelon is essential. Basing the echelon in the FOB, forward repair and recovery can be effected through organic assets, while base repair and routine maintenance should be a function of routine operations at the FOB. To expand, the security issues associated with forward recovery can be somewhat mitigated by the troop’s capability for self recovery to either a pre-designated equipment collection point or a FOB. Tank troops are well versed in self recovery and each vehicle has four mounting bollards and carries two tow cables to facilitate recovery if required. The procedure is as simple as any vehicle in the troop connecting the tow cables and dragging the damaged vehicle to a suitable location for recovery by the A1 echelon.
Accuracy. The concept that the tank is indiscriminate and will undoubtedly cause greater collateral damage than other forms of offensive action is false. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have shown that appropriate application of tanks in operations have reduced collateral damage. This is reinforced by the experience of the Canadian tank squadron deployed to Kandahar, where the commander highlighted:

…the security issues associated with forward recovery can be somewhat mitigated by the troop’s capability for self recovery …

…suggestions that the use of tanks has alienated the local populace more than other weapon systems have proven completely unfounded. Since commencing combat operations…tanks have killed dozens of insurgents in battles throughout Kandahar, yet there has been no suggestion of civilian deaths attributed to tank fire during the entire period. Equipped with a fire control system that allows our soldiers to acquire and engage targets with precision and discrimination, by day and by night, the tank has in many instances reduced the requirement for aerial bombardment and indirect fire, which have proven to be blunt instruments…a strong case can be made that tanks have actually reduced collateral damage in the AO.¹¹

Table 2. Estimated monthly fuel usage per tank¹⁰

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission Type</th>
<th>Indicative Frequency of Mission per Month</th>
<th>Monthly Fuel Usage Per Tank (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOB security including routine maintenance at FOB</td>
<td>9 days</td>
<td>450 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwatch from SBF location (approx 30 km from FOB)</td>
<td>12 full day missions</td>
<td>8400 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QRF reaction task (approx 30 km from FOB). Includes break in, secure mission and extraction) Approx duration 6 hours.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4500 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban clearance patrol including assault and exploitation on an objective. Approx duration 6 hours.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4500 L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total usage:</td>
<td></td>
<td>17850 L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (COM ISAF) released a tactical directive in July 2009 which specifically directed the cessation of air-to-ground kinetic activity where certainty of the absence of civilians could not be ascertained and where a battle damage assessment was unable to be performed. It follows logically that the combined arms assault, using tanks for their mobile precision, is an exceptional means of safely and effectively achieving the mission while fulfilling COM ISAF’s intent.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE TANK IN SUPPORT OF AUSTRALIAN OPERATIONS

A popular interpretation of the relevant employment of the tank is summed up as ‘There are no enemy tanks in Afghanistan to destroy, so why would we need a tank?’ The making of such a statement, other than to get a rise from Armoured Corps officers, illuminates a limited understanding of military history and combined arms operations at the tactical level.

Having considered the current warfighting context in Uruzgan, there are several roles of key significance by which employment of the tank is assessed as having impressive potential to improve Australian operations and protect both Australian and Afghan National Army soldiers. These mission profiles include employment as part of an armoured QRF, as part of the exploitation of objectives using the combined arms assault, overwatch of dismounted operations in a support by fire (SBF) position, kinetic targeting in support of dismounted operations, and the application of the demonstration.

THE ARMoured QUICK REACTION FORCE

The first and perhaps most obvious utility for the tank in Afghanistan is as part of an armoured QRF in support of offensive, defensive or security operations. The structure of the QRF is open to a variety of configurations, dependent on the task and threat environment; however, the following structure can be used across a variety of operations:

a. two tanks with four armoured personnel carriers (APC) or PMVs (Figure 2) for security operations and low level operations; and

b. four tanks and four APCs or PMVs (Figure 3) for a higher anticipated threat.

The rationale behind the employment of the armoured QRF, as a combined arms grouping in support of an array of operations is associated with the inherent mobility, protection and firepower attributed to the tank, coupled with the ability to achieve dismounted tasks where required.
Enhanced mobility for the QRF is paramount for several reasons, including being able to avoid likely insurgent target areas of interest (e.g. channelling points may well be targeted using mines/IEDs and small arms ambushes). Furthermore, enhanced mobility enables breaching of hastily established blocking points, which, in turn reduces these obstacles for any less mobile following vehicles. The infamous Blackhawk Down\footnote{Blackhawk Down} saga is a prime example of a situation where an armoured QRF would not have been blocked by the makeshift barricades that significantly hampered the progress of the wheeled QRF in Mogadishu. Finally, the ability to create alternate exfiltration routes reduces the likelihood for targeted exfiltration, and therefore the risk of exploitation through pursuit.

Maximum protection for the QRF is vital. It is highly advantageous to employ a level of protection which enables the QRF to close with a potentially lethal threat and achieve the required level of disruption to secure an incident site, thus setting the conditions for success in exploitation of the incident site. The tanks leading the QRF can call dismounts forward to clear vulnerable choke points as required, while the tanks will...
bear the brunt of small arms fire ambushes and can provide support for the troops clearing the ground.

The distribution of the required level of firepower to neutralise a given threat necessitates the employment of weapons systems with a broad spectrum of effects and utilities to be effective. The Australian tank (M1A1 AIM SA) employs a diverse range of weapons systems, including two 7.62mm machine guns, a fifty calibre commander’s weapon station, twelve 66mm grenade launchers, and the 120mm cannon as its main armament. The system also offers a range of munitions which enable the crew commander to assess the required effect on the ground in a given situation and apply an effective and appropriate response. A relevant consideration here is that a single 120mm high explosive round will cause less collateral damage in an urban environment than numerous rounds from a fifty calibre machine gun to achieve the same effect.\textsuperscript{15} In addition to the advantages of employing varying levels of firepower, the application of such firepower from the tank specifically facilitates success in target discrimination, ensuring the minimisation of collateral damage from the unnecessary employment of air support or indirect fire.

### THE COMBINED ARMS ASSAULT

Another effective means of employment of the tank in Afghanistan is either in the deliberate or hasty combined arms assault on complex or hardened objectives. The effectiveness of this technique has been reinforced on multiple occasions by Canadian combined arms teams in Afghanistan, specifically comprised of heavy armour (tanks) with armoured engineers\textsuperscript{16} in order to achieve the combined breaching and shock action necessitated by the situation.

One of the common frustrations experienced by Australian troops in Afghanistan is a lack of manoeuvrability while in contact. It is a common occurrence that when in contact, Australian troops are limited in exploiting insurgent positions because of suppression by small arms fire. In addition, if the level of small arms fire renders friendly positions untenable, the clean break becomes problematic, as dismounted elements lack the firepower to achieve the shock action required for an effective clean break. A synchronised, concentrated weight of fire on an objective achieves the necessary temporary neutralisation of the insurgent objective for unhindered friendly manoeuvre.

The employment of the tank/infantry combined arms team in reaction to engagement by small arms fire and rocket propelled grenades applies the most tangible of
the tenets of manoeuvre warfare—shock action—to maximum advantage. Having applied the firepower and protection provided by the tanks to rapidly close with the insurgents, infantry are then able to clear the insurgent position or complex with minimal risk. Not only does this approach enable the exploitation of insurgent complexes and strongholds, the structure employed provides the flexibility to react to a changing tactical environment with speed and efficiency. The importance of maintenance of manoeuvrability in contact is paramount.

SUPPORT BY FIRE

Current operations in Afghanistan have seen ASLAVs employed in a support by fire (SBF) role for overwatch tasks in support of dismounted operations. Although this has generally been an effective means of overwatch, mobility and firepower can be enhanced, and therefore reduce the risk of disruption, by using a tank troop in SBF.

The enhanced mobility achieved by the tank allows flexibility in choosing SBF locations. In addition to this advantage, targeting by IEDs can be significantly reduced by the selection of unpredictable routes with alternate withdrawal routes, achievable given the enhanced mobility of tanks.

SBF positions, particularly within and firing across the Baluchi Valley, have at times lacked effectiveness due to the vast ranges of targets compared with the effective range of weapons used. Noting that the accuracy of 25mm rounds in excess of 2000m suffers exponential decay, the comparative 4000m range afforded by the M1A1 AIM SA by day or night, static or moving, combined with its remarkable accuracy, presents a significant advantage in reducing collateral damage. Furthermore, the exposed forward slope firing positions often adopted by ASLAVs in this role can be avoided considering the extended range of the tank. The benefits of this would become irrevocably evident if insurgents were to adopt and employ any capable anti-armour weapon.

KINETIC TARGETING

Tanks will likely not augment dismounted patrols by moving with the patrol. Regardless, there is significant wisdom in the utility of the tank as part of the mission profile for kinetic targeting. Historically, kinetic targeting has been affected by attack helicopter and close air support, which, while generally effective, are limited by weather effects, their ability to deliver sustained direct fire and conduct target exploitation. The proposed means of affecting this level of targeting includes moves by a tank pair or troop to designated hides, from which a number of ‘be prepared to’ tasks are allocated. From these hides, vehicles can react to designated objectives or to unexpected situations as required. The resultant effect on the insurgent includes both heavy sustained direct fire in all weather conditions and the option to achieve exploitation on necessary objectives.
The psychological effects of a planned and targeted show of force include two key issues: insurgent shaping and population reassurance. The insurgent is shaped in his planning and conduct of operations, and the local population is reassured that its security and welfare are of such importance to coalition forces that they are willing to employ such visibly formidable means to oppose the insurgency. Anecdotal evidence of these effects is apparent from operations in Mogadishu, whereby US forces employed tanks as their QRF. The deployment of tanks caused immediate dispersal of Somalian crowds.¹⁷

The application of a show of force must be an unpredictable and uncommon mission. Frequent application of such missions will dilute the psychological effect through familiarity. This, too, was realised by the same US force in Somalia under a different Brigade Commander in its excessive application of demonstrations, whereby the psychological effects of demonstrations became obsolete.¹⁸

Counterinsurgency operations have been historically complex, compounded by the fact that many conventional force packages are generally ill-equipped to meet the broad range of tasks and requirements of COIN operations. Tanks offer exceptional utility in support to Australian forces deployed to Afghanistan by providing the field commander with improved options in the prosecution of his mission and in reducing the options available to the insurgent commander. The applicability and capability of tanks to assist in jungles and urban terrain have often been initially misjudged by military commanders throughout history. History has shown, however, that the tank’s presence, extreme accuracy and long-range weapons systems, protected cross-country mobility, enhanced surveillance systems and solid communications enable success in a wide range of mission types. Tanks require combined arms integration and intimate protection to perform tasks in this environment, and when employed in such a manner can have impressive results. Although not suitable for every mission, every time, tanks assist in avoiding predictability, enable discrimination in the application of force, and increase the options available to the tactical commander. Australia has the means and the ability to deploy this capability to support Australians on operations in Afghanistan. Doing so will ultimately assist in saving lives and achieving mission success.
ENDNOTES

3 Cadieu, ‘Canadian Armor in Afghanistan’, p. 20.
4 Table is based on a qualitative analysis of the performance of different systems against selected criteria. Note that predicted IED protection is higher for tank than PMV as the analysis of tank includes underbelly armour as per the Tank Urban Survival Kit (TUSK) upgrade program.
7 TUSK is a progressive US project comprising a large quantity of enhancements. While Australian tanks have not and will not adopt all enhancements, the slung seating and underbelly armour are assessed as highly advantageous for the warfighting context of Afghanistan.
8 The figure of 150L per hour is derived from the author’s experience in the field as the Tank Officer Instructor at the School of Armour. Fuel usage rates are not constant and cannot be accurately deduced for hourly usage, or per kilometre. This is due to different consumption rates dependent on ground surface, ground moisture content, weather, type of mission and aggression in movement. It should be noted that, contrary to common belief, the tank does not use the same quantity of fuel at idle as it does at higher revolutions.
10 This table is not sourced from standing force element work ratios. It is the result of an analysis of assessed reasonable ratios.
13 This is a suggested format. Doctrinal employment is not prescriptive, as different tactical situations will dictate the requirement for different QRF construction. Note that M113 can be used in conjunction with PMV if required (eg. organic squadron medical M113 and fitter’s track may be used in conjunction with attached PMV containing dismounts).
15 The rationale here is that the local effects of the 120mm round are devastating but, unlike a less accurate system such as the 12.7mm machine gun or the 25mm cannon, the surrounding infrastructure remains unaffected.
The assistance of Colonel Mick Reilly is acknowledged in the writing of this article.

**THE AUTHOR**

Captain Tim Tiller joined the Australian Regular Army in 1999, in which he attended the Australian Defence Force Academy to graduate with a Bachelor of Science. He was allocated to the Royal Australian Armoured Corps after graduating from the Royal Military College in 2002. Upon completion of his Regimental training, Captain Tiller was appointed as a tank troop leader in the 1st Armoured Regiment, where he remained as a squadron second in command until 2006. He was posted to the School of Armour in 2007, and was employed as the Tank Officer Instructor in Tactics Wing at the time of writing.
After eight years of war, more than 907 Americans dead and 4,400 wounded, and $227 billion in aid from the United States alone, Afghanistan was “deteriorating” badly, according to the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) commander, General Stanley McChrystal, in an August 2009 report to the Secretary of Defense.\(^1\) Although General McChrystal has been more optimistic of late, the fact remains that the Taliban’s reach is more extensive now than at any time since being expelled from Kabul eight years ago. They have shadow governors in every province except Kabul. People turn to Taliban courts rather than state courts for justice in many parts of Afghanistan. And many Afghans prefer the Taliban’s austerity over the Karzai government’s corruption and incompetence. Why?

Why have the Taliban and their al Qaeda allies, who just a few years ago were reviled by the vast majority of Afghans for their brutality and fanaticism, grown in strength and popularity during nearly a decade of US and international assistance? More broadly, why has massive international development assistance in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere failed to defeat the grip of extremist ideologies among many people who have benefited from billions of dollars worth of aid? Is it even possible for international development aid to help defeat radical Islam and other ideologies hostile to the West and, if so, how?

The conflict in Iraq taught the US military many valuable lessons about how to gain the trust and cooperation of the local populace in the fight against radical Islamic insurgents, demonstrated in the new counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy implemented during the 2007 “surge.” First, the Anbar Awakening established a successful precedent of the US military partnering with local tribes against insurgents, a tactical approach that could be considered “COIN 1.0.” Next, COIN theorists led by General David Petraeus described the Clear-Hold-Build strategy to transition and expand tribal security alliances into long-term governance arrangements, a strategic advance that can be termed “COIN 2.0.” General McChrystal and ISAF forces are applying many of these lessons in their current COIN operations in Afghanistan. There remains, however, a substantial doctrinal need to move from tactical methods that cultivate and develop tribal alliances to the strategic use of international aid to defeat insurgencies broadly and decisively. The authors term this new strategic approach to providing development aid in conflict areas “COIN 3.0.”

This article explains how civilian and military policy-makers have incorrectly assumed that international development aid is inherently beneficial to local populations; necessarily fosters stability; and invariably leads to a grateful populace that will shun insurgents, thereby advancing US strategic goals. The article posits that using international aid to combat radical Islamic insurgencies is more complex than aid advocates assume and outlines a different conception of what constitutes development. Finally, it explains how small-scale, micro-development based on corporate social responsibility practices, rather than traditional foreign aid, will have the greatest and most enduring impact against Islamic insurgencies. Such an approach most effectively inculcates beliefs and institutionalizes behaviors that are congenial to the West while being sensitive to local conditions.

AFGHANISTAN: MORE OF THE SAME

At the recent London Conference on Afghanistan, which brought together leaders and ministers from 60 nations, “the international community pledged to maintain its long-term commitment to Afghanistan,” without explaining why the prior eight years of assistance had produced such limited results. The new US Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy, announced the week before the London Conference, also omitted any explanation. Except for calling past efforts “historically under-resourced,” last summer’s report from General McChrystal also offered no account.

The international consensus on how to stabilize Afghanistan remains the same: provide more and better military and development aid to help build a credible national Afghan government, especially its security forces. The London Conference
pledged, among other things, to support the “growth and expansion of the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police” as well as a “better coordinated and resourced civilian effort” to overcome Afghanistan’s “formidable development challenges.” Similarly, the *Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy* calls for a global coalition to “contribute increased civilian and military resources, pursue efforts to build legitimate trade and economic activity, curb illicit financial flows, and provide critical political support.” General McChrystal’s report did recognize the “urgent need for a significant change to our strategy and the way that we think and operate” in Afghanistan, including treating the Afghan people as the main objective of the COIN effort. But despite the report’s innovations, it too focuses on improving Afghan security forces “through greater partnering” and “improving governance at all levels through both formal and traditional mechanisms.” But these efforts are not enough, because traditional mechanisms frequently ignore local self-determination and are often characterized by local rivalries, corruption, and even tyranny.

Many of the initiatives by ISAF and other foreign governments active in Afghanistan are laudable. In a nation where 70 percent of the population is less than 22 years old, promoting jobs, education, and the overall economy is vital. When more than 80 percent of the population believes that corruption is a serious problem, accountability and good governance initiatives are crucial.⁵ No matter how successful these programs are, however, in order for foreign military and civilian efforts to have an enduring impact, they have to fundamentally alter Afghan society’s vulnerability to theocracy, xenophobia, intolerance, sexism, and clannishness. Until Afghans can develop the institutions and mores to overcome these characteristics, Afghanistan will not be able to resist those who foster and exploit them—the Taliban and al Qaeda. Put another way, for sustainable success, international assistance needs to gain the support and trust of a traditional society even as foreign aid transforms it. To do that, programs to promote security forces, good government, and economic development will not be enough.

**THE SMART POWER CONSENSUS**

There is a widespread consensus in US civilian and military policy circles that the Bush Administration relied too much on the use of force or “hard power” to promote its foreign policy goals. As an alternative, foreign policy thinkers developed the concept of “smart power” to further America’s strategic objectives at a reduced

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Programs to promote security forces, good government, and economic development will not be enough.
human cost. In the words of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, smart power employs “the full range of tools at our disposal—diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural” to advance US interests, security, and values.⁶

In fact, well before the Obama Administration took office, the US military had implemented a doctrinal shift toward smart power, especially in counterinsurgency campaigns and stability operations. At the policy level over the last eight years, numerous military and civilian counterinsurgency experts advocated integrating soft and hard power, emphasizing that economic and infrastructure development is part of successful counterinsurgency operations. In July 2005, then-Major General Peter Chiarelli, commander of the deployed 1st Cavalry Division at the time, recognized that sewer, water, electricity, trash, and employment activities in Iraq were as important as security operations to stabilize the nation.⁷ As a result, the Army and Marine Corps produced a joint field manual on counterinsurgency and now conduct extensive stability operations training. “The integration of civilian and military efforts is crucial to successful COIN operations. All efforts need to focus on supporting the local populace and HN [host nation] government,” the joint manual directs. “Political, social, and economic programs are usually more valuable than conventional military operations in addressing the root causes of conflict and undermining an insurgency.”⁸ Each service also has produced other doctrinal manuals that include political and economic development concepts. In addition, the Army has rewritten four manuals that guide its overall strategic direction, each of which codifies smart power as a major component of Army doctrine.⁹

Most recently, the US Army provided commanders from the brigade level and lower with guidance on using funds to defeat “COIN targets without creating collateral damage by motivating antigovernment forces to cease lethal and nonlethal operations, by creating and providing jobs along with other forms of financial assistance to the indigenous population, and by restoring or creating vital infrastructure.”¹⁰ But aside from listing various types of projects that may be helpful toward achieving these goals—such as water and food production, healthcare, sanitation, electricity, and education—there is little-to-no guidance on how to select projects, whether or how to enlist local support in their design and development, or even how to determine if an aid project is actually helpful. Rather, by far the greatest emphasis is on compliance with government contracting requirements. Simply integrating civil and military efforts is not enough.

THE DEVELOPMENT DISCONNECT

While winning short-term support from locals through cash infusions and small development projects may be an effective “weapon system” at the tactical level, especially when battling insurgents, local commanders often have little time or
expertise to assess and implement the full strategic potential of development aid. Frequently, the civilian aid workers assigned to Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) have to focus on specific projects and are evaluated according to standard development metrics, such as the number of schools built, roads paved, or wells dug. Given the emphasis on finishing aid projects before PRT deployments end and the brevity of certain deployments, as short as a few months in some cases, there is little opportunity to tackle challenges that require extended, fundamental change.

On a broader level, although many of the military’s new manuals task commanders with developing local cultural awareness, they reflect the flawed assumptions of much smart power thinking: western-style political institutions are the remedy to instability; major infrastructure projects will have the greatest improvement on people’s lives; and development necessarily promotes gratitude and loyalty to aid providers. Along with the flawed belief that these acts will result in the target population’s adoption of western values of human rights, democracy, good governance, and the rule of law.

Many civilian smart power advocates share these assumptions. In seeking to extend an open hand rather than the Bush Administration’s clenched fist, smart power proponents have unwittingly adopted the prior Administration’s misguided notion that Iraqis, Yemenis, and tribesmen throughout Afghanistan and Pakistan want the same things that Americans desire, namely democracy, free markets, pluralism, and similar values. Through economic development, improved healthcare, educational opportunities, and other material improvements, smart power advocates believe that the United States and its allies can shift the support of clans and tribes away from radical Islam to more secular, universal values. Indeed, reared in the tradition of the New Deal, Democrats have been especially attracted to the dogma that material improvements in people’s lives can shift political loyalties away from al Qaeda and the Taliban toward the United States, its allies, and the West in general.

Traditional societies of the Middle East and Central Asia, however, operate on a host of principles and values that may be at odds with western notions of justice, honor, and freedom. For example, in clan culture, justice might be more about retribution than due process; honor is rooted more in familial reputation than nationalist pride; and parents often want their daughters to be married more than they want them legally or politically emancipated. Even in the United States, as Thomas Franks observed, people frequently base their political allegiances more on cultural or religious values than they do on economic self-interest.11 This is not to say that humanitarian aid and development programs should not be a central focus of US foreign policy or that such programs cannot benefit national
security. The United States and other forces of modernity, however, are competing against radicalized Islamic challengers, who operate under the pretense of traditional values and cultural affinity with local societies.

To succeed, policy-makers will have to trust in the very people they want most to change, by ceding to them the choice of how to change and what to change. This approach may not guarantee that aid recipients become close US allies in the fight against terrorism, but it is the best way to prevent them from supporting al Qaeda and the Taliban. COIN practitioners can achieve a greater degree of success by recognizing and supporting those traditional values that are consonant with western values, including self-governance and freedom.

THE DEVELOPMENT DILEMMA

Smart power advocates overwhelmingly view development aid as intrinsically benign. After all, development means improving people's health, education, and welfare. When their lives change for the better, smart power thinking posits, people will support the agents that brought improvement. In Afghanistan, those agents are ISAF forces and the Karzai government; elsewhere, they are the West and international aid organizations that espouse western ideals.

But as anyone who has ever implemented a foreign assistance project knows, aid is inherently disruptive and potentially destabilizing, and development does not necessarily translate into pro-American or pro-Afghan government sentiments. Indeed, in much of the countryside the Karzai government is more estranged than ever, with ISAF still seen as occupiers, according to a District Reconstruction Team member who wished to remain anonymous. Years of misrule and abusive, government-backed militias have overshadowed billions of dollars in aid.

Especially in starkly underdeveloped countries such as Afghanistan, foreign development assistance confronts the absorption paradox: Although the need is seemingly infinite, the capacity to absorb foreign aid is quite finite. Limitations in human capacity, infrastructure, and public and private institutions place severe constraints on what can be achieved and how quickly. Once the foreign aid saturation point is reached, excess money quickly becomes a source of waste, abuse, and corruption. But now that US policy-makers believe Afghanistan has been “under-resourced” for the past eight years, military and civilian aid groups will face enormous pressure to spend foreign aid dollars, despite these risks.

Even when well-implemented, foreign aid can be extraordinarily disruptive, challenging every aspect of society. It can distort traditional labor markets, depress prices of locally produced goods while inflating prices of other commodities, and strain natural resources. Foreign aid and the development it brings may upset established economic relations between family members, villagers, clans
and tribes, and among villages and towns. It does so by changing how people make their living, what constitutes property, what is valuable and valued, and who has power over other people’s livelihoods and lives. International aid has the potential to diminish or destroy some kinds of private property, while introducing totally new kinds of property; just as it can introduce whole new skills into a community, while rendering old ones obsolete. It may change how people think and learn, what they believe, and what they trust or how people see themselves, the world in which they live, and those who exert power or influence over them. As a result, development affects who and what is respected, valued, admired, and obeyed. Thus, aid designed to quell violence might actually unleash dynamics that generate conflict, as individuals and groups compete for new sources of wealth and power.

In short, development aid can be revolutionary. It poses the possibility of an upheaval in traditional economic, social, and political relations. Similar to all revolutionary catalysts, its consequences are difficult to foresee, let alone control. Providing development assistance with the goal of promoting political stability for a host nation might thus be profoundly ill-conceived.

In fact, revolutionary change is often desirable. Many lines of authority in developing countries and traditional societies are tyrannical, corrupt, elitist, and factional, all of which can be sources of conflict and oppression and thus easily exploited by insurgents. Increasing the level of development aid without addressing these ailments is futile. The key challenge for COIN advocates is to provide aid that will yield social, political, and economic advances—changes that will be revolutionary but not driven by radical Islam, and that will be fundamental without fostering fundamentalism. To do so, aid providers will have to understand aid as altering established practices and modes of thinking, not just completing projects; and will have to understand development as building values and mores, not just infrastructure. They also will have to marry resources for economic growth with additional resources to foster good governance and social justice.

DEVELOPMENT AS FREEDOM

Some scholars, such as Tufts University researcher Andrew Wilder, are skeptical that development aid can have any strategic impact. Wilder argues, for example, that research shows “that far from winning hearts and minds, current aid efforts are much more likely to be losing them.” If development assistance is conducted the same way it has been for decades, Wilder and his colleagues are probably correct. As he notes, a 1988 US Agency for International Development (USAID) study of the two decades America provided development assistance to Afghanistan prior to the Soviet invasion concluded that:
The United States generally had too much confidence in the applicability of technical solutions to complex social and economic development problems and of the appropriateness and transferability of US values and experience. This overconfidence … meant that too little attention was paid to local circumstances and values in the preparation and execution of aid activities.¹⁴

Health clinics, schools, roads, wells, and other development projects may buy ISAF good will and temporary friends, but they will not improve Afghan society in the long-term. It is a brutal irony that the irrigation canals built by USAID engineers in the 1950s were recently used by Taliban snipers in the battle for Marja, the Taliban stronghold in Helmand province.¹⁵ Efforts to “win hearts and minds” will invariably be temporary, since hearts can be fickle and minds forgetful. The only way to build loyalty is to empower local people to act as partners with government and foreign aid agencies toward shared, long-term objectives. Creating dependency on short-term government or foreign aid will yield temporary alliances, not sustained allegiance, from local populations facing insurgents. The way in which development aid is delivered—establishing a deliberative process, gaining input from all constituencies, respecting dissenting views, and acting on a nondiscriminatory basis—is the key to sustainable progress. These practices will promote the values and behavioral norms necessary to build civil society and promote an affinity with the West.

Harvard professor and Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen envisions freedom as both the primary ends and principal means of development.¹⁶ His conception of freedom is broad and encompasses “processes” in which people can make choices as well as “opportunities” or conditions that allow people to pursue their choices. Specifically, he identifies five complementary yet “distinct types of rights and opportunities” that can help to “advance the general capability of a person.” They are:

- Political freedoms.
- Economic facilities.
- Social opportunities.
- Transparency guarantees.
- Protective security.¹⁷

Development, Sen argues, should not only promote each of these freedoms as instruments to enable “people to lead the kinds of lives they have reason to value,” but also reinforce the link among these freedoms in order to enhance human freedom generally. But how? How should ISAF and civilian development agencies promote societal freedom in places such as Afghanistan, one of the poorest, most corrupt countries on Earth and one that is suffering from overwhelming illiteracy, a vigorous insurgency, and trauma from 30 years of war?

At a minimum, we need to dispel the myth that traditional Islamic societies are immune to change. Contrary to the stereotype of rustic Afghanistan composed
of static “tribal” social and political structures dominated by elders, rural Afghan society is far more fluid and localized. The Army’s Afghanistan Research Reachback Center describes current circumstances as:

Instead of “tribal engagement” in Afghanistan, the [Center] advocates for “local knowledge, cultural understanding, and local contacts,” in the words of David Kilcullen. There are no shortcuts... Most of Afghanistan has not been “tribal” in the last few centuries, and the areas that might have been (majority-Pashtun areas that make up parts of Regional Commands South and East) have changed drastically over the past 30 years.

The authors have worked in traditional Islamic societies confronting terrorism and civil war and have witnessed these societies responding to new challenges and opportunities. The fact that 70 percent of Afghanistan’s population is less than 22 years of age presents an enormous opportunity to shape the future. This cohort is especially impressionable and will embrace change if technology, education, and employment opportunities are available. Those strategists who invoke history as proof that Afghanistan will reject foreign influences have little understanding of how dynamic societies can be if foreigners bring opportunity instead of conquest. One of the most essential elements for success in security and development is harnessing this human potential for change. Indeed, Afghans are already acutely aware of the freedom they enjoy. Eighty percent of Afghans believe that they have more personal freedom now than under the Taliban, a number that has grown despite rising concerns about security. Coupled with development that promotes local empowerment, this sense of freedom will flourish.

On the other hand, government imposed from Kabul, as ISAF continues to promote, will have a hard time gaining acceptance or fulfilling local Afghan aspirations. General McChrystal’s “government in a box, ready to roll in” description of the Afghan governor, administrators, and 1,900 police officers brought into Marja to take control—while an improvement over past COIN operations that did not sufficiently involve the Afghan government—should not be the final goal. Indeed, many members of the Afghan National Security Forces recently used to secure Helmand province “are not from those areas, many times they do not speak the local language or dialect, and can seem just as foreign as US forces,” according to one District Reconstruction Team member with extensive experience in the area.

**MICRO-DEVELOPMENT, MACRO-RESULTS**

Rather than thinking of COIN as a top-down approach to establish security for national government administrators and foreign aid workers to arrive and provide services and development aid to win the hearts and minds of poor and primitive people, COIN 3.0 would engage a broad spectrum of society with a bottom-up
approach. Currently, the Afghan government’s Community Development Councils and National Solidarity Program and the US military’s Commander’s Emergency Response Program have had some success. But village elders, local government officials, and traditional bodies such as “shuras” are not broad enough to empower all Afghans, especially women. The COIN 3.0 approach would challenge aid providers to go deeper into communities and, in turn, would call upon community members to evolve their traditions and practices, including empowering women, ethnic minorities, and other marginalized groups.

Smart power advocates invariably highlight the development expertise of civilian aid agencies, but the authors believe that cutting-edge corporate social responsibility practices adopted by a number of multinational corporations provide a more sophisticated and effective approach. First, COIN 3.0 would begin with a community needs assessment that evaluates local social, economic, political, and risk conditions. This assessment would take special care to include women, children, the elderly, the disabled, ethnic minorities, and others who are often marginalized in traditional societies.

Second, based on this assessment, community members would help develop proposals and would have substantial input in evaluating and selecting projects. Decision-making would be shared by all relevant community members, local government officials, foreign military and civilian aid providers, and other relevant stakeholders. Mechanisms would be created to enable community decision-making and feedback throughout project cycles. Third, local people will help design projects, thereby allowing the community to define goals more precisely, expand potential resources available for projects, and permit the lifecycle of a project to extend beyond the deployment of a particular PRT or other foreign aid provider’s tenure. Fourth, aid providers will train community members to implement and manage as much of a project as possible. Fifth, community members will be involved in monitoring projects to ensure that they meet local expectations, and in modifying projects when necessary.

For their part, foreign and government aid providers need to ensure that programs are fair and inclusive; mend social cleavages; create and reinforce mutually beneficial relationships; and avoid favoritism, corruption, and zero-sum gamesmanship. In addition to providing technical skills and training, outside aid providers need to ensure that projects promote civic skills and practices. Specifically, aid projects should be designed and implemented to promote human rights, inclusiveness, peaceful conflict resolution, the rule of law, democracy, and other values.
that underlie civil society, as much as they are crafted to improve the material lives of local populations. Aid providers should also focus on institutionalizing best practices that are adopted by local populations. In this way, development projects will be sustainable in their truest and richest sense.

Finally, in addition to traditional measures for assessing aid projects—were they completed on time, on budget, within specifications, and without waste and fraud—stakeholders will evaluate projects in light of the original social, economic, political, and risk assessments. This step will permit communities to gauge not just whether a project was successfully completed, but also what changes occurred in the communities themselves. It will also allow aid recipients to assess the practices and institutions that community members adopted to complete the project in order to understand what was effective, what should be improved, and how better to organize and deploy local resources. In this way, good governance can be tracked alongside project cycles during an extended period of time.

Far from COIN in a box, this approach is as organic as possible and evolves from local needs, resources, and priorities; each project also contributes to overall strategic objectives. In fact, the whole character of a local community, the larger society, the government, and aid programs should be integrated into a comprehensive COIN plan.

US Army Special Forces have already used some of these measures in several tactical situations. For example, a Special Forces team was able to gain popular support and operate without being attacked in Zabul province, which was formerly controlled by the Taliban and composed of local people from the same tribe as Mullah Omar, the Afghan Taliban leader. The team did this by creating mutually respectful relationships and inclusive, population-driven projects. They were also sure to include all tribes and villages in the region and to spread equitably the costs and benefits of the projects. As a result, they reduced rivalries among tribes and friction between the Special Forces and the local community.

Applying these practices can be difficult, which explains why they are rarely seen in the COIN context. Government officials or elders rarely give up power or prerogative voluntarily; bureaucrats rarely defer to those less technically trained; and foreign aid workers face enormous pressure to complete public works and infrastructure quickly. The process by which aid projects are selected and implemented is rarely a consideration, except for the desire to limit corruption. For foreign and local military commanders striving to obtain support from local power centers, whether warlords or sheiks, empowering new members of a community and thus potentially destabilizing the traditional decision-making process may seem like a threat to their mission and forces.

Yet it is precisely because social relationships in “traditional” societies have in fact adapted and evolved over hundreds of years that development aid should challenge
local populations to evolve politically and socially as well as economically. The very nature of warfare influences political, economic, and social conditions; it is foolhardy for COIN practitioners to try to avoid change. The essential question is not will there be change, but how will it occur? COIN operations will have to balance short-term and long-term exigencies, while still aiming for enduring social and political progress.

The authors are confident that in the long-term, COIN 3.0’s form of development is more effective for fostering democracy, good governance, community, loyalty, economic growth, entrepreneurialism, employment, and more successful training than the current foreign aid approach. With its emphasis on micro-development, COIN 3.0 is sustainable and flexible. It does not depend on unrealistic or unsustainable contributions from the international community or a central government. Precisely because of its emphasis on the small scale, it can have a powerful, immediate impact, including by improving security.

In Afghanistan, COIN 3.0 can reinforce ISAF’s role as an ally for progress rather than an occupier. Beyond Afghanistan, in places such as Yemen and Egypt, it can help defeat Islamic radicalization by making US assistance the agent of change, not al Qaeda or the Muslim Brotherhood. COIN 3.0 presents rural Afghans and others with opportunities as familiar and intimate as helping their families and as profound and transformative as the struggle for modernity—a struggle the Taliban and al Qaeda will never win.

ENDNOTES


2 Counterinsurgency entails much more than providing development assistance to civilian populations. This article offers some ideas regarding the kind of aid that would be most strategically effective for long-term, far-reaching COIN efforts.


Much of the discussion in this section is based on more than 25 years of combined experience in relief aid and economic development, from the village to ministerial levels, in emerging market nations throughout the world. Two prominent commentaries on the role and shortcomings of development assistance are Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007) and William Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006).


Ibid., 10.


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This article reviews the 2006 US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual along with two major historical works on counterinsurgency. The author does not seek to present a précis of each work. Instead selected threads from each work are drawn out to pose the question: Are these works milestones that further our understanding of counterinsurgency or millstones that place impossible burdens on us? While other books and operational experiences have contributed significantly to the corpus of counterinsurgency thinking, these selected works have been quoted widely as seminal influences.

This article examines selected ideas discussed in three influential ‘big books on small wars’. First published in 1896, C E Callwell’s Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice is our starting point. The second work is the United States Marine Corps’ Small War Manual published in 1940. The US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual, released in December 2006, is the third ‘big book’ in this study.
Although immediately influenced by recent operational lessons, the Counterinsurgency Field Manual also acknowledged the solid intellectual bedrock of past military thought—including our two books on ‘small wars’. So why select these two works when there are so many—by both practitioners of insurgency and counterinsurgency—to choose from?

Firstly, the three works studied in this article were published at roughly fifty year intervals and thus provide three equidistant signposts in counterinsurgency thinking. Secondly, one suspects that the two earlier books are more often referenced rather than actually read, so we shall see what they actually have to say. Thirdly, Small Wars and the Small Wars Manual were not part of the ‘classical’ canon of the post-1945 era inhabited by Thompson, Galula and of late, the ubiquitous John Nagl. This allows us to examine two different, ‘pre-classical’ perspectives on counterinsurgency.² Lastly, the new manual aims to challenge military practitioners to think differently about the challenges posed by insurgencies. This article will examine whether these works have assisted or hindered our understanding of this complex topic.

Most officers would understand the central tenets of classical counterinsurgency thinking: the emphasis on gaining the population’s acquiescence by improving its security and wellbeing; dislocating the insurgent functionally or geographically; the multiple lines of operations (of which combat is but one); and the need for a unified political/military effort (the ‘whole-of-government approach’ in modern parlance). For our purposes here, we can be content with David Kilcullen’s pithy definition that ‘counterinsurgency is armed social work, an attempt to redress basic social and political problems while being shot at’.³

**CALLWELL’S SMALL WARS**

*As a general rule, the quelling of the rebellion in distant colonies means protracted, thankless, invertebrate war.*⁴

It is easy to view Callwell’s book as an anachronism. My copy, a handsome reprint of the 1906 edition, has a stirring painting of the 1884 Battle of Tamai for its cover. In the foreground, we see Sudanese troops armed with short spears and shields advancing towards the British square in the middle distance; some tribesmen have fallen while others crouch and continue running forward. Ahead, shrouded by dust and smoke, stands the thin red line of British infantry, weathering this onslaught.
At first glance, then, this would seem to be a book recounting imperialist campaigns against conquered ‘savages’. But on closer inspection, we perceive something different. This painting shows a Sudanese firing a rifle. Did he pick up a discarded rifle during the battle or was it supplied previously by a rival European power? We also see that the surging wave of Sudanese has passed an abandoned Gatling gun; obviously this battle has not been a one-sided affair and the British have ceded ground (and lost their key fire support weapon) under extreme pressure. A painting capturing an instance of ‘asymmetric warfare’ is an apt cover for a book on the type of wars that ‘regular forces always have most to dread’. In his book, Callwell treats his various enemies, if not with respect, then at least with caution and circumspection.

An artillery officer by training, Callwell served in a number of imperial campaigns and fought against the two of Her Majesty’s most resolute foes—the Afghan tribes and the Boers. He used the term ‘small wars’ to describe those campaigns in which regular, modern, professional forces fought irregulars or forces that were relatively irregular in comparison. Describing his subject as ‘an elastic expression covering a great diversity of conditions’, Callwell noted that such wars could be fought for conquest of new territory, suppressions of rebellions, punitive campaigns in response to a perceived insult or as a ‘campaign of expediency’. These small wars, while displaying different characteristics each time, shared a number of common aspects. They broke out unexpectedly and if not prosecuted quickly, ‘small wars’ often became protracted affairs against an adaptive and cunning enemy. Invariably, this enemy would operate or seek sanctuary in remote and inhospitable areas, where they enjoyed considerable advantages in local knowledge and support.

Let me be clear: Callwell did not write about counterinsurgency as we now understand it. When he spoke of small wars, he meant largely military campaigns against non-professional, non-Western armies, guerrillas or bandits. His book focused almost solely on military solutions at the tactical and operational level to what he saw as military problems. In modern parlance, he adopted an enemy-centric approach in which many of his recommended practices would be considered too harsh for the sophisticated tastes of the modern counterinsurgent. In this way, Small Wars is not a prototype of later ‘classical’ counterinsurgency works. What then, are we to make of Callwell’s robust ‘principles and practice’?

In general, Callwell advocated self-contained columns that pushed out into the remote areas and brought the fight to the enemy.
desired end-state, would dictate the conduct of operations.⁹ Callwell warned that troops—infantry, generally, and lots of them—must be able to work, survive, protect lines of communication and fight in all iterations of small wars, over all types of terrain and against all manner of foes.

We can only guess what Callwell would make of the later ‘classical’ counterinsurgency theory, although we may assume that he would probably disagree with the rationale of the multiple lines of operations executed simultaneously. However, as a British officer with experience in numerous imperial campaigns, which were designed to either open up a country for trade or protect established commercial/imperial interests, Callwell saw defeating the enemy first as the essential precondition for subsequent lines of operation. In due course (and in theory), the British colonial civil service would follow once hostilities concluded and provide governance and public services, in turn creating an indigenous civil service and stability.¹⁰ Local military forces would be trained to take up key roles in imperial constabulary actions.¹¹ Economic development would follow as goods were traded throughout the Empire, locals employed and so on. Questions about imperialism’s morality and actual operation aside, it was the context in which Callwell wrote his dictums: removing the enemy’s military power first was the sine qua non of further success.

Does Small Wars deserve any of the resurgent attention it has enjoyed? Maybe it should be simply seen as a historical examination of just one line of operation—combat—and not as a textbook on counterinsurgency as we understand it. Perhaps Callwell’s weakness was not considering other elements of national power and not viewing the wider, local population as a group to be won over and supported, rather than subdued. For example, he noted clearly that the stance of the wider population was always in doubt, and the commander would never know how many would decide to take part actively in operations against him. He took this ambivalence as a given, not a factor that could be mitigated. Should we chide Callwell for his failure to do more to reach out to the indigenous population or recognise his pragmatic assessment of the reality of human nature?

Callwell also wrote that gathering sound intelligence from the population was difficult. Screening one’s own operations was even more difficult, due to the social system in such theatres of war … news spreads in a most mysterious fashion … the regular army is being watched in all its operations and cannot prevent it.¹² Callwell’s methods meant that he missed the potential to shore up population support …
Conversely, does Callwell challenge our cherished ideas about population-centric counterinsurgency? What Callwell did make clear was that a small war was still a war and to consider it anything else was folly. He advocated that small wars must be prosecuted with all the commander’s will and combat power at his disposal. Failure to do so spawned desultory warfare, with the enemy emboldened, soldiers exposed to small war’s frustrations and dangers, and opinion makers at home increasingly uneasy. Callwell knew whatever technological and organisational advantages an army enjoyed would be undermined or negated in the longer term. He understood that ‘strategy favours the enemy’.13

Callwell adopted an enemy-centric approach, but we should not treat this term as a pejorative per se. If the strategic purpose of the war, such as the speedy recommencement of trade and normalcy, did not warrant the wholesale destruction of the enemy and alienation of the population, then Calwell wrote that other solutions should be found.14 He understood that some foes could be over-awed by a demonstration of military resolve, whereas a ‘savage race swayed by a despotic sovereign’ would have to be defeated in battle.15 Though he used the words of Lord Wolseley, Callwell stressed that the ‘root of the whole matter’ in determining how to defeat or influence one’s opponent was to ‘capture … whatever they prize most and the destruction or deprivation of which will probably bring the war most rapidly to conclusion’.16 In other words, what would be the centre of gravity in each campaign?

If every small war and insurgency is sui generis, logic would lead us to the conclusion that the centre of gravity would be different in each instance. Classical counterinsurgency theory states that the population is always the centre of gravity. But is it not conceivable, that the centre of gravity in a given iteration of an insurgency could be the destruction / defeat / intimidation of the enemy?

Callwell argued that the army must thrust out into the enemy’s country and seek battle, admonishing that it ‘must play to win and not for safety’.17 The modern reader will comment that to fight the enemy, one must first find him and this requires sound intelligence. We may also comment on the effects of urbanisation and other sociological developments which militate against Callwell’s clear cut strategies. However, for Callwell, any misgivings about war’s violent reality were to be ignored and dismissed as misplaced compassion. The greater tragedy was allowing the war to drag out; he knew that aspects of small wars would ‘shock the humanitarian’ so operations should be conducted quickly and with purpose, to bring fighting to an end quickly and decisively; failure to so would result in protracted conflict.18 Contrary to classical counterinsurgency, which stated that excessive military operations can turn the population’s sympathies towards the enemy, Callwell suggested the opposite. He argued ‘a vigorous offensive has the effect of keeping home those who hesitate to take up arms … a bold plan of campaign tends to reduce the hostile forces to the lowest limits and to disincline those who are uncompromised from joining in.’19
On this point, let us not also forget that these military operations were not conducted without some external scrutiny from correspondents (both British and European) and domestic parliamentary inquiries. As such, Callwell did not suppose that an absolute free hand of excessive brutality was an allowable means to an end. To be sure, media ubiquity and influence was nowhere near as pronounced as it is today, and as such, this represents a major influence in the conduct of such wars; one that Callwell would surely have been surprised, and concerned, about.

But we, as modern soldiers in the constant scrutiny of the media, do not have the option to wage a Callwellian campaign, even if we wanted to. Callwell used a brutal but ultimately realistic logic to justify his small war principles, but on these points, modern armies have parted ways with him. In trying to find and isolate the enemy, we must, to a large degree, switch our focus to the local population to gain its support. To assuage public opinion home and abroad, we must limit the use of our military power. These are noble and correct objectives. But ultimately, does our compassion condemn us to courses of action that result in ‘protracted, thankless and invertebrate war’?

**USMC SMALL WARS MANUAL**

> In small wars, tolerance, sympathy and kindness should be the keynote of our relationship with the mass of the population (but) there is nothing in this principle which should make any officer or man hesitate to act with necessary firmness…whenever there is contact with armed opposition.

The *Small Wars Manual* introduces us to the concept of the soldier in another milieu, where he is welfare worker, election official, astute cultural observer and occasionally, combatant. The impact this second work has upon modern counterinsurgency thinking cannot be overstated.

The *Small Wars Manual* distilled the experiences of a number of USMC-led interventions in the Caribbean. We may say that Callwell wrote his work for a general to plan his campaign or an independent column commander his operation; *Small Wars* provided the guiding principles with the tactical context given through after-action reports and proven techniques from the field. In contrast, the *Small Wars Manual* was designed for a company commander with his own area of operations. In that area, he was responsible for all combat missions, intelligence gathering and stabilisation activities.
In so doing, the manual provided practical instruction and ‘how to’ advice for company-level operations ensconced within the strategic, political and legal context of small wars. The Small Wars Manual stressed the importance of the US State Department and the USMC’s working relationship with it. This was paramount in small wars because ‘very junior subordinates of the State Department and the Marine Corps may have to solve problems that might involve the United States in serious difficulties.’

Noting again that the term ‘small war’ could describe any number of iterations, the Small War Manual wrote that it covered limited interventions in a friendly country through to full-blown military expeditions to restore order and governance. As such, US Marines may be required to cooperate with the local government or replicate its functions if in abeyance; support and/or train local security forces; conduct combat operations; and maintain good relations with the locals. Pace Callwell, the Small Wars Manual stressed that ‘the application of military measures may not, by itself, restore peace and orderly government because the fundamental causes of the condition of unrest may be economic, political or social.’

By highlighting this economic, political and social element, the Small Wars Manual introduced us to the conundrum that we still struggle with today: balancing the training, skills and mindsets required for combat with those for stabilisation missions. As such, the manual provided explicit information on how to conduct, supervise and police elections and how to proclaim, create and administer functionally a military government. In particular, by establishing the civilian population as the focal point for efforts, the Small Wars Manual codified the requirement for Marines to possess cultural awareness, circumspection and self-discipline lest they inadvertently injure or alienate civilians. Therefore Marines on such operations must exercise ‘judgement, persistency, patience, tact and rigid military justice.’

This said, the Small Wars Manual still emphasised the principle of the offensive as a key component of the mission. In fact, its advice would have resonated with Callwell: in the early stages of the intervention, a crushing victory that would end the insurgency in one fell swoop was to be desired. However, as the manual tells us resignedly, ‘this is seldom achieved.’ Instead the remnants will disperse into small groups of resistance. Offensive operations, through aggressive patrolling,
then became paramount to the wider mission’s success. Not only did such methods gather intelligence, they served to deny sanctuary to insurgents in remote areas and protect the civilian population as well. In fact, the manual stressed that as long as armed opposition remained, the intervening force had to maintain the offensive. This was as much to maintain the psychological ascendancy as to kill or capture the enemy.\(^{28}\)

Like Callwell, the *Small Wars Manual* argued that the myriad of local nuances and inter-related factors made centralised control unworkable, and as such, local commanders must be given as much autonomy as possible. This meant that any unit in small wars must be ‘tactically and administratively self-sustaining.’\(^{29}\) As local commanders were responsible for all actions—combat, intelligence and civil/political—in their area of operations, specialist staff functions, which would normally reside at formation-level, must be devolved to a much lower level. Intelligence gathering was a case in point, with the manual stressing that ‘every detached post or station must organise and develop its own intelligence system.’\(^{30}\) Sub-units must tailor an aggressive patrolling program to gather local demographic (perhaps via a census-style record) and terrain information to send back to the higher command. These local units would be the ‘subject matter experts’ for their area, feeding intelligence up, rather than being the recipients of centrally processed intelligence from a battalion/formation S2. Anyone who has reaped the benefits of a company-level S2 cell while on independent operations would surely agree with this advice.

As the key overarching concern for such USMC interventions was the speedy restoration of normalcy through the normal functioning of the state, the *Small Wars Manual* stressed that the creation of a constabulary or armed forces was a priority ‘as soon as tranquillity has been secured.’\(^{31}\) It is clear when reading the manual, that the creation of host nation forces was not a line of operation to be executed concurrently with others; instead such forces would be created only after combat operations had concluded and the United States was preparing to withdraw from country in question.

Thus like Callwell, the *Small Wars Manual* identified a number of lines of operation, but argued that they should be executed *sequentially* rather than concurrently. Lest there be any doubt, let us examine the point made in the chapter on ‘Strategy’:

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These local units would be the ‘subject matter experts’ for their area, feeding intelligence up, rather than being the recipients of centrally processed intelligence …
The initial problem is to restore peace. There may be many economic and social factors involved, pertaining to the administrative, executive and judicial functions of the government…peace and industry cannot be restored permanently without appropriate provisions for the economic welfare of the people. Moreover, *productive industry cannot be fully restored until there is peace.* (emphasis added)\(^{32}\)

Despite its age, the *Small Wars Manual* may still be one of the best single volume resources for a company commander on such operations. For sure, one may have limited need for the techniques for correctly fitting a mule with the Phillips pack saddle (although never say never!). However, the manual’s workman-like chapters on the unique requirements of small wars, balanced with a pragmatic view on the use of aggression and force, have remained especially relevant.

The *Small Wars Manual* marked the middle ground chronologically and perhaps more importantly, doctrinally, in this study of counterinsurgency thinking. It was not solely enemy-focused but emphasised the equal importance of restoring legitimacy to the host nation government rendered unstable due to domestic unrest. The final work to be examined here—the US Army/USMC *Counterinsurgency Manual*—takes this concept further. Counterinsurgency is studied in the context of nation-building (or failed state rebuilding) and dealing with transnational threats. Creating a state, in some cases *ab initio*, demands more unusual, non-traditional skill sets, while transnational threats pose particular challenges to contemporary counterinsurgents.

**US ARMY/USMC COUNTERINSURGENCY FIELD MANUAL**

*COIN is fought among the populace. Counterinsurgents take upon themselves responsibility for the people’s well-being in all its manifestations.*\(^{33}\)

Unlike many military doctrinal publications, the US Army/USMC *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (henceforth referred to as the *Field Manual*) is well written, is an engaging read and provides an overarching narrative. Stressing that it is a guide, rather than a prescription for success, the manual is a synthesis of ‘soft’ operations research and decision-making techniques, the emerging field of social network analysis, recent operational experiences, historical anecdotes and perhaps most importantly, ‘classical’ counterinsurgency theory.

Compiled over two years, the manual was the product of multiple academic, military, government and non-government organisations’ contributions and many recent
operational experiences. In particular, the manual has been inordinately influenced by David Galula’s seminal 1964 work, the experience of the British in Malaya, and modern proponents of classical counterinsurgency doctrine such as John Nagl and David Kilcullen.

But the most interesting contributions to the military debate made by the Field Manual are not strictly related to the subject of counterinsurgency. For example, the manual is to be praised for restoring the central role of the human, not technology, in warfare. In so doing, it recognises the essential truth of what warfare was, is and always will be—a clash of wills between adaptive, free-thinking opponents in which human emotions interact with friction, chance and chaos. Counterinsurgency operations involved ‘complex, changing relations among all the direct and peripheral participants … both sides continuously adapt to neutralise existing adversary advantages and develop new (usually short lived) advantages on their own.’ One US battalion commander assessed that the enemy adapted within one week to any tactical changes enacted.

As such, the Field Manual is not just a ‘how to’ guide to fighting insurgency; it is a call to action to become a better learning organisation generally. ‘In COIN,’ the manual argues, ‘the side that learns faster and adapts more rapidly—the better learning organisation-usually wins. Counterinsurgencies have been called learning competitions.’ One would argue that this sound advice is applicable across the conflict spectrum; but determining what constituted a lesson in counterinsurgency is the vexed question. Success may be difficult to determine if second or third-order effects are yet to be seen. Similarly, ‘lessons learned’ may not have universal applicability; for example, just because Anbar ‘awakened’ does not mean Helmand will respond to the same counterinsurgency measures.

The chapter, ‘Designing Counterinsurgency Campaigns and Operations’ introduces strategic decision-making techniques and concepts pertaining to intuitive, naturalistic decision-making and pattern recognition into the common military vocabulary. One can predict that such multi-disciplinary skills, concepts and qualities will gain more attention in military journals and usage generally. This is a general recognition of so-called ‘right brain’ attributes such as big picture synthesis, perception and empathy. Therefore methods tailored to delve into the nature of the problem are introduced as a guide to penetrate the multifaceted ‘wicked problems’ in counterinsurgency.
breaking down a problem into its component parts, but rather to assess the problem in its *gestalt* or entirety. Such is the goal of systems thinking, which ‘seeks to understand the interconnectedness, complexity and wholeness of the elements of systems in relation to one another’.

Therefore ‘Learn and Adapt’ is decreed as the counterinsurgency ‘imperative for US forces’. Due to the decentralised nature of counterinsurgency operations, the role of junior leader decision-making is paramount. As such, the value of pattern recognition, which assists intuitive decision-making in complex and time-pressure situations, is highlighted. Recognising the context and what is out of place requires a deep and broad frame of reference; this can only be gained by experience, education and immersion in prior examples, case studies and anecdotes. Moreover, soldiers must submit their plans and concepts to continual assessment so as to incorporate the evolving complexity of counterinsurgency operations.

By the order of chapters, one can see the emphases in this manual. After a discussion on the nature and characteristics of insurgencies, the manual deals in turn with ‘Unity of Effort: Integrating Civilian and Military Activities’ then ‘Intelligence in Counterinsurgency’ and ‘Developing Host-Nation Security Forces’. This reflects the long-standing importance and common recognition of these subjects in counterinsurgency; Callwell hinted at them, whereas the *Small Wars Manual* referred to them explicitly. The *Field Manual* notes that the counterinsurgency environment is crowded place with non-government organisations, multinational forces, a multitude of US government and other government agencies, each bringing specialist skills and advice to the operation. Orchestrating these disparate groups’ efforts across multiple lines of operation was the key to success.

The *Field Manual* explains that insurgency is attacked by a number of conceptual categories or logical lines of operation (LLO), namely combat operations, support to host nation security forces, and providing essential services, governance and economic development. These LLOs are characterised as strands of rope that are individually of little consequence, but when woven together, form a more powerful multifaceted rope. Information operations (IOs) are overlayed on all these LLOs or as the manual states, ‘may often be the decisive LLO. By shaping the information environment, IOs make significant contributions to setting conditions for success of all other LLOs.’ These LLOs are well understood and its concepts are mirrored to a large extent by the lines of operation in the Australian Army’s *Adaptive Campaigning*. 

… it was clear that the active enemy was to be defeated (or at least severely weakened) before other lines of operation were to be enacted.
What is less understood is the order in which these LLOs are to be applied. In *Small Wars* and *Small Wars Manual*, it was clear that the active enemy was to be defeated (or at least severely weakened) before other lines of operation were to be enacted. The *Field Manual* recommends a three phase process, likened to emergency triage on a patient. The first stage, ‘Stop the Bleeding’, aims ‘to protect the population, break the insurgents’ initiative and set the conditions of further engagement’. The implied order within this stage is protect the population, then attack the insurgents. Stage two is characterised as ‘Inpatient Care – Recovery’ wherein the bulk of what is commonly understood as classical counterinsurgency actions take place. Stability is the goal, with all LLOs developed, especially the host nation military and governance capacity. This achieved, the efforts merge into the final stage, ‘Outpatient Care – Movement to Self-sufficiency’, the main goal of which is to transition the running and conduct of the counterinsurgency to the host nation, with foreign assistance gradually reduced.⁴⁴

This would seem a clear-cut echoing of Callwell and the *Small Wars Manual*; security first, then nation-building in all its forms. But the manual is less clear than one would expect. Therefore, while it stresses that ‘accomplishing the objectives of combat operations/civil security operations sets the conditions needed to achieve essential services and economic objectives’, the manual also informs that ‘progress along each LLO contributes to attaining a stable and secure environment for the host nation’. In other words, all LLOs are equal and security is not necessarily a prerequisite for other LLOs to operate. Indeed the manual argues other LLOs that assist the ‘progressive, substantial reduction of the root causes of insurgency’ reinforce stability.⁴⁵

This tension between a ‘security first, nation-building later’ mindset and one more in line with classical counterinsurgency precepts is never fully resolved in the manual.

This also assumes that the root causes of insurgency are material (rather than religious or ideological) and can be challenged by nation-building measures. Moreover, the manual would seem to believe that democracy, rather than something more Hobbesian, is the natural state of affairs in the world. A major tenet of this nation-building is grafting democracy onto an extant belief system, which may or may not be receptive to this graft.

In her introduction to the University of Chicago edition of the manual, Sarah Sewell, a human rights academic, noted ‘if these other instruments of national power don’t show up, can’t stay or aren’t effective, the buck then passes back to the military.’⁴⁶ This captures the greatest concern one may have with classical

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counterinsurgency theory and the Field Manual. While a ‘whole-of-government’ approach understands that civilian agencies and other government organisations are better suited to provide civilian services, the fact remains that the military will assume these roles when the insurgency is still violent and relative stability cannot be guaranteed. Again, this highlights the tension between the ‘simultaneous’ and ‘subsequent’ LLO constructs. If the active insurgent elements are not weakened enough so that nation-building efforts can take place in relative safety, these government and non-government agencies will be withdrawn. The military will then be forced to undertake tasks in which it has little expertise. It would seem in the best interests of the ‘whole-of-government approach’ with its division of labour, that the military achieve security and a level of dominance over the enemy first. If this is not achieved, the military must undertake combat and nation-building roles simultaneously, leading to a dilution of effort and confusion about its raison d’être.

There are three further points in relation to this. The first is that the manual would seem to have an unrealistic belief in the efficacy of a central military/civilian controlling authority. One may legitimately question the chances of success of a ‘whole-of-government approach’ in a war-torn country, coordinating the efforts of many disparate groups within the friction of the counterinsurgency context. Governments have a hard enough time coordinating and providing these services in their own country in peacetime.

Secondly, the manual is advocating this approach—it does not yet exist beyond the nominal services provided by USAID. This point cannot be stressed enough. Normally doctrine is guided by strategy and overarching government aims. Instead, the manual reverses this trend and asks ‘civilian agencies to detail their missions and develop capabilities’; in so doing the ‘risks and cost of counterinsurgency would be spread across the US government’.

In order to have a ‘whole-of-government’ approach, with all its benefits, governments must be prepared to send more than just soldiers. Until governments understand and commit to this, the manual’s ideal division of labour will continue to be wishful thinking.

Thirdly, one suspects that by placing an equal emphasis on all lines of operation, rather than prioritising some over others, a phenomenon—which we may call military relativism—has arisen. By treating the building of bridges, doling out of medical supplies and the aggressive targeting of the insurgents’ sanctuaries as tasks of equal importance, warfighting becomes ‘just another’ task. This presents a skewed operational context and allows contributing countries with justifications to commit only medical teams or engineers. After all, if providing essential services is just as important as combat operations, why would a country contribute combat troops and risk the public backlash when the casualties start occurring? Has this military relativism created an unintended rod for the United States’ back, and as a result, it must conduct the vast majority of combat operations itself?
Previously, we posited for whom _Small Wars_ and _Small Wars Manual_ was written. The _Field Manual_ was written for ‘leaders and planners at battalion level and above.’\(^4^8\)

This provoked some commentators to accuse the manual of being too esoteric. To be sure, its high-level, academic, synthesis approach means that it is not an explanatory manual in the classic sense. This author found the manual’s tone and approach (if not all its content), attractive. However, to augment this manual, the US Army has just released a companion volume: Field Manual Interim 3-24.2, _Tactics in Counterinsurgency_. This links tactical actions to the larger context, provides new acronyms for mission analysis, and orders writing and section/platoon/company tactics, techniques and procedures.\(^4^9\)

When treated as a whole volume, it mirrors the British counterinsurgency pamphlet, which combined a higher level study of the topic with a ‘nuts and bolts’ methodology for troops at the tactical level.\(^5^0\)

The _Field Manual_ is a great read, introduces new disciplines such as decision analysis, social network analysis and stresses the importance of rapid organisational learning to outlearn the enemy. However, it is anchored squarely in classical counterinsurgency doctrine and some of its conclusions would seem unduly influenced by a ‘best case’ view of counterinsurgency operations.\(^5^1\) The manual warns that each insurgency is different and does so admirably in its contextual chapters. Intuitively therefore, one would suggest that there would be no one ‘way’ of waging a counterinsurgency campaign; the manual instructs otherwise. It also bequeaths complex, non-traditional roles to the military with little suggestion of how the military is to attain the skills to fulfil these roles. Being flexible and operating across the full spectrum of operations is one thing. The _Counterinsurgency Field Manual_ would seem to impose orthodoxy of a different kind; a mindset that nation-building is the key role of militaries in the future.

**CONCLUSION – MILESTONES OR MILLSTONES?**

*I thought I understood something about counterinsurgency, until I started doing it.*

Major John Nagl, Khaldiya, Iraq, 2004.\(^5^2\)

If we accept that strategy is about defining priorities and thus making trade-offs, we also accept that we can only achieve strategic ends with the means we possess. Strategy in turn drives operational theory and doctrine. Our _Adaptive Campaigning_
doctrine mirrors many of the precepts in the *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, and the Australian Army will have some deep soul searching to do. The same questions about what strategy we wish to pursue and thence the core purpose of our army and the skills it should possess will occupy us as well. Is nation-building the best way to counter an insurgency? If so, are we prepared to spend the time, money and lives pursuing this strategy? If this is the end we seek, is the military—in particular, the Army—the best means to meet this end?

John Nagl, a key proponent of the US counterinsurgency strategy, served in Iraq as his battalion’s operations officer. He had previously won acclaim with his exquisitely-timed book on counterinsurgency and thus proceeded on his tour with the reputation of an expert. He found that counterinsurgency was easier to write about as a concept than it was to practise in the field. We may also say the same about the varied skills soldiers are told to acquire for the new operational environment. It is easy to write about in theory, but significant and drastic trade-offs would need to made about the organisation, training and very core values the Army holds.

We progressed from an enemy-centric focus in Callwell to a hybrid enemy / population-centric stance in the *Small Wars Manual*. The *Field Manual* morphed further into a population-centric doctrine that does not seek simply to restore the legitimacy of the government, but rather create the concept and apparatus of government *ab initio* in the context of nation-building. Remember our definition of counterinsurgency as ‘armed social work, an attempt to redress basic social and political problems while being shot at’? This is social work writ large, with Western governments asked to foot a massive bill over a long period of time, hoping that by dragging some societies into the twenty-first century, its members will not succumb to radicalisation.

A debate rages in the various military journals and blogs. Proponents of various emphases in counterinsurgency have coalesced into camps of ‘COINdinistas’, ‘crusaders’ and conservatives. Some take issue with the dilution of traditional military skills in the interests of nation-building. Others question whether the threat of transnational Islamic groups, with utopian ideals, can be defeated using traditional or classical counterinsurgency doctrine. We have Rupert Smith declaring ‘war no longer exists’ but Colin Gray assuring us that we will face ‘another bloody century’. Western militaries continue to grapple with the ramifications of this debate.

Is it time to develop a fourth iteration of counterinsurgency doctrine, that of a ‘home-centric’ focus? In the introduction to the *Field Manual*, it noted that enemies will try to exhaust Western nations’ will by undermining and outlasting public support, that
counterinsurgency campaigns will be long and difficult with success hard to measure. Recent polls suggest that the Australian public is overwhelmingly against a further increase of our very modest commitment due to the death of twenty-one Australian soldiers in Afghanistan. Our media is imbued with an almost institutional degree of anti-Western *schadenfreude*. Do we need to do more to protect our critical vulnerability of public opinion? In this fourth iteration, the population would still be the centre of gravity, but the population we would be protecting is *ours*, from the reality of war.

So we come back to our original question and basis for our study: do these three ‘big books on small wars’ help or hinder our understanding of counterinsurgencies? Are they true milestones that guide our way, or millstones that limit our ability to adapt to new iterations of insurgencies?

We have discussed at length the key issues and differences in enemy-centric and population centric strategies. This said, a number of threads are common to all three works. All iterations of insurgency will be different and care must be taken not to seek generic solutions. The role of intelligence is crucial and will drive all operations. The situation will be fluid and is best served by command devolved down to lower levels; as such small-unit leadership is paramount. All agree that infantry will be the key arm of any counterinsurgency operation and that local commanders will be responsible for all lines of operation in the areas of operation. The acceptance of risk and commitment to operate away from secure bases was consistent in all three. And all of these works warned that ‘small wars’ often drag out into long wars.

If we understand that all insurgencies are *sui generis* and use these ‘big books on small wars’ to provide illumination through historical context, we may consider them useful milestones. However, if against such inchoate threats, we rely on any one way or doctrine as an article of faith, such works may well be millstones that drag us into long, costly and bloody ventures for which we are ill-suited.

**ENDNOTES**


2 For further exploration of this theme, see David Kilcullen, ‘Counterinsurgency Redux’, *Survival*, Vol. 48, No. 4, Winter 2006–07.

4 Callwell, *Small Wars*, p. 27.
5 Ibid., p. 126.
6 Ibid., p. 483.
7 Of course, the Spanish term *guerrilla* means 'little' or 'small war'.
8 There are a number of points of interest in Callwell’s book that are not related to our discussion on counterinsurgency. He described the development of what we recognise as light infantry tactics and the effects various types of terrain had on command and control, tactical formations and engagement ranges. He noted that the terrain would dictate how any engagement would be fought. In close scrub, the range of firearms was severely limited, so that one of the technological advantages of regular forces was reduced. Not only were engagement ranges shorter but maintaining tactical control was difficult. When operating in mountainous areas, it was important to move along and command the high ground—a tactic later known to Australian Infantry in New Guinea and Korea as ‘running the ridges’. Callwell, *Small Wars*, pp. 246, 249, 257, 286–92, 458.
9 Callwell noted that the absence of a frontline made the question of resupplying columns operating in enemy territory a vexed one. One solution was to create a series of forts—a prototype forward operating base but Callwell expressed some doubts about the unintended side effects of stationing troops in these forts. The new COIN manual expands on this further. See Callwell, pp. 65, 278.
11 For some discussion on the historical basis on British small war/counterinsurgency theory, see I A Rigden, *The British Approach to Counterinsurgency: Myths, Realities and Strategic Challenges*, US Army War College, 2008.
13 Ibid., p. 85.
14 Ibid., pp. 41–42.
15 Ibid., p. 42.
16 Ibid., p. 40.
17 Ibid., p. 75.
18 Ibid., p. 40.
19 Ibid., p. 76.
20 But as I will argue later in the article, I do not subscribe to an absolutist belief that ‘population-centric’ strategy is necessarily pertinent to fighting future iterations of insurgency.
22 The *Small Wars Manual* captured the lessons of the USMC’s so-called ‘Banana Wars’ at a time when the USMC was in the midst of an internal doctrinal debate. In this way, the *Small Wars Manual* shared a similarity with Callwell’s work. Callwell wrote
about ‘small wars’ and the final edition of his work would soon be overshadowed by
the outbreak of the First World War—a conventional conflict writ large—and his
dictums ignored for more than half a century. However, at that time the USMC was
debating whether it should shift its focus onto amphibious operations in conventional
conflict. Again the course of history—this time the extensive amphibious operations
in the Pacific theatre during the Second World War—overshadowed small war theory.
See John P Sullivan, USMC, 'The Marine Corps' Small Wars Manual and Colonel
C.E Callwell’s Small Wars – Relevant to the Twenty First Century or Irrelevant
Anachronisms?', submitted in partial fulfilment for Master of Military Studies, USMC
Command and Staff College, Quantico, 2006, p. 24.

23 USMC, Small Wars Manual, Chapter One, p. 34.
24 Ibid., Chapter One, p. 15.
25 Ibid., Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen.
26 Ibid., Chapter One, p. 31.
27 Ibid., Chapter Six, p. 1.
28 Ibid., Chapter Six, p. 2.
29 Ibid., Chapter Two, p. 43.
30 Ibid., Chapter Two, p. 27.
31 Ibid., Chapter Twelve, p. 2. See also Robert M Cassidy, ‘Back to the Street Without
Joy: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam and Other Small Wars’, Parameters,
Summer 2004, pp. 76–80; and Michael M Melillo, ‘Outfitting a Big War Military with
33 United States Department of the Army, US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency
Field Manual, (US Army Field Manual No 3-24/Marine Corps Warfighting
Publication No 3-33.5), reprint of the 2006 edition, University of Chicago Press,
34 The impetus behind the manual was General David Petraeus and he effectively acted
as sponsor for the project. He appointed an old West Point classmate, Conrad Crane,
now Director of the Military History Institute at the United States Army War College
to be the author-in-chief.
35 US Department of the Army, COIN Field Manual, p. 196.
36 Ross A Brown, ‘Commander’s Assessment: South Baghdad’, Military Review,
January–February 2007, p. 27.
37 US Department of the Army, COIN Field Manual, p. 1ii.
Review, March/April 2008; General David W Barno, ‘Fighting “The Other War” –
October 2007; and blogs such as Small Wars Journal <http://www.smallwarsjournal.


Ibid., p. lii.

Ibid., p. 160.


Ibid., pp. 154–58.


Ibid.

Ibid., p. xlvi.


The conduct of the British counterinsurgency campaign is consistently held up as the acme to aspire to. Indeed, it is the gold standard, but by the same token, modern counterinsurgents will never ‘enjoy’ the environment the British did in this campaign, such a self-isolating enemy, sanctuaries quarantined by geography and an extant and full-functioning colonial bureaucracy. Proponent who use the Malayan experience as the benchmark overlook the fact that even with these very benign conditions, it took more than a decade to bring the insurgency to conclusion, and a large part of this was due to Britain granting independence.


For example, do we use our limited and specialised medical services to support our operations in the field or divert them to provide services to the population? See S J Neuhaus, N I Klinge, R M Mallet and D H M Saul, ‘Adaptive Campaigning: Implications for Operational Health Support’, *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. V, No. 3, Summer 2008.


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ABANDONING THE TEMPLE

JOHN BOYD AND CONTEMPORARY STRATEGY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JASON THOMAS

ABSTRACT

John Boyd is a military theorist who achieved significant influence on military thought with his renowned OODA Loop. His thoughts evolved during the Cold War, but he did consider guerrilla and irregular warfare. The majority of his work dealt with this security environment as his frame of reference. The author believes that Boyd’s work remains relevant to the contemporary security environment. Boyd’s approach to strategy is articulated and then discussed using the 9/11 Commission Report as a tool for comparison. We will see that the apparent simplicity of Boyd’s theories conceal some profound analyses that enables them to be broadly applicable to contemporary security problems. The article concludes with a call to revisit Boyd’s work in totality in the way the ADF approaches military planning.

The OODA Loop may appear too humble to merit categorization as good theory, but that is what it is. It has an elegant simplicity, an extensive domain of applicability, and contains a high quality of insight about strategic essentials, such that its author well merits honourable mention as an outstanding general theorist of strategy.

Colin S Gray
Nothing is more difficult, and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide.

Napoleon

Great strategists and theorists emerge from many areas and backgrounds. The truly great rarely appear to be fostered or formally developed by the nation that they will ultimately serve. Most continue their work despite this and fate calls them to the stage when the act is written specifically for them. John Boyd, however, departed that stage during his soliloquy, not because his ideas were incomplete, but because the audience did not quite comprehend the potential of his verse. As the historian and strategic analyst Colin Gray argues, Boyd deserves greater recognition and study, particularly since his simple OODA (observe, orient, decide and act) Loop and resulting work have significantly influenced contemporary US military concepts, equipment design and have even reached into the realm of business strategy.

A former Commandant of the United States Marine Corps (USMC) referred to Boyd as the architect of victory in the First Gulf War. Boyd revolutionised the rules of design for fighter aircraft and combat, made a major contribution to the development of ground attack aircraft and, more importantly, encouraged innovation in US military combat concepts. In the 1980s and 1990s, Boyd’s theories were instrumental in ensuring that US military might massively over-matched any adversary encountered on the field of battle.

But the application of military power is only one facet of strategy. Just as strategy is a broader topic, so too the scope of Boyd’s work is extensive—far more extensive, in fact, than most strategists assume. The purpose of this article is to analyse Boyd’s work in the realm of strategy, his area of focus later in life. The resulting discussion will place Boyd’s work in the context of a major strategic event: the 11 September 2001 attack and its immediate aftermath—specifically, the 9/11 Commission Report key recommendations. The specific and overall relevance of Boyd’s theories will then be examined, as will the fact that these theories provide an overarching framework for dealing with contemporary issues that is surprisingly robust. As with any theory, the relevance of Boyd’s thought to present-day conflict depends to some extent on what latter-day theorists choose to make of it.

… the relevance of Boyd’s thought to present-day conflict depends to some extent on what latter-day theorists choose to make of it.
Boyd was a theorist of conflict. He began in the narrow realm of air-to-air combat tactics where, as a fighter pilot instructor, he was revered. As he analysed fighter tactics during the Korean War, Boyd noticed a discrepancy in the loss exchange ratio between the US F-86 Sabre and the Soviet-built Mig-15. Theoretically, the Mig-15, with a superior rate of climb and higher speed, was the better aircraft. Yet F-86 pilots had a superior kill ratio. Boyd assessed that a number of factors gave the US pilots the advantage. First, the F-86 had a high-set cockpit which allowed better observation. F-86 pilots were also better trained in air-to-air combat tactics; they were more skilful in orienting to the situation and deciding on the best tactics to employ. In addition, the F-86 had fully hydraulic powered flight controls while the Mig-15 had only hydraulically assisted controls. Thus the F-86 pilots could transition from one manoeuvre to another more rapidly. This became the core of Boyd's fundamental (but not sole) legacy for strategists—the observe, orient, decide, act (OODA) loop or 'Boyd Cycle'. A combatant able to move through this loop more quickly than an opponent will ultimately disorient that adversary and be able to strike before the adversary can effectively respond. Boyd went on to expand this cycle, constructing a more comprehensive form which will be considered later in this article.

Boyd's theory permeated US military doctrine in the 1980s and 1990s; it still forms the core of USMC instruction in tactics and is extensively analysed within the US Army. US military power is a key component of contemporary strategy (both nuclear and conventional), and the efficiency of military force is one of the foundations of military power—and thus strategy. The use of military power is but one component of strategy (albeit a rather potent and costly one) and the OODA Loop has exerted a significant influence in the realm of military operations. This much is generally known and accepted by military strategists. What is less appreciated is the potential for Boyd's theories to extend beyond the realm of contemporary military strategy.

The majority of Boyd's work takes the form of extended slide presentations which Boyd refused to abbreviate. One of his first published essays, 'Destruction and Creation', is exceedingly difficult to read and, while containing many innovative ideas, is not well structured. It was not until the doctoral work of Dr Frans Osinga that a novice to the discipline could view Boyd's work holistically. Osinga defined Boyd's series of slide shows as a 'discourse', starting with 'Patterns of Conflict' (probably his foundation presentation), moving to 'Organic Design for Command and Control' (citing the need for directive control on operations), 'The Conceptual Spiral' and 'The Essence of Winning and Losing'.

Boyd developed a framework for three realms of strategy: the physical, the mental and the moral.
Boyd’s most important strategic presentation was ‘The Strategic Game of ? and ?’ (in which the question marks represent ‘winning’ and ‘losing’ respectively). Boyd developed a framework for three realms of strategy: the physical, the mental and the moral. In conflict, a strategy must be focused on isolating an adversary in all of these domains. Boyd also turned this construct 180 degrees, citing the need for open communication within, information about, and understanding of the ‘world’ with which the strategist must engage. This facilitates engagement with the strategies of allies, avoiding the creation of unnecessary adversaries and allowing the identification of true enemies.

In summary, Boyd advocates that strategists:

Shape or influence the moral-mental-physical atmosphere that we are a part of, live in, and feed upon so that we not only magnify our inner spirit and strength, but also influence political adversaries and current adversaries as well as the uncommitted so that they are drawn toward our philosophy and empathetic toward our success; yet be able to

Morally-mentally-physically isolate our adversaries from their allies and outside support as well as isolate them from one another, in order to: magnify their internal friction, produce paralysis, bring about their collapse; and/or bring about a change in their political/economic/social philosophy so that they can no longer inhibit our vitality and growth.

While this is, of course, easier said than done, it possesses an ‘elegant simplicity’—a description that Colin Gray also applies to the OODA Loop. The emphasis on the moral basis for strategy permeates Boyd’s work and is incorporated in his final version of the OODA Loop. He also highlighted the importance of the ‘orient’ phase, reminding strategists that they must be aware not only of the cultural mores of others, but also of their own.

One of the pivotal events of the past decade and probably the next—the 11 September 2001 attack—is thoroughly permeated with the theories of John Boyd. Indeed, further application of Boyd’s work to this event would be illuminating. At this stage, there is little point analysing the 11 September 2001 attack in detail; suffice to say, the inability to detect (observe) and discover the intent of (orient) the terrorists quite clearly prevented the containing (decide) and capture/killing (act) of the terrorists. The initiation of the US government’s decision cycle came far too late and structural faults in command and control prevented a coherent response.

The key overarching theme of the follow-up actions recommended in this chapter is the need for unity of effort.
At no point before 9/11 was the Department of Defense fully engaged in the mission of countering al-Qaeda, though this was perhaps the most dangerous foreign enemy. It is in the recommendations of Chapter 13 of the 9/11 Commission Report that the threads of Boyd are most apparent. The key overarching theme of the follow-up actions recommended in this chapter is the need for unity of effort. Four of the five major government recommendations call for unity: unification of strategic intelligence and operational planning (better observation); a unified Director of National Intelligence (better orientation and decision-making); unified information-sharing systems (better orientation); and superior Congressional oversight to improve quality and accountability (ensuring better decision-making [apparently]). Even the fifth recommendation, the strengthening of the FBI and homeland defence, underpins the ability of the United States to ‘act’ against the terrorist threat. Boyd’s ‘elegant simplicity’ runs right through the recommendations for government reform.

It is, however, in the preceding chapter that Boyd’s simple approach to grand strategy finds relevance. A key theme of Chapter 12 is the call to see beyond terrorism itself, to use all elements of national power and to include (in this case) Moslem nations as partners in development and implementation. This chapter resonates with Boyd’s three strategic environments: the physical, the mental and the moral. Boyd’s ‘physical’ environment is represented in the report’s recommendation to target terrorist sanctuaries and organisations and to decisively support counter-terrorism or confront terrorist support in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia. This recommendation places the emphasis squarely on the physical domain, as does the call to protect and prepare the United States for terrorist attacks. Many of the recommendations also extend into Boyd’s ‘mental’ domain. The emphasis on broadening the national strategy to a coalition strategy again reinforces the importance of both the mental and Boyd’s ‘moral’ domain. But it is probably in the moral domain, in seeking to engage the Islamic community, that the strongest alignment with Boyd’s preference for positive engagement is apparent. How effectively the Bush administration implemented these recommendations is a task for others to assess.

The challenges of contemporary strategy are not simply confined to the application of national power against religious fanatics. As the current US Secretary of State commented acidly, the 5000 nuclear warheads possessed by the United States make the destructive power of a few hijacked airplanes trivial. Strategy also includes many skills and assets that are not seeded in conflict: diplomacy, trade, education and culture among others.

While Boyd reinforced the need for harmony among allies and the importance of a moral basis for strategy, he will always remain, above all, a strategist of conflict. Boyd’s method of research in itself provides some insight into the use of his concepts...
beyond his key domain. In dealing with strategy and its definition, he outlined his
typical approach (author's italics):
• make a general survey (*observe*)
• consider the essential elements (*orient*)
• place in strategic perspective (*decide*)
• implement (*act*)

As a broad approach to strategic planning, indeed any complex problem-solving, this provides a
strong overarching framework.

Perhaps Boyd's most contentious assertion is embodied in his work 'Creation and Destruction' which is
essentially a thesis on the need for continuous change and evolution. Boyd theorises that, the moment an
organisation is established, running effectively and achieving its aim, it is in danger of being rendered obsolete by a
competitor and thus must change. But Boyd went further than this, advocating the
destruction of the original organisation to allow a new system to evolve. The need to
evolve and adapt is Boyd's only constant. While this is an extreme metaphor, Boyd
emphasised that the status quo should never be accepted and roundly condemned
mediocrity. He highlighted the risks of strategic stasis leading to irrelevance and
eventual defeat:

The wrong research path would be to again coin conceptual categories grounded in
current events rather than good theory.²²

Boyd's *Zeitgeist* was the Cold War and counter-revolutionary war, but his theories
transcend these and hold much for latter-day strategists who choose to explore and
exploit his work. As Kalyvas emphasises, concepts cannot be based on current events
and trends, although it is difficult to envisage strategic design that does not risk
becoming trapped in its time or domain.²³ Maritime strategy, counterinsurgency
strategy, the continental school of strategy and nuclear strategy are all theories that
have swung in and out of vogue as have a host of others. It is also the case that a
particular nation or actor may have to remain wedded to one or a limited hybrid of
'schools' by dint of geography or resources. However, the more broadly based the
theory, the greater its chance of retaining relevance and applicability.

In his criticisms of Clausewitz, Jomini and others, Boyd demonstrates a grasp
equal to analysts such as Gray and Echevarria.²⁴ Indeed, Boyd's intellectual power
is beyond question. As Colin Gray argues, Boyd's relevance lies in the ultimate

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While Boyd reinforced the need for harmony among allies and the importance of a moral basis for
strategy, he will always remain, above all, a strategist of conflict.
simplicity of his theoretical framework. While he possessed a complex mind that led him down convoluted paths, he was careful to leave simple codas to all his work. Boyd was an educator as well as a thinker. He did not leave specific approaches or solutions, but general principles and concepts that are broadly applicable to contemporary strategy.

As discussed, Boyd’s theoretical framework for strategy consists of three basic platforms. The first advocates approaching any strategic problem in the three domains (physical, mental and moral) and recognising the need to isolate the adversary and develop harmony within the friendly organisation and that of allies and potential allies. Boyd’s second platform comprises the expansion of his simplified OODA Loop, highlighting the importance of continuous orientation and, in particular, the need to understand culture (friendly, adversary, and that of the operating environment). The third platform encompasses his overall approach to strategic problem-solving which provides the strategist a solid framework for analysis and concludes with the important and difficult stage of implementation. These three platforms combine to embody a simple theory that is applicable to the complexity of the contemporary strategic environment.

All strategic theories will shift in and out of fashion. Boyd’s work, however, boasts continued and universal applicability. He attempts to understand the core of human behaviour in conflict and provides deductions towards the development of battlefield command and control. Boyd provides a dynamic dialectic model for strategy in conflict that can be expanded into a strategy for peace. Analysis of the 9/11 Commission Report demonstrates that Boyd’s simple elegance translates to one of the most extreme and complex issues of the last decade. Boyd’s three theoretical platforms retain their relevance for the modern strategist dealing with the challenges of contemporary strategy.

Like any theorist, Boyd is subject to both criticism and acclaim that will wax and wane. His refusal to publish extensively has placed his theories in an unusually vulnerable position; the dangers they face include over-simplification by others or even being lost to contemporary strategists. The parallels and indeed strengths that Boyd offers the Army and ADF in conceptual terms are of such value that considerable effort should be devoted to ensuring that neither fate befalls his theories. Indeed, his thought provides the elusive luxury of a solid foundation in this post-modern environment of conceptual spin-doctoring.

**These three platforms combine to embody a simple theory that is applicable to the complexity of the contemporary strategic environment.**
Like any universal theorist, Boyd remains relevant to the modern era of warfighting; the challenge now lies in finding a means to fully utilise this relevance. Broad-based theories do not provide easy paths to answers; it takes education and then practice to apply these fully. Boyd’s thoughts and deductions provide a powerful lever which needs only a suitable fulcrum point and the application of effort:

So, how does one pay homage to a man like John Boyd? Perhaps best by remembering that Colonel Boyd never sought the acclaim won him by this thinking. He only wanted to make a difference in the next war, and he did. That ancient book of wisdom—*Proverbs*—sums up John’s contribution to his nation: ‘A wise man is strong and a man of knowledge adds to his strength; for by wise guidance will you wage war, and there is victory in a multitude of counsellors.’ I, and his Corps of Marines, will miss our counsellor terribly.25

**ENDNOTES**

8 Boyd would also later advise US F-4 Phantom pilots on tactics to counter the more manoeuvrable Mig-17 during the Vietnam War.
13 All these papers are available from <http://www.ausairpower.net/APA-Boyd-Papers.html>
15 This approach is paralleled by Gray in Modern Strategy, p. 49. Gray cites a definition by Fred Charles Ikle, highlighting the strategist’s need for a broad intellect and worldly vision.
18 Ibid., p. 351.
19 Ibid., p. 399.
20 Ibid., p. 361. The basis for the next three paragraphs of analysis is the 9/11 Commission report, pp. 361–98.
21 Ibid. See p. 385, for example.
24 See Osinga, Science, Strategy and War, p. 94; and A J Echevarria, Clausewitz and Contemporary War, Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 103. Osinga and Echevarria in turn demonstrate an equivalent comprehension of Clausewitz’s understanding of friction.
25 Cown, ‘Warfighting brought to you by…’, citing General C C Krulak at the time of Boyd’s death.

THE AUTHOR

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CONCEPTS

RISK MANAGEMENT IN THEATRE STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING

COMMANDER STEPHEN P FERRIS, USN

ABSTRACT

This article operationalises the concept of strategic risk as originally developed by Lykke as an imbalance between ends, ways and means. It explains how non-congruence between any pair of these elements can produce strategic or operational risk. The author develops the new concepts of aspirational, design and menu risk to illustrate how planning risk occurs. Various historical examples demonstrate how these risks can be identified and what techniques are available for their mitigation. The author also develops the complementary concepts of strategic wobble and strategic collapse to allow assessment of what constitutes an acceptable level of risk.

There is no 'perfect' strategic decision. One always has to pay a price. One always has to balance conflicting objectives, conflicting opinions and conflicting priorities. The best strategic decision is only an approximation—and a risk.

Peter Drucker

Peter Drucker
RISK UNDERLIES THE SECURITY STRATEGIES OF ALL NATIONS. INDEED, ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS ANALYST PETER BERNSTEIN, RISK DEFINES THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE ANCIENT AND MODERN WORLDS SINCE IT INTRODUCES ‘THE NOTION THAT THE FUTURE IS MORE THAN THE WHIM OF THE GODS AND THAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE NOT PASSIVE BEFORE NATURE.’2 THUS IT IS SURPRISING THAT THE CONCEPT OF RISK IN NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY—ORIGINALLY DESCRIBED BY ARMY WAR COLLEGE STRATEGIST RETIRED COLONEL ARTHUR LYKKE—REMAINS IMPERFECTLY DEVELOPED. STRATEGIC RISK IS THE FOCUS OF THIS ARTICLE WHICH EXPANDS LYKKE’S ORIGINAL CONCEPT AND APPLIES STRATEGIC RISK TO OPERATIONS, PROVIDING GUIDANCE FOR MODERN PLANNERS ATTEMPTING TO DESIGN FUTURE THEATRE SECURITY STRATEGIES.

LYKKE INTRODUCES HIS CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC RISK THROUGH A METAPHOR THAT CHARACTERISES STRATEGY AS A STOOL SIMULTANEOUSLY BALANCING ENDS, WAYS AND MEANS. WITHIN THIS METAPHOR, STRATEGIC RISK IS A CONSEQUENCE OF ANY IMBALANCE AMONG THE LEGS OF THE STOOL:

IF MILITARY RESOURCES ARE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH STRATEGIC CONCEPTS OR COMMITMENTS AND/OR ARE NOT MATCHED BY MILITARY CAPABILITIES, WE MAY BE IN TROUBLE. THE ANGLE OF TILT REPRESENTS RISK … TO ENSURE NATIONAL SECURITY THE THREE LEGS OF MILITARY STRATEGY MUST NOT ONLY EXIST, THEY MUST BE BALANCED.3

BEYOND THIS DEFINITION, LYKKE OFFERS THE THEATRE PLANNER NO CLEAR GUIDANCE ON HOW TO IDENTIFY, MEASURE OR MITIGATE STRATEGIC RISK. THIS ARTICLE ADDRESSES THOSE LIMITATIONS BY ARGUING THAT LYKKE’S MODEL OF STRATEGY AS A BALANCE OF ENDS, WAYS AND MEANS IMPLIES THREE DISTINCT KINDS OF RISK THAT WILL AFFECT THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS FOR ANY THEATRE SECURITY STRATEGY. THESE THREE TYPES OF STRATEGIC RISK—ASPIRATIONAL, DESIGN AND MENU RISK—POSSESS UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS AND OFFER SPECIFIC CHALLENGES TO OPERATIONAL PLANNERS. A DISCUSSION OF THEIR IMPACT ON THEATRE-LEVEL PLANNING, HOW THEY CAN BE MEASURED AND, ULTIMATELY, MITIGATED SERVES AS THE CENTRAL FOCUS OF THIS ANALYSIS.

THE DECOMPOSITION OF RISK

ACCORDING TO LYKKE, RISK OCCURS WHEN THERE IS AN IMBALANCE AMONG THE ENDS, WAYS AND MEANS OF STRATEGY. STRATEGIC RISK RESULTS WHEN ANY TWO OF THESE THREE STRATEGIC ELEMENTS ARE MISMATCHED. THE THREE DISTINCT IMBALANCES THAT ARE POSSIBLE CAN BE REPRESENTED AS AN EQUATION WITH STRATEGIC RISK EXPRESSED AS \( \Theta \) —THE SUM OF THE POSSIBLE IMBALANCES:4

\[
\Theta = |E-M| + |E-W| + |W-M|
\]

WHERE E = THE ENDS OF A SPECIFIC STRATEGY

W = THE WAYS OF A SPECIFIC STRATEGY, AND

M = THE MEANS OF A SPECIFIC STRATEGY.
The first term to the right of the equality sign is the component of strategic risk attributable to an imbalance between ends and means. This risk is referred to as ‘aspirational risk’ since it reflects the mismatch between the ends to which the combatant commander aspires and the resources available to achieve those ends. The second term expresses the imbalance that may exist between ends and ways. If the operational planner selects a way that is inconsistent with the desired ends, then strategic implementation is poorly designed and creates risk, referred to as ‘design risk’. The final term captures the strategic uncertainty that arises from an imbalance between the selected way and the available means. This is known as ‘menu risk’ since it occurs when the operational planner chooses a selection from the menu of ways that is more costly than can be supported by the available means.

Figure 1 presents a graphic illustration of the effect of ends, ways and means on strategy and, ultimately, policy. In panel A, theatre strategy is balanced—its ends, ways, and means are all aligned. Policy is likewise balanced and rests on a strategy in equilibrium. In panel B, ‘strategic wobble’ occurs as an imbalance emerges among ends, ways and means. This ‘wobble’ may result from an imbalance among all three components of strategy or between any two of those components. At this point, the imbalance is not fatal to strategy, although it does cause strategic oscillation and policy shift. In panel C, the imbalance among the ends, ways and means becomes so severe that the theatre strategy collapses, with consequent adverse policy implications.

The remainder of this article examines the specific kinds of imbalances that can occur among ends, ways and means and describes how the operational planner can measure and manage the resultant risks. The insights provided by this analysis will allow the operational planner to identify and measure these risks which are inherent in all strategy. Such an exercise will also guide the planner in selecting those mitigation techniques that can best prevent policy failure by maintaining either a strategic balance or, at worst case, ‘wobble’.

**ASPIRATIONAL RISK**

Aspirational risk represents strategic risk that results from a mismatch between ends and means. Aspirational risk reflects the limiting factor of resources in the achievement of strategic ends. Because this is the most common risk faced by planners, it will be developed in greater detail in this article, with particular attention paid to its ‘bi-directional’ nature, which implies that means might exceed ends or ends might exceed means.
TYPE I ASPIRATIONAL RISK: OVER-REACH

Imbalance between strategic ends and means can also occur when the operational planner over-reaches and the ends exceed the availability of means to support them—referred to as ‘type I aspirational risk’. Operation BARBAROSSA, Hitler’s invasion of the USSR, suffered from this type of aspirational risk. Similarly, Britain experienced this over-reach risk during its Falkland Islands campaign in 1982. Over-reach risk is closely related to the theory of ‘imperial overstretch’ developed by British historian and author Paul Kennedy who postulates that the strategic commitments and interests of a nation exceed its ability to defend them:

Aspirational risk represents strategic risk that results from a mismatch between ends and means.
If a state overextends itself strategically by, say, the conquest of extensive territories or the waging of costly wars—it runs the risk that potential benefits from external expansion may be outweighed by the great expense of it all.⁵

Yale political scientist Jeffrey Taliaferro analysed Japan’s attack on the United States in 1941 and described the strategic thinking leading to that decision in terms consistent with aspirational over-reach risk. During the 1930s, Japan sought to create ‘a continental empire that would make Japan economically self-sufficient, and thereby, secure.’⁶ Such a strategy involved a southward advance by Japan into French Indochina and the Dutch East Indies to acquire raw materials which was bound to provoke conflict with the United States and Britain. Yet Japan persisted, despite the fact that, as Taliaferro writes, the Japanese realised they ‘could not win a prolonged war and that any war had a high probability of lasting several years.’⁷

**TYPE II ASPIRATIONAL RISK: UNDER-REACH**

A less common case of aspirational risk occurs when means exceed ends—referred to as ‘type II aspirational risk.’ This risk is rare because an excess of resources relative to a particular mission is an unusual state of affairs given eroding defence budgets and increasingly large government deficits. Strategic under-reach allows the operational planner to achieve less than is possible given the means available—a strategic circumstance described by the French general and strategist Andre Beaufre as ‘ends moderate, means large.’⁸ Beaufre uses the US Cold War nuclear deterrence strategy to illustrate this type of risk. The end selected for this strategy was very basic and limited to the survival of the United States as an independent nation. The means available to achieve such an end, however, were abundant. More recent examples of under-reach in which modest ends were combined with abundant means include Operation URGENT FURY (Grenada 1983) and Operation JUST CAUSE (Panama 1989).

When means exceed ends, there is a danger that ends will expand to consume the available means. An expansion in strategic ends that is a consequence of abundant means rather than a product of careful strategy formulation is known as ‘mission creep’. Defence analyst Adam Siegel notes that mission creep can generate risk to strategy by causing a loss of focus, entanglement, and the misuse of assets, particularly military capabilities. His concept of ‘mission shift’ is closely aligned to this article’s description of mission creep as unplanned growth in strategic ends:
Mission shift occurs when forces adopt tasks not initially included that, in turn, lead to mission expansion. There is a disconnect between on-the-scene decisions to involve forces in additional tasks and political decision-making about objectives.⁹

MEASURING ASPIRATIONAL RISK

The mission analysis step of deliberate planning requires the planner to analyse the assigned task and determine the military objective (end) and to identify resources available (means) for use in developing the plan. It is at this point that planners must make an initial assessment of the magnitude of aspirational risk.

Planners begin their estimate of aspirational risk by screening the assigned task and evaluating the possible resources against a set of risk factors. These risk factors represent a range of different actions that can affect the requirement for resources or identify new resources available to support the operation. There are a number of actions available to the planner to reduce the need for resources and thereby achieve a more equitable balance between means and ends. For instance, it may be possible to scale back the desired objectives, thus contracting the ends towards the available means. Similarly, the planner may be able to increase the time available to achieve the desired objectives or prioritise and phase-in the objectives over an expanded duration. It may also be possible for a subset of the objectives to be delayed, reducing the total resources required.

Alternatively, the planner could seek to increase the resources available to achieve the objectives. Resources may be reallocated from other programs or borrowed from allies or coalition members to support the operation. There may be an opportunity to recruit new allies and gain additional resources. In some cases, emergency or reserve inventories could be diverted to support this operation.

The planner then needs to assess each of these risk factors as likely, uncertain or unlikely, associating each risk factor assessment with a specific point value. If a factor is viewed as likely then it is either associated with a reduction in the resources required or an increase in resources available. In either case, the gap between means and ends narrows, reducing aspirational risk. Thus, those risk factors evaluated as likely are assigned a value of 1. Factors viewed as unlikely imply an increase in resources required or fewer resources made available. Either situation results in an expanding gap between means and ends, and thus greater aspirational risk. Consequently, these
factors are assigned a value of –1. Factors which are uncertain are assigned a value of 0 since it is unclear whether they increase or decrease the amount of aspirational risk present.

A qualitative assessment of the aspirational risk present in a specific operation can be achieved through a series of consecutive steps. First, the scores of the individual risk factors are summed before this aggregate factor score is compared to its range of possible values and a set of qualitative risk assessments. Consider the following example in which there are ten factors that the planner identifies as relevant. The range of the aggregate score extends from –10 when all the factors are unlikely, to a maximum value of 10 when all the factors are likely. If the aggregate score is between 10 and 7, then the risk is almost non-existent. The risk is assessed as low if the aggregate score is between 3 and 6, moderate for scores between 2 and –2, high with scores in the –3 to –6 range, and dangerous for scores from –7 to –10. This approach allows the planner to summarise the amount of aspirational risk that is present in any given course of action through a careful identification and evaluation of the factors governing the difference between means and ends. This assessment will permit the planner to more accurately evaluate the risks to mission success and will assist in the design of a more effective course of action.

MITIGATING ASPIRATIONAL RISK

There are many ways to mitigate aspirational risk. Principal among these is the adjustment of the ends so that they are consistent with the available resources. Most commonly, this will involve scaling back the ends so that the resource constraints become less binding. This method was applied during the 1973 Paris Peace Accords between the United States and North Vietnam, which resulted in a less comprehensive settlement than that initially sought by the United States.

Another way to adjust strategic ends so as to mitigate aspirational risk involves pursuing the objective over an extended time interval thus requiring a less intensive use of resources, as exemplified by the Cold War between the United States and the USSR. An objective can be delayed, thereby eliminating the need for a set of resources. Hitler’s decision to defer Operation SEA LION, the German invasion of Britain, released aircraft and troops for use in Russia and the Balkans. The planner can also mitigate risk through the prioritisation of objectives and a scheduled phase-in as illustrated in the US Pacific island campaign during the Second World War.

The recruitment of new allies or coalition partners … is another method of enhancing the strategic means.
Modifying the means will also reduce aspirational risk. This will usually require the operational planner to identify additional resources. Increasing resources available to the planner is the most direct way to accomplish this; resource levels can be boosted also by borrowing from other programs, reallocating or running a deficit—all methods that have been used to find resources to support Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The recruitment of new allies or coalition partners (which occurred during the first Gulf War and, more recently, during the Global War on Terror) is another method of enhancing the strategic means. Planners can also direct resources to deploy in phases in a ‘pay as you go’ approach. The US Cold War strategy reflected this approach as new weapons systems were developed and deployed over several decades. In more extreme cases, resources can be obtained by consuming seed capital, a last resort employed by the Japanese government during the Second World War. Finally, resources can be obtained from the objective itself in a ‘live off the land’ approach. In this case, the force becomes self-sufficient, creating its own resources, the approach adopted by the German Army on the Eastern Front during the Second World War.

**DESIGN RISK**

**THE CONCEPT OF DESIGN RISK**

Design risk results from an imbalance between a strategy’s ends and the ways chosen to accomplish these. Because it contrasts strategic ends with the various methods designed to achieve them, this concept is termed ‘design risk’. Specifically, design risk focuses on whether the operational planner’s design will permit strategic success. The dangers that design risk poses to strategic success are clearly illustrated in the following historical examples which span more than two millennia and suggest the permanency of design risk in operational planning.

Donald Kagan, academic historian and author, describes Athens’ strategy for the Second Peloponnesian War as defensive in nature but characterised by a series of nuisance raids against Sparta that implied rather than actually projected Athenian naval power:

… the Athenians were to reject battle on land, abandon their fields and homes in the country to Spartan devastation and retreat behind their walls. Meanwhile, their navy would launch a series of commando raids on the coast of the Peloponnesus. This strategy would continue until the frustrated enemy agreed to make peace.¹⁰

This strategy, however, contained substantial design risk. For Athens ultimately to prevail, it needed to defeat Sparta on land. But Athens shrank from the cost of such a strategy, its planners unwilling to select the way necessary to achieve its strategic ends against a determined enemy. While Athens chose a way that emphasised the
defensive, the nature of its enemy ‘made the Athenian way of warfare inadequate, and Pericles’ strategy was a form of wishful thinking that failed.’

A more recent example of design risk occurred with US military operations in Indochina. Retired Colonel Harry Summers, author and military strategist, argues that there was a mismatch between the ends and ways of the US involvement in Vietnam. Put simply, the way selected by US strategists was inconsistent with their ends. Summers contends that this mismatch resulted in the selection of a way that was deeply flawed:

But instead of orienting on North Vietnam—the source of the war—we turned our attention to the symptoms—the guerilla war in the south. Our new ‘strategy’ of counterinsurgency blinded us to the fact that guerilla war was tactical and not strategic. It was a kind of economy of force operation on the part of North Vietnam to buy time and to wear down superior US military forces.12

MEASURING DESIGN RISK

The operational planner becomes concerned with design risk at that stage in the concept development phase when possible courses of action are identified. At that point, any imbalance between ends and ways becomes highly relevant. By adopting an approach comparable to that used to assess aspirational risk, the planner can determine the amount of design risk present in a specific operation. There are two ways to reduce the gap between ends and ways that characterise design risk: either the ends are contracted or the ways are expanded. The factors associated with design risk address both possibilities. The end-related factors that affect aspirational risk also influence this aspect of design risk. Thus, design risk can be mitigated by scaling back ends, extending the time to achieve the desired ends, prioritising and phasing the ends, or delaying a subset of the ends.

The expansion of the ways or course of action represents the other dimension of design risk. For example, the course of action can be accelerated in time to reduce the need to sustain resources. Planners can also design courses of action that do not emphasise attrition for success or employ the multiple elements of national power. Courses of action that can be calibrated in implementation, are viewed as legitimate, or allow measurable progress towards completion represent other methods to expand the strategic ways. Similar to the assessment for aspirational risk, the
aggregate factor score can be estimated across these factors and the magnitude of design risk can be evaluated. This assessment operationalises the concept of design risk and allows it to be explicitly incorporated into the planning process.

MITIGATING DESIGN RISK

Since design risk involves an imbalance between ends and ways, the mitigation of this risk requires a closer realignment of these two strategic elements. This can be accomplished by focusing on the ends, on the ways, or on some combination of both. A number of examples from recent history illustrate various techniques aimed at reducing design risk in operational planning that remain relevant to operational planners today. The US-manned lunar program, for instance, used periodic assessment of progress towards the desired goal as a method to mitigate design risk. Inviting the participation of representatives from other elements of national power mitigates design risk because of their potential to influence courses of action. The US involved allies and coalition members in its campaign in Afghanistan to enhance the perceived legitimacy of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Courses of action can also be expanded by a change in organisational structure—including command and control relationships—to permit implementation of the selected way. This can be as simple as the replacement of one commander by another or as complicated as the creation of new organisations such as the US NorthCom or the Department of Homeland Security. Design risk can also be mitigated by an expansion of the specific course of action or an intensification of its implementation. The US firebombing campaign against Japan in 1945 represents an intensification of a selected way and a mitigation of design risk associated with the planning for the defeat of Imperial Japan.

The US-manned lunar program, for instance, used periodic assessment of progress towards the desired goal as a method to mitigate design risk.

MENU RISK

Menu risk refers to an imbalance between the ways and means of strategy. This type of risk occurs when the operational planner chooses from the menu of ways a strategic entrée that is too expensive. Menu risk reflects the mismatch between the requirements of a given way and the means available to execute it. French strategists faced significant menu risk in the years following the First World War when the French government sought to improve its security by developing a network of alliances and international agreements. France anticipated that this system of
alliances would allow it to defeat any nation that attempted to disrupt the European status quo but, as Army historian Robert Doughty observes:

In the quest for a military strategy, the French had to balance the conflicting requirements of organizing and equipping military forces that could simultaneously protect their frontiers, provide assistance to their eastern friends, and defend their lines of communication in the Mediterranean. Unfortunately, France did not have sufficient military forces for all these requirements. In the final analysis, French grand strategy proved inadequate …

By the late 1920s a gap had opened between French security strategy and its military capabilities. French inter-war strategy involved commitments to allies that required a military force capable of ‘strategic maneuver and of offensive action against Germany’. By 1930 France had lost the ability to initiate offensive operations against Germany and French strategists faced significant challenges resulting from menu risk.

IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO MENU RISK

The threats-opportunities-weaknesses-strengths (TOWS) matrix of strategic analysis originally developed by business professor Heinz Weihrich can be modified to assist in the identification of menu risk and to suggest responses or techniques for its mitigation. In Figure 2, the available means are scaled on the vertical axis and range from low to high. A high level of means represents a strategic strength while low means are a weakness of the chosen strategy. The available means are then compared with the resource demands required by a given strategy. Strategies with a high demand for resources are more costly to execute and attract greater debate/review because of their higher opportunity costs. Consequently, such choices are less attractive to planners and in this sense are ‘threatening’. Alternatively, strategies requiring a lower level of means generate less competition for resources, making their adoption and implementation easier. Consequently, they represent opportunities for the operational planner.

The cells in Figure 2 provide the operational planner with an indication of when menu risk might occur and options for response and mitigation. In cell HL (high means, low demand) the operational planner faces no menu risk. The means are abundant relative to the resources demanded by the selected way. Such a relationship suggests that the combatant commander should implement the selected way while exploiting any new opportunities that might emerge.

Strategies with a high demand for resources are more costly to execute and attract greater debate/review …
Likewise, in cell HH (high means, high demand) the operational planner should execute the selected way while also recognising the potential for menu risk. Although the available means are high, the ways demand significant resources. This imbalance raises the possibility of menu risk in the future. Consistent with the relationship presented in cell HH, the attrition strategy of the Western Front during the First World War generated a menu risk in which the belligerents ‘could succeed only by wearing down enemy resources and willpower at a faster rate than their own.’

The bottom two cells represent resource-limited environments. In cell LL (low means, low demand), the strategist should seek to overcome the constraints of limited means and attempt to exploit the advantages inherent in a low cost way. Menu risk is possible if the modest demands of the way ultimately exceed the means available. Military historian and analyst Michael Handel notes that Israel’s small ‘wars must end quickly and decisively to avoid or minimize the economic paralysis caused by total mobilization’

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Figure 2. The threats and opportunities associated with menu risk.

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**Demand for Resources by Selected Ways**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Available Means</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| High                     | **Cell HL:** Execute the selected ways; exploit emergent strategic advantages.  
**No menu risk.**       | **Cell HH:** Execute the selected way.  
**Limited menu risk.**  |
| Low                      | **Cell LL:** Seek to overcome limitations and exploit opportunities. Seek to expand means.  
**Potential menu risk.** | **Cell LH:** Must reduce the means required by the selected way.  
**High menu risk.**     |
population has forced that nation to depend heavily on reservists and thus ‘wars must end quickly and decisively to avoid or minimize the economic paralysis caused by total mobilization’. The limited size of the Israeli armed forces has resulted in the selection of ways that attempt to reduce a military conflict to the shortest possible duration and to employ ‘capital intensive warfare’ to reduce casualties.

In cell LH (low means, high demand) there is clear menu risk. The selected ways are resource intensive while the means available to the strategist are insufficient. To eliminate this risk, the operational planner must reduce the level of means required by the selected way. The German Ardennes offensive of December 1944 exemplifies menu risk in such an environment. The putative objective for this offensive was ‘to cripple the attack capabilities of the Allied armies and chew up their divisions east of the Meuse’. With an attrition-like objective in mind, the selected way—a ground offensive—is highly demanding of resources. Hugh Cole describes the German armies in the Ardennes in 1944 as ‘fighting a poor man’s battle’ suffering acute logistics shortages. Although the German forces initially overwhelmed the Allied defenders, they were unable to make up their losses. The limited means available to Germany to execute this way were quickly exhausted. Menu risk ultimately doomed the German offensive to collapse.

MEASURING MENU RISK

In a similar process to that used to assess aspirational and design risk, the operational planner must evaluate menu risk when formulating courses of action during the concept development phase. A number of factors can be identified that allow the planner to evaluate the resources and the ways available to support a course of action. These factors allow the planner to assess likely menu risk.

The planner will first need to assess those factors that affect available resources. As discussed earlier, the means will be affected by the ability of the planner to borrow or reallocate from other programs or receive resources from allies. The availability of host nation or in-theatre resources will also affect the means.

The value of a selected way will be governed by a variety of factors. For instance, the ability of a way to substitute technology for personnel or the possibility of calibrated implementation affect the risk associated with a specific course of action. The inherent risk in a chosen way is also influenced by its ability to be asymmetric in nature or accelerated in time or across space. The aggregate factor score obtained from the planner’s assessment of
these factors can be qualitatively evaluated and will allow the planner to determine the extent to which menu risk is present in a specific course of action.

The various risk factors discussed above also imply a set of mitigation measures that can reduce the level of design risk present in any given plan. In this sense, the inventory of risk factors can be used to transition a plan across the threats and opportunities matrix presented in Figure 2. For instance, obtaining host nation support or reallocating resources from other programs can increase the level of means available for a plan’s execution and migrate it from cell LH (high menu risk) to cell HH (limited menu risk).

CONCLUSION

Lykke’s concept of strategic risk is underdeveloped and is of little practical use to staff planners or others involved in the design of theatre-level security strategies. This article attempts to operationalise Lykke’s concept by developing three new concepts of risk that are inherent in his model. These new risk concepts can be separately identified, measured, and ultimately mitigated by staff planners. The use of historical examples to develop and illustrate the concepts of aspirational, design and menu risk allows theatre-level planners to better understand the risks associated with a specific security strategy. This discussion moves beyond the creation of these new risk concepts by providing a useful set of analytical tools for the planner to determine the extent to which these risks are present and how they might be mitigated in the development of courses of action. Through a careful process of measurement of each of these risks, the planner can better identify which risk mitigation methodology is most appropriate. Such an approach to planning will increase the likelihood of choosing a course of action that will contribute to strategic equilibrium and the achievement of policy objectives.

ENDNOTES

4 There are several assumptions that underlie equation 1’s deconstruction of strategic risk. The first is that strategic risk is additive. This follows from Lykke’s model in which strategy is defined as the sum of the ends, ways and means. The second assumption is that there are no interactive effects. To the extent that there is a
significant covariance between the risks, equation 1 is not fully specified. Such interactive effects, however, are likely to be secondary to the primary effects attributable to aspirational, design and menu risks. Third, the model assumes that the risks are equally weighted. Again, this follows from Lykke’s original specification in which ends, ways and means are of equal importance in the formulation of strategy. Consequently, it is further assumed that the theatre planner weights each risk proportionately which, in this case, implies equally. Finally, the mathematical operators of absolute value are meant to indicate the assumption of symmetry in the effect of any imbalance. For instance, aspirational risk might exist because either the ends are in excess of the available means or the means are in excess of the strategy’s stated ends. This model recognises the possibility of an imbalance in either direction, but does not differentiate in its description of the magnitude of their contribution to the total risk of the strategy.

7 Ibid., p. 95.
9 Adam B Siegel, ‘Mission Creep or Mission Misunderstood?’, *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 25, Summer 2000, p. 113. Siegel contends that, in fact, mission creep represents a continuum of mission changes. It ranges from task accretion, which represents the accumulation of added tasks necessary to accomplish the original objectives, to mission shift, to mission transition when a mission undergoes an unclear or unstated shift of objectives, and finally to mission leap which is an explicit policy choice to change objectives and military tasks.
11 Ibid., p. 54.
14 Ibid., p. 495.
CONCEPTS

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17 Ibid., p. 551.
19 Ibid., p. 663.

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THE ENTERPRISING SOLDIER

COLONEL CHRIS FIELD

ABSTRACT

This article argues that, while the nine core behaviours are an excellent base for our soldiers, it is perhaps time to consider enhancing their skills to ensure they are better prepared for the dual factors of an operationally busy Army and competitive enemies. This article proposes the Enterprising Soldier model, to provide the Australian Army and the Land Force with a capability edge over known and anticipated enemies, which takes the Australian soldier beyond Army’s nine core behaviours. This article proposes four ideas where Enterprising Soldier may be considered by Army: Army Individual Readiness Notice, education, ethics and culture.

Enterprise, n., boldness or readiness in undertaking, adventurous spirit, or energy.

The Macquarie Dictionary

The Australian Army values soldiers with enterprise. These soldiers are, by definition, bold, ready, adventurous and energetic. ‘Enterprising’ soldiers are developed beyond Army’s nine core behaviours and could potentially provide the Australian Army and its land force with a capability edge over both known and anticipated enemies. The Enterprising Soldier model proposed in this...
article will enhance the skills of Army’s people to ensure that they are better prepared for service in an operationally busy Army—and better able to fight competitive enemies. The Enterprising Soldier program proposes four enhancements to the skills of Army’s soldiers focusing on Army Individual Readiness Notice (AIRN), education, ethics and culture.

**BACKGROUND**

In May 2007, the then Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, introduced the ‘I’m An Australian Soldier’ initiative. This initiative is built on nine core behaviours that describe a soldier ‘ready to meet any challenge on operations’. In the three years since the introduction of the nine core behaviours and in an era characterised by ‘persistent conflict’, Army’s soldiers have maintained continuous operational deployments both regionally and in the Middle East, and have performed exceptionally well. Australian soldiers are fighting competitive, lethal, adaptable and agile enemies and Army needs to ensure that its soldiers continue to adapt faster than their adversaries. They must be bold, ready, adventurous and energetic—they must be ‘enterprising’ soldiers.

**WHO IS THE ENTERPRISING SOLDIER?**

The enterprising soldier is every soldier in the land force. Enterprising soldiers hold Army’s nine core behaviours at the centre of their professional competence, but are ready to move beyond these to become bold, ready, adventurous and energetic. Every soldier has the potential to be enterprising.

The Enterprising Soldier model is designed to complement Army’s existing processes in support of deployed forces. Establishing a program in competition with current Army processes would be wasteful and counterproductive. However, for the Enterprising Soldier model to succeed in generating effective adaptation throughout all levels of Army, it will need to be implemented through a consultative and inclusive process. For the Enterprising Soldier model to work, Army must trust its leaders. Every leader has the potential to be enterprising and every leader is crucial to the process of implementing this initiative.

Every leader has the potential to be enterprising and every leader is crucial to the process of implementing this initiative.
THE ENTERPRISING SOLDIER MODEL

The Enterprising Soldier model consists of four enhancements to Army, the first of which focuses on the Army Individual Readiness Notice (AIRN). Army should expand AIRN ‘measures of capability’ available to soldiers to allow them to develop beyond the nine core behaviours. The second enhancement focuses on education for soldiers—as distinct from training, while the third applies to soldiers’ skills in understanding and applying ethics. Fourth, Army should provide cultural education—as distinct from cultural ‘awareness’—for its soldiers.

These four enhancements are offered as initial discussion points; this list is neither comprehensive nor complete. It is important to note that Enterprising Soldier can simultaneously enhance the nine core behaviours and support Army’s existing continuous learning processes.

ENTERPRISING SOLDIER: FOUR ENHANCEMENTS TO ARMY

Expanded AIRN ‘measures of capability’. The AIRN measures the capabilities of soldiers in six areas: individual availability, employment proficiency, medical fitness, dental fitness, physical fitness, and weapon proficiency. All measurements are annual except physical fitness and weapon proficiency, which are bi-annual. AIRN is recorded on the Personnel Management Key Solution (PMKeyS) database, which enables a central measurement of soldier compliance with the six capability requirements.

Enterprising Soldier would expand the ‘measures of capability’ beyond existing AIRN requirements. This expansion would assist in developing ‘enterprising’ soldiers. Expanded measures of capability could include proficiency in combat fitness, weapons handling, swimming, navigation, unarmed combat, first aid, enhanced shooting and marksmanship, the delivery of orders, and tactics. Additional proficiencies could range from inoculation currency to certified proficiency in Helicopter Underwater Escape Training and should be recorded on PMKeyS.

Expanded AIRN measures of capability would develop enterprising soldiers through the enhancement of skills that boost confidence and professional mastery, generating soldiers who are bold, ready, adventurous and energetic. An expanded AIRN would also provide Army’s chain of command with additional measures to assess Army’s preparedness and enhance Army’s fighting power.

Enhanced education for soldiers—as distinct from training. Training has been defined as the ‘development in oneself or another of certain skills, habits, and attitudes’. The Australian Army trains soldiers to a high standard—clearly illustrated in the performance of Australian soldiers in conflict in the decades following the Second World War. From the mountains of Korea and Afghanistan to the jungles of Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam, Cambodia, Rwanda, East Timor and the Solomon Islands...
Islands, to the arid climates of Somalia and Iraq, Australian soldiers have constantly trained, learned and adapted to changing, uncertain and complex circumstances against agile, lethal and determined enemies.

The less easily measured corollary of training is education, defined as ‘imparting or acquisition of knowledge, skill’. In this area, the Australian soldier is not as well supported. While the reduction in Army educational opportunities has been largely incremental, these changes are cumulative and may eventually affect the overall education and capability of Australian soldiers. The Australian Army, like most large government organisations, no longer recruits and educates soldiers as teenage apprentices; this task is largely left to private enterprise. The full-time Year 12 education program that Army conducted at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, in the 1990s, and which produced many competent officers directly from the ranks of soldiers, has been replaced by distributed and outsourced part-time Year 12 programs. The former Subject 3 education courses for sergeant and warrant officer, which provided both English and mathematics competencies, has largely disappeared.

The Defence Assisted Study Scheme, which assists soldiers to enhance their educational qualifications in their own time, has been reduced in scope and funding. Enterprising Soldier would address the cumulative effect of these incremental changes to Army education which threaten to populate Army with soldiers who are well trained, but inadequately educated. Army’s education programs must encourage and develop soldiers capable of bold actions, ready responses, with an adventurous spirit and energetic behaviour. The aim of education policies developed under the Enterprising Soldier initiative is the generation of enterprising soldiers.

Enhancing the soldier’s ability to understand and apply ethics. Ethical behaviour in the Australian Army relies, in the first instance, on the system of moral principles communicated to soldiers by their parents and other key people in their early development including relatives, guardians, teachers and mentors. This system of moral principles forms one criterion for the selection of soldiers to serve in the Australian Army. Once selected, soldiers receive training in ethics, which includes an understanding of the Australian Army’s nine core behaviours.

Enterprising Soldier would build on Army’s current level of ethics training to enhance confidence and professional mastery and develop enterprising soldiers. The Enterprising Soldier model would include an ethics program that examines the current and expected future ethical dilemmas that occur in operational theatres.
worldwide. In addition, ethical ‘think tanks’ could partner the Australian Army in developing tailored ethics training to be delivered directly to soldiers.\textsuperscript{15} With enhanced confidence and professional mastery based on a comprehensive understanding of ethics, Australian soldiers would become bolder, choosing the right actions with more confidence; ready for the challenges of increasingly complex battlespaces; adventurous in thinking—particularly critical thinking; and tenacious in seeking the right ethically based results for all missions.

**Cultural education—as distinct from cultural ‘awareness’—for soldiers.** The operational performance of Australian soldiers suggests that they are empathetic people. There are many iconic images and stories from all wars that show Australian soldiers caring for non-combatants, enemy combatants and for their mates. The apparently natural empathy of Australian soldiers for people of foreign cultures is remarkable given the fact that these are soldiers drawn largely from a monolingual society that is generally Australian-born; only 43 per cent of Australians or their parents were born overseas.\textsuperscript{16}

Enterprising Soldier would examine whether the Australian Army can continue to rely on preparing monolingual soldiers enabled by cultural ‘awareness’ training to meet agile enemies. Enterprising Soldier would replace cultural ‘awareness’ training with cultural education. Cultural education requires soldiers to be immersed in the environment, language, religion and habits of both friends and enemies. Such immersion could be provided by broader recruiting—creating a more diversified, more cosmopolitan Army population—and by attaching people from relevant cultures to units prior to and during deployments. Through immersing soldiers in a culture (or cultures), the Enterprising Soldier model would generate its own learning and educational experiences that would act to support other centrally directed cultural training. An Enterprising Soldier cultural education program would aim to give soldiers increased confidence and competence in operating in a culturally complex environment.

It is also time for the Australian Army to consider a US Army Foreign Area Officer (FAO)-style trade or career path for Australian soldiers as a component of an Enterprising Soldier cultural education program. The US Army FAO encompasses positions which require the application of foreign area expertise, political-military awareness, foreign language proficiency, and professional military knowledge and experience with military activities having an economic, social, cultural, or political impact.\textsuperscript{17}

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Enterprising Soldier would build on Army’s current level of ethics training to enhance confidence and professional mastery and develop enterprising soldiers.
US Army FAO ‘serve as attaches; security assistance officers; political-military operations, plans and policy officers; political-military intelligence staff officers; liaison officers to foreign military organizations; and service school instructors’.\footnote{The Macquarie Dictionary Online <http://www.macquariedictionary.com.au> accessed 19 October 2009.}

The Australian Army has no such program. Instead, individuals gain expertise in ‘foreign areas’ including Australia’s immediate region through self-selection, via additional study, actively managing their own career opportunities, and personal interest.

There is no doubt that Australia’s friends—and its competitive, lethal, adaptable and agile enemies—understand the ad hoc nature of Army’s ‘foreign area’ program. An Enterprising Soldier cultural education program would support an Australian Army FAO system tailored to Australian operational requirements. This program would concentrate on giving soldiers the ‘foreign area’ skills that enable them to act boldly, yet sensitively, within a different culture, and provide them the ready tools to support Army’s warfighting capabilities.

**CONCLUSION**

The Australian Army needs to look beyond the nine core behaviours and examine its ability to develop an ‘enterprising’ soldier with a capability edge over known and anticipated enemies. The Enterprising Soldier model described in this article is designed to foster Army’s development of such soldiers, particularly in the land force. This program is not entirely new; Enterprising Soldier is designed to complement rather than replace Army’s existing programs and is based on the enhancement of AIRN, education, ethics and cultural training. The Enterprising Soldier model will simultaneously enhance the nine core behaviours and support Army’s existing continuous learning processes. In recognition of the quality of existing skills and experience, the implementation of this program would be accompanied by broad consultation and the inclusion of ideas and feedback garnered from all levels of Army.

Ultimately, Enterprising Soldier will ensure that Australian soldiers continue to adapt faster than the enemy. It will develop soldiers who are bold, ready, adventurous and energetic—who are enterprising in an age of adaptation.

**ENDNOTES**


4 The land force will consist of task-organised elements drawn from all ADF services and other government agencies including the deployable civilian capacity and, potentially, non-government organisations. The land force will be optimised for joint operations, operating in a joint environment, and relying on joint enabling capabilities for full effect. The land force is also required to be trained, equipped and resourced for effective interaction with coalition partners and commercial contractors where applicable. Developing definition, Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept, Head Modernisation and Strategic Planning – Army, Australian Army Headquarters, Canberra, September 2009, p. xii.


7 Professional mastery describes soldiers’ ability to execute their duties; their ability to perform these duties in a range of circumstances; their self-confidence to act autonomously despite risk and ambiguity; and their understanding of the purpose and consequences of their actions. Land Warfare Doctrine 1, The Fundamentals of Land Warfare, 2008, p. 93.

8 Fighting power is the result of the integration of three interdependent components: the intellectual component provides the knowledge to fight, the moral component provides the will to fight and the physical component provides the means to fight. The Fundamentals of Land Warfare, p. 61.

10 Post-Second World War was chosen as a time-frame comparison for this article because this period represents the expansion and development of the Australian Regular Army as a component of a standing ADF. During and prior to the Second World War, the Australian Army had a small Permanent Military Force and a large Militia (Reserve) force.


12 Dr Phillip Toner of the University of Western Sydney notes that 'a major contributor to the reduction in apprentice numbers over the 1990s has been the large scale withdrawal of all levels of government from apprentice training … largely due to the corporatisation or privatisation of state and Commonwealth government activities.' <http://www.aph.gov.au/Library/Pubs/RN/2005-06/06rn29.htm> accessed 17 December 2009.

13 As advertised on the Defence Jobs website, under the Defence Assisted Study Scheme (DASS), soldiers ‘may receive a part payment, of up to 75% depending on the course, of all compulsory fees.’ <http://www.defencejobs.gov.au/army/training/OngoingTraining.aspx> accessed 16 December 2009. However, DEFGRAM NO 682/2009 dated 27 October 2009, ‘Defence Assisted Study Scheme – Changes to Sponsorship and Call for Applications Semester 1, 2010,’ reduces the advertised DASS assistance from 75%: ‘any studies undertaken after 01 January 2010 will be reimbursed at 60% of the member’s allowable study expenses.’

14 Ethics is defined as ‘a system of moral principles, by which human actions and proposals may be judged good or bad or right or wrong,’ *The Macquarie Dictionary Online* <http://www.macquariedictionary.com.au> accessed 17 December 2009.


18 Ibid.

**THE AUTHOR**

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Stabilising Complex Adaptive Systems
Using Complexity Theory in Operational Design for Stabilisation and Support Operations

Major Robert K Calhoun and Captain Brendan F Hayward

Abstract
Stabilisation and support operations such as those currently being undertaken by the Australian Defence Force as part of larger whole-of-government efforts in East Timor and the Solomon Islands present a number of challenges. For the military commanders and staff, the primary challenges lie in understanding the situation, identifying threat sources, determining courses of action and developing lines of operation through the orthodox application of doctrinal appreciation processes. The application of the Intelligence Preparation and Monitoring of the Battlefield (IPMB) and (Joint) Military Appreciation Process (J/MAP) to conventional and counterinsurgency warfare problems is well understood. However, the use of these tools is less intuitive when the area of operations encompasses a permissive but sovereign nation-state. In this situation, threats to security are latent but may emerge from interactions between a myriad of stakeholders; the mission itself, however, relates more closely to anti-insurgency or indigenous capacity-building end-states than to counterinsurgency and the neutralisation of identified threat sources. In such cases it may be beneficial to apply theories formulated to describe the behaviour and life-cycles of natural systems in order to understand how societies work, how failing (or fledgling) states can be stabilised and supported, and where a military force can achieve disproportionate effects.
SOCieties AS COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS

Nation-states, which are central to any stabilisation or support operation, exist as a panarchy of nested systems at different scales—referred to commonly as a ‘system of systems’. Formal and informal sources of power and authority exist based on both traditional and modern hierarchies. These are supported by stakeholders including indigenous security forces, religious and ethnic groupings, and a host of non-state actors. Sources of stress emerge as conflicting interactions between these stakeholders, and from actors that choose to challenge or operate outside the rules of the system (thus undermining the legitimacy and authority of the state). Applying an analytical approach which seeks to isolate and then concentrate on each ‘agent’ (or stakeholder) in turn, fails to efficiently identify the importance of behaviours that emerge as a result of the interactions between agents. These interactions, behaviours, and the positive and negative feedback cycles that control them, are more likely to provide insight into the emergence of threats to security than the modelling of agents in isolation. Consequently, it is helpful to consider the society as a complex adaptive system (Figure 1).

Complex adaptive systems consist of agents which comprise all the component actors of the system or society. These agents may be individuals, groups or systems. They include governments, political parties, local leaderships, potential or actual insurgents and their supporters, security forces, businesses, religious groups, gangs, criminal elements, schools, universities, the media and non-government organisations. The agents interact with one another and their environment continuously in both deliberate and spontaneous ways. Some of the consequences of these interactions are linear and predictable; others are not. However, from the vast number of interactions, a pattern of behaviour emerges. This pattern of behaviour then informs the interaction of the agents (and begins to establish rules for the system) through the gains around positive and negative feedback mechanisms. Increases in the gains around positive feedback loops result in the amplification and proliferation of behaviours (be they negative or positive), while negative feedback mechanisms serve to dampen these gains and, by extension, the associated behaviours.

Feedback is critical in shaping the emergent behaviour of a complex adaptive system.
positive and negative feedback cycles can result in disproportionate responses, unpredictable behaviour or an indeterminate relationship between cause and effect. Importantly, feedback (and non-linear feedback in particular) drives the emergence of successful strategies or templates that may then be learned, remembered and copied by other agents within the system. Once they are established, highly successful past strategies or templates (for example, the organisation of militant cadres and use of intimidation by supporters of a political party) become difficult to remove from the system.
THE ADAPTIVE CYCLE

The adaptive cycle, a model derived from studying the dynamics of ecosystems, can be used to understand the life-cycle of complex adaptive systems such as the society within which a stabilisation or support operation is being conducted. This model (illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 2) is of particular relevance because the processes of destruction and reorganisation are emphasised rather than overlooked in favour of a focus on growth and conservation. The four phases in the adaptive cycle are: growth and exploitation ($r$); conservation ($K$); release or collapse ($\Omega$); and reorganisation ($\alpha$). Slow, incremental phases of growth and conservation are punctuated by more rapid collapses or releases leading to reorganisation and renewal of the system.\(^6\)

![Diagram of the Adaptive Cycle]

Figure 2. The adaptive cycle—a life-cycle model for complex adaptive systems. In a society, the release or collapse ($\Omega$) phase involves revolution and rapid change which may manifest as disorder, upheaval and violent conflict. The reorganisation ($\alpha$) phase involves regime change and the establishment of new paradigms, rules and strategies. The new relationships and opportunities afforded by this process are exploited with strong growth during the $r$ phase and are maintained and proliferated during the slow, conservative $K$ phase.\(^7\)
In a society that comprises a complex adaptive ‘system of systems’ or panarchy, constituent systems may be in different phases of the adaptive cycle at any point in time. For example, the political system and indigenous security forces may be in phases of reorganisation (α) while aid, investment and the exploitation of natural resources have driven the economic system into the growth (r) phase. If one system within the panarchy—the political, economic or security system for instance—enters a release or collapse (Ω) phase, it may trigger a crisis, catalysing the collapse of other systems (known as a ‘revolt’ connection). Alternatively, the strategies, templates and resilience of larger, slower systems within the panarchy may heavily influence the subsequent reorganisation (α) phase (known as a ‘remember’ connection).⁸

Resilience and the related concept of adaptive capacity are critical to the stability of a complex adaptive system, and work to prolong the period between phases of release or collapse (Ω), reduce the likelihood of ‘revolt’ connection-based crises, and increase the stabilising effect of ‘remember’ connections. Resilience refers to the capacity of the system to absorb and tolerate disturbance without collapsing (retaining structure and function), while adaptive capacity relates to the ability of the system’s agents to learn and store knowledge and experience, creating flexibility in problem-solving. Resilience and adaptive capacity are interdependent, and diversity (or functional redundancy) is fundamental to both.⁹

Stabilisation and support operations are likely to be conducted in response to a release or collapse (Ω) phase in the life-cycle of a social system and may be designed to reduce the severity of this transition or guide the subsequent reorganisation and renewal (α and r phases) to ensure that undesirable strategies and templates (such as corruption, radical ideology, politically motivated violence or organised crime) do not flourish. From a systemic perspective, the military force is employed to alter system feedback to ensure that such behaviours are unproductive, while desirable strategies and templates are generated, supported and reinforced. The military force also contributes to the resilience of the system by buffering shocks to the nascent indigenous political and security apparatus, and can increase adaptive capacity through mentoring and advisory approaches. Effectively, stabilisation and support operations represent an effort to generate a ‘remember’ connection between the social system in collapse and the more stable societal systems represented by the contributors from the military force.
APPLYING THE THEORY TO STABILISATION AND SUPPORT OPERATIONS

So how is complexity theory applied to military appreciation processes? Within the panarchy of the target society, some agents (including international forces), interactions and behaviours act as sources of stress, others as sources of resilience, while others simply exist as symptoms (or outputs) of the system’s functioning. In the conduct of stabilisation or support operations, anti-insurgency and indigenous capacity-building objectives can be accomplished through the identification of sources of resilience to sustain and enhance (through the creation or amplification of positive feedback loops) and the nomination of targetable sources of stress to neutralise or repress (through the creation or reinforcement of negative feedback loops). Such an approach is not novel in warfighting theory, having been postulated in a variety of forms since the advancement of Soviet deep-operations doctrine in the 1920s. However, this approach can also be used to develop the tactical and operational actions or decisive effects required to populate imposed (specified) lines of operation such as *Adaptive Campaigning* 2009’s joint land combat, population protection, information actions, population support and indigenous capacity-building.12

In the first instance, the range of critical sub-systems and their stakeholders, which act as important agents within the complex adaptive system, should be identified. These may include political parties and leaderships, gangs and groups, markets and business interests, security forces and militias, religious and ethnic groupings and both international state and non-state actors. From a reductionist analytical point of view, each of these stakeholders has its own centre of gravity, critical capabilities, requirements and vulnerabilities, and available courses of action. All these may need to be determined and assessed. Next, the relationships between these stakeholders should be examined. While many of these will be complex and opaque, understanding these interactions is critical as they govern the emerging behaviour of the complex adaptive system when iterated through positive or negative feedback cycles. Identifying which agents and interactions contribute to sources of stress (crime, lack of faith in security and the justice system, lack of availability of food, unemployment, poor access to services) and which act as sources of resilience (cultural identity, social groupings, traditional laws and leaderships, agriculture, religion and education) will provide a set of possible points where leverage may be applied to the system. This set will, of course, need to be refined, based on access…

... stabilisation and support operations represent an effort to generate a ‘remember’ connection…
and appropriateness for the military force within the whole-of-government effort, and given the resources available.

The points of leverage or ‘levers’ which may be used to produce disproportionate effects on targets identified within a complex adaptive system can be drawn from systems theory. A subset of these levers is readily applicable to a military force conducting stabilisation and support operations. In order of increasing power, this subset includes: monitoring and observing parameters in order to measure operational effectiveness and identify sources of systemic stress and resilience; contributing to the buffering of the system by adding capability and resilience to the security apparatus; alternative reinforcement and dampening of negative feedback loops by enacting or supporting the disruption of threat agents and subversive activities; alternative reinforcement and dampening of positive feedback loops through information actions and contributions to the security of positive templates; improving the flow of information supporting positive templates and discouraging harmful strategies through information actions; ensuring adherence to the rules of the system by monitoring and focusing attention on transgressions; and, where advisory capacity allows, influencing and reinforcing positive developments in the structure of the system and its goals. Ultimately, the use of these levers formalises the requirement to identify and monitor sources of stress and subversion, protect and reinforce successful strategies, build and generate successful templates, and dislocate or disrupt threats, subversive activities and harmful templates. Command and staff recognition of the paramount importance of innovative, thoughtful and proactive information actions and engagement in this process is essential for success. Commanders must also recognise that complex systems are often counter-intuitive and that, in some cases, the ‘cure may be worse than the disease’. Given the inherent non-linearity—and therefore unpredictability—in the response of a complex system to actions that alter its feedback mechanisms and information flows, the actions of the military force conducting the stabilisation or support operation are likely to be ‘effects-seeking’ rather than ‘effects-based’. Consequently, measuring the effect and the effectiveness of the actions taken by the military force and then adjusting those actions accordingly, is of paramount importance. This requirement is encapsulated succinctly from a doctrinal perspective in the adaptation or ASDA cycle (act, sense, decide, adapt). The most difficult task lies in assessing the effect that has been generated, an assessment that relies on the effective monitoring of carefully selected, culturally perceptive
measures of performance (MOP) and effectiveness (MOE). These measures are necessarily specific to the societal system in question, but comprise an excellent start point and use specific methodology published by the United States Institute of Peace. Additional consideration should be given to breaking down MOP and MOE according to the appropriate scale they reflect. This will potentially yield *micro-MOP/MOE* for sub-systems and inform *macro-MOP/MOE* for the system as a whole. Academic consultation with groups such as the Defence Science and Technology Organisation could be helpful in designing such metrics.

The approach detailed in this discussion (summarised in Table 1), governed as it is by the need to use and measure influence in the absence of a readily quantifiable threat, demands disproportionate attention to information actions, civil-military cooperation and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. Information actions, ranging from media product to key leadership engagement and the messages or ‘talking points’ briefed to every patrolling soldier, allow the military force to support successful templates and discourage harmful strategies.  

Table 1. Applying complexity theory to the appreciation processes for stabilisation and support operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Identify the key sub-systems and their actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Identify the relationships between the actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Identify which actors and relationships function as sources of resilience and which constitute sources of stress on the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Develop decisive points along specified lines of operation to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Build, protect and reinforce sources of resilience (successful strategies).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Deter, dislocate or disrupt sources of stress (threats and subversive activities).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Adapt actions based on the effects that have been generated through continuous review.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Information actions used to seek this type of leverage must be clearly distinguished from public affairs campaigns promoting the military force. Information actions focus on amplifying and promoting examples of indigenous resilience and adaptive capacity (such as the successes achieved by local security forces or community organisations). Sources of resilience, adaptive capacity and harmony within the community can be reinforced through civil-military cooperation, and should serve as the discriminator for project selection (rather than a preoccupation with ‘consent-winning tasks’ delivering doubtful flow-on benefits to stability or to indigenous capacity). Finally, identifying the opportunities for these actions and monitoring measures of effectiveness require the entire military force to maintain an informed awareness of its intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance role.

CONCLUSION

Complexity theory affords commanders and their staff a useful ‘lens’ through which to view their tasks during the planning of stabilisation and support operations, and also provides a means to conduct targeting in the absence of clearly distinguishable (or illegal) threats to the security of the host nation. When used to augment the framework of doctrinal decision-making tools such as the IPMB and the J/MAP, complexity theory enhances the utility of these tools away from their well-understood application to conventional and counterinsurgency warfare. A systemic (rather than analytic) approach, focusing on interactions and feedback mechanisms rather than concentrating on agents, will offer insights on where to apply leverage so as to contribute to the development of security and stability within a society. The targeting derived from such an approach will focus on building and fostering identified sources of resilience and adaptive capacity within the host nation, while mitigating or disrupting sources of stress. Complexity theory highlights the non-linearity of feedback mechanisms, implying a requirement for the continuous monitoring of measures of effectiveness in order to adapt effects-seeking operations. In analysing progress using these measures of effectiveness, viewing the society as a complex adaptive system evolving in an adaptive cycle provides a valuable understanding of where the host nation lies on its continuum of development. However, complexity theory does not promise certainty and, in its practical application, it does not permit the reduction of complex problems to simplicity. It allows commanders to identify more places to act, but imposes a requirement to decide on the appropriateness of such actions and then closely monitor the effects generated.
ENDNOTES


4 Ibid.

5 Glenn, Complex Targeting, pp. 28–41.


7 Ibid., p. 34.

8 Holling, Gunderson and Peterson, ‘Sustainability and Panarchies’ in Panarchy, p. 75.


16 Head Capability Development Army, Adaptive Campaigning 2009, Department of Defence, Canberra, pp. 16–18.

THE AUTHORS

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CONCEPTS

THE UNIVERSAL INFANTRY

WILLIAM F OWEN

ABSTRACT

This article suggests that the ADF should seek to adopt a standard organisation for infantry battalions, based on manpower and organisation, rather than conditions dictated by manning equipment.

The aim of this article is to propose one type of infantry battalion for the Australian Defence Force. One type of infantry battalion would greatly simplify organisation, manning, and refocus thinking toward the fact that infantry are human beings to whom the army gives equipment, and are not simply there to operate that equipment.

The need to implement this ‘one type of infantry battalion’ is not predicated by any trend or supposed altering to the nature of war or warfare. It is based in the thinking that the current variety of infantry battalion organisations no longer represent a sound basis for progressing ideas, and the reason that so many diverse and inefficient organisations exist is because of an historic failure of thought. Let us be clear. This is not proposed because of the imagined challenges of the future. This is proposed because this is how it should have always been had someone thought clearly about the problem. That being said, this work states the opinion that it will be very relevant to future operations, in whatever form they may be.
Military organisation is primarily a function of command. It resides in the conceptual realm of combat, but is expressed both morally and physically. It could well be opined that the basics model of Roman infantry organisation remained valid well into the nineteenth century, purely because of the basics of close order battle. While differing in detail, basic organisations remained largely the same. The purpose was to generate decisive mass, be that fire or blade, at the point of application. In general terms, infantry equipment held little or no sway over organisation.

The introduction of the rifle forced dispersion and thus considerably shrunk the span of command that could be effectively exercised over troops in combat, because soldiers had to both disperse and use cover to manoeuvre. However, almost all infantry soldiers had the same basic equipment. The aim was to equip the man. Today this is no longer the case. No longer is the utility of infantry about giving the best men the right equipment. Today we see infantry battalions of differing types manning differing forms of equipment. To a critical eye this may appear to verge on sophistry. Hopefully what follows will demonstrate otherwise.

Most armies have debated and quarrelled over the ‘size of the section’, including the infamous question posed by a former UK Director of Infantry: ‘how many men should the 8-man section have?’ No one has ever reached any firm conclusions; contrary to popular belief, there is very little authoritative work in this area, and certainly very little based on sound research. There are, however, many pages of opinion mostly lacking rigor. Simply put, there is no ideal section size. There is no ideal platoon size either. The better or worse for every given solution largely depends on training, mission, tactics and the quality of the officers and NCOs. Yes, there has to be a default, and that default has to be predicated on a number, but that does not have to be the ideal. It merely has to set conditions for effective organisation.

Alterations in the size and organisation of the section have nearly always been predicated on equipment capabilities. New equipment leads to new organisation. For example, the United Kingdom’s 1980 decision to make the 8-man section into two 4-man fire teams was based purely around plans for a new small arms family. A great many of the supposed advantages cited subsequently were after-the-fact rationalisations. With the introduction of the Warrior MICV, the question explicitly became ‘how do we man this equipment?’, because the vehicle required ten men, not eight.

An alternative view to this accepted wisdom is to merely state that the platoon will be X number of men. What X signifies is not important, but let us use thirty men for the sake of example. The exact number is not the point; the point is that the
question then becomes ‘how do I equip and organise thirty men?’, not ‘how do I man four vehicles?’ This is not as banal and obvious as some may wish to imply. In terms of a useful discussion, a great deal more can be gained from asking ‘how do I best organise and equip X number of men?’, rather than trying to ascertain and justify the size of the platoon/section and its equipment, based on no real constraints and a history of opinions usually ill-informed by operational reality. Additionally, the platoon still has to function in the face of casualties and in differing terrains against differing enemies, so what has to be ascertained is general principles of organisation, not absolutist declarations about the 4-man fire team or the 8-man section.

However, it is the act of defining the number of men from which all else will usefully follow. The number of those men—officers and NCOs—will have a significant impact on costs, training and flexibility. Purely for debate, let us assume that conditions dictate: one officer, one sergeant, two corporals and two lance corporals for twenty-four other ranks. We have now added another condition from which to usefully debate and discuss organisation. No one has yet mentioned equipment.

THESIS

The organisation presented here is simple. A battalion consists of a headquarters with three or four identical companies. The companies comprise a headquarters and three or four identical platoons. That is it. Depending on the number and size of the platoons the battalion will be approximately somewhere between 430 and 680 all ranks.

Ideally the battalion headquarters should not exceed the size of a platoon, and company headquarters should be not more than ten. Both these numbers allow for spare manpower to meet a great variety of conditions. BG TAC and Main rarely if ever require more than sixteen to eighteen men in total for both, and effective company headquarters can be as small as two or three men.

In garrison and during field training, there is an attached increment of support staff, which is not deployable and need not even be infantry trained. Who they are and of what they may comprise falls outside this discussion.

Points to note are:
1. The entire organisation is designed to fight dismounted. It is not equipped with any weapon or system, plus a useful ammunition load that cannot be transported on foot and/or across a rope bridge.
2. Likewise, the default setting for resupply and evacuation is helicopters, boats and/or vehicles.
3. If the battalion needs to march or move a long distance it is uplifted by an armoured personnel carrier (APC) from an assembly point, along a planned route, to a dismount point, similar to the method used by support helicopter or landing craft.

4. When deployed on operations, a thirty to forty-man Formation Echelon Platoon of non-infantry manpower directly supports the battalion from the formation level of command. It holds all the battalion's stores and equipment, on wheels, in 8–10 x 20’ ISO containers. This would include the battalion’s ‘3rd line’ personal equipment held in kit bags or holdalls. It also configures all resupply loads for the battalion, swaps out defective equipment for repair and recharges batteries.

5. Should armoured battle groups need infantry to dismount from MICVs, the companies or platoons detach from the battalion for that purpose. The MICVs have dedicated crews.

These are just the broad-brush outline of the thesis in general. Essentially there are nine to sixteen identical platoons that can be given any equipment, providing they get suitable training. It’s a blank canvas against which training and equipment can be applied. The real value is the 500–600 determined, fit and well-trained men that it comprises.

Exactly how the companies and platoons will be equipped and organised depends on the mission, terrain and threat. This is a solution that fits expeditionary armies because they will never be able to predict where they will fight or against whom, and for what purpose. Again, the platoons must be equipped. The platoons do not merely man the equipment!

On some operations it may be both useful and necessary to permanently group the APCs and MICVs with either a battalion or company. That is not to say that the battalion becomes trained and organised as a ‘Mech Battalion’. It could just as soon dismount and begin operations in the airmobile role.

**TRAINING**

The primary objection to this concept (and it is neither new or original) is always couched in terms of training. The question has to be asked: what platoon training could not be achieved given six weeks and the necessary resources? In most cases, two to three weeks is sufficient. The default setting for all platoons would be ‘rifle’, so training would focus on dismounted close combat, patrolling, close reconnaissance and covert observation posts. The basics would reside around jungle and
urban operations (as it currently is), with a balance between combat and security
operations against both regular and irregular enemies.

Given good basics, those thirty men can be turned into a ‘guided weapons
platoon’ or have guided weapons issued to them. If ten to thirty Javelin operators
cannot be trained in five working days, then something is wrong with the trainer or
the system. The platoon’s basic rifle skills have covered sighting a dismounted
observation posts, so the nuances of sighting an AT post within a defensive position,
and as part of an integrated anti-armour plan, is pretty easy in comparison. Training a mortar
platoon may take slightly longer, but once the process is proven and understood, it should not
present a challenge.

The battalion default setting should allow for specialist platoons, so that expertise in an
equipment or role area can exist. Specialist platoons will have the same manpower and
rank structure as every other platoon, so they can ‘instantaneously’ revert to being rifle
platoons if required. Promotion and transfer will distribute those skills at some
level throughout the organisation, assuming men remain within the unit or within
the infantry. For example, it probably makes sense to have a sniper platoon so that
sniper skills are maintained and subject matter experts exist to train snipers for
other companies and platoons. The constraint on the total number of snipers within
a battalion is the equipment and training budget, but ten sets of equipment can
train thirty or more snipers. The debate is actually far more about time and money
to achieve the standards required, than how many snipers a battalion should have.
The snipers need to understand that their job is to be a good sniper, and to select
and train other snipers when required. Problems do occur when ‘sniping’ becomes
an image and not a fire support skill. This is a liability for any specialist platoon, not
just snipers. The antidote is coherent command and doctrine.

It should also be possible to equip some or all platoons with a simple armoured
vehicle if the mission demanded it. The vehicle would be something like that
envisaged by Project Overlander Land 121 Phase 4. Logistic support can be raised
from battalion manpower with specialist service support and maintenance attached.
Only experimentation and experience can really validate these ideas, combined with
the realisation that it may not be the perfect answer, but it may be better than the
current organisation, given the requirements of current operations.

To implement this there would have to be ongoing experimentation with actual
platoons. This would be the best way to equip and train X number of men, with Y
or Z type of equipment for A or B type roles, which could build into a logical and
coherent body of corporate knowledge. The challenge here comes from the novelty, and not any actual complexity stemming from the supposed black art of operating a mortar.

Some traditional platoons would cease to exist. The skills of the signals platoon would become absorbed into company and battalion headquarters. Additionally, battalion and company headquarters may have to operate small unmanned aerial vehicles. New types of platoon may be brought into existence.

HOW DID WE STRAY?

Assuming some see merit in this, it is perfectly fair to ask, why is this not the norm? Why is this idea actually not done by anyone? The answer lies in the evolution of combined arms from the dawn of proto-modern warfare to the present day. From 1914 onwards, completely new infantry weapons were rapidly introduced into service. For the United Kingdom—and almost everyone else—their introduction far outstripped doctrine and an understanding of their application. Weapons such as mortars and Vickers ‘heavy’ machine guns obviously required specialist training, and needed to be grouped together for control and administration. Add to this the introduction of ‘carrier platoons’ and ‘anti-tank batteries/platoons’ and it is easy to see where the equipment-defined organisation began to grow from. It must be recognised that there was nothing inherently wrong with this, as long as all infantry battalions were the same, because then the solutions to adapting to other roles remained the same for everyone. This remained largely the case until the early 1960s and the introduction of the APC. By the 1980s there were four to five distinctly different infantry organisations, all of which were based on manning the equipment. This was purely a product of evolution. The problem was that very significant proportions of manpower were no longer in rifle platoons, and the best way to maintain any form of coherency was to leave battalions with their equipment. The claim that the army equips the man only remains true for the sections not in the armoured infantry role. The problem is that the focus on the section ‘as a platform’ has left the soldier overloaded. This is in sharp contrast to the 1918–36 model that made the platoon the smallest independent element capable of manoeuvre in attack and defence.
BETTER OR WORSE?

The aim of this article has been to propose one type of infantry battalion for the ADF. Hopefully it will provoke debate. Hopefully that debate will occur in a rational form that enables useful conclusions to be drawn about the issues raised. While equipment is important, the quality of men and their training is much more important. Therefore there are really two separate issues to be considered.

The first is: does having one model of infantry battalion create benefit, and should that battalion be based on the rope-bridge principle of dismounted operation and the need to equip the men, not merely man the equipment?

The second then is: what are the limitations to training and education inherent to the average ADF infantry platoon? They will not all be snipers, but can 90% assemble and operate a 60mm mortar, both single handed and as part of crew? Can the other 10% be found from other platoons? Can 90% of that mortar platoon revert to being a rifle platoon or retrained as a guided weapons platoon, given three weeks’ notice, or one week of in-theatre emergency training? Without being needlessly provocative, if this cannot be done, what does it tell us about any concept predicated on the need to adapt?

This article would not have been written had the author not believed that these things were possible and beneficial, but it is only with rigorous trailing, experimentation and examination of that belief that it will yield something useful.

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William F Owen is a military writer, critic and defence technology journalist, living and working in Israel. He joined the British Army in 1980 and served in both regular and territorial infantry battalions, as well as the Intelligence Corps, until 1993. He has since worked on defence projects in the Middle and Far East, as well as West Africa. He is currently pursuing a Masters Degree by Research at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom.
INFORMATION OPERATIONS

RETHINKING INFORMATION DOMINANCE AND INFLUENCE BATTLESPACE EFFECTS

MAJOR JASON LOGUE

ABSTRACT

Adaptive Campaigning – Army’s Future Land Operations Concept is a wake up call for the Army and ADF as a whole, as it seeks to generate effects in the modern complex operational environment. A core element of the concept is the requirement to recognise and utilise the global information environment to support operations. While the concept in various versions has been available for some time, Army has yet to fully embrace the capabilities already resident within its organisation to focus on winning the dominant narrative and successfully exploiting opportunities in the Information Actions Line of Operation.

This article proposes that unless Army creates an Information Operations generalist to effectively plan, synchronise and execute information effects in support of operations, the strong and successful work of disparate information actions task elements will continue to be limited and potentially misused. This article proposes that Army uses the pool of information specialists in the Australian Army Public Relations Service (AAPRS) to generate this much-needed capability. It traces the history of AAPRS and the issues uniformed members of the Defence Public Affairs area currently face and suggests that this pool of personnel may offer an opportunity for Army to expand into becoming the Information Dominance and Influence Battlefield Operating System subject matter experts. The article highlights the intellectual and operational growth of AAPRS officers over the past few years to justify
further the argument that if Army is to truly adapt to the new environment, the resources are available but are currently misused.

The article also highlights many of the issues with Information Operations and puts to rest many of the myths and perceptions associated with the capability that have become common within both the ADF and the general public. It argues that to truly gain any level of information dominance requires substantial subject matter expertise, quality planning and a solid dose of Mission Command, all facets that are currently lacking across both Army and the ADF.

The article recommends today’s AAPRS officer as a first stop in creating the capability that is severely lacking at the operational level.

INTRODUCTION

In June 2006, Charles Sturt University academics Zoe Hibbert and Peter Simmons published the results of their Defence-sponsored research into the relationship between Australian journalists who specialise in reporting Defence matters and the Military Public Affairs Branch of the Australian Defence Force.¹ The study focused on the relationship between the two groups during the 2003 Iraq invasion and sought to ‘clearly identify gaps and problems in the relationship between the two parties’.² While laudable in its approach, the study failed to recognise that Military Public Affairs, for the most part, does not engage directly with the media. Current Military Public Affairs Officers have neither the freedom of action, nor the command authority, within the current military or political environment to act on most recommendations of the study. In fact the study, reported as ‘helping the military public relations department to change strategy, structure and policy’,³ did little more than redesign the wider Defence Public Relations area, within the existing constraints of manpower, to be almost singularly focused on media responsiveness.⁴ Anything beyond the internal restructure and focus was, and remains, simply beyond the authority of the organisation to change.

In reality, the study which sought to establish the relationships between Military Public Affairs—those uniformed officers of the ADF who operate within the global information environment⁵ in support of military operations—was more reflective of relationships between the media and the much larger, mostly civilian Defence Public Affairs area. In the current Defence construct it is civilian public affairs staff that primarily interfaces with the media. This interface is constrained to the provision of cleared responses provided for release by the relevant Service or branch of the Department. Most importantly, however, is that this approach is universally applied across Defence issues, which range from kangaroo culling within training areas through to the latest operational incident in Afghanistan. The current approach makes
little distinction between a domestic public relations function—being good neighbours in a regional area—and supporting an operational commander in achieving effects within the Information Dominance and Influence Battlespace. It quite often ends up with a civilian who has no operational experience and little understanding of complex battlefield actions advising the Senior Leadership Group on communication strategies and, more importantly, deciding on the releasable content in support of current operations. Despite its shortcomings, the Hibbert and Simmons study clearly identified that there are significant issues within Defence in understanding exactly what ‘operations’ within the global information environment entail.

Across Defence, the focus on media relationships as the panacea to the information conundrum continues, yet the capability to specifically address the operational aspect of this issue has been mostly left to its own devices. Army continues to employ a small group of specialist communicators within the Australian Army Public Relations Service (AAPRS) to address ‘media issues’ but, unlike their US and UK equivalents, has completely disempowered them from proactively engaging with the media. This leaves an obvious question. Is Army and the ADF actually demanding and receiving the service it now requires from its uniformed specialists, particularly in light of the release of Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept? More importantly, what role does today’s AAPRS officer need to perform in a complex operational environment?

**AIM**

This paper seeks to further the debate started in the 2008 Chief of Army’s Military History Conference titled “The Military, the Media & Information Warfare.” The conference, through its range of speakers and topics, focused almost solely on the media element of the triumvirate and in doing so, furthered the misperception that the military’s relationship with media was the critical element of operations in the global information environment. The author contends that it is the third element, the mislabelled ‘Information Warfare,’ which should be the focus of the uniformed Army and the ADF today.

In the current construct the media relationship aspect is almost solely the domain of Defence civilians, leaving a pool of uniformed officers in employment limbo who work hard to achieve operational effects but are usurped in implementing strategies by a civilian approach that focuses on media engagement as a measure of effectiveness.
The fact that convenors chose to use a term that fell out of favour almost a decade ago also highlights the single greatest issue facing any practitioner of effects in the global information environment today. Everyone has an opinion on what it is, who should do it, how they should go about it and, quite regularly, how it is failing. For a capability that Army requires to generate and sustain the dominant narrative in *Adaptive Campaigning*, very little has been done to actually direct its development beyond stove-piped enhancement within information task elements. Like the resultant changes from the Hibbert and Simmons research into Military Public Affairs, development of capability in creating information effects has essentially been self-generated, limited in scope and generally unsupported externally. The real issue therefore is not as Hibbert and Simmons or many of the Chief of Army’s History Conference presenters would contend—the relationship between the military, particularly Military Public Affairs, and the media—but one of the Army actually moving beyond a capability requirement that was developed in the 1980s, and actively supporting its own doctrine and policy through the directed development of capabilities to support the Adaptive Campaigning’s ‘Information Actions’ Line of Operation. Rethinking the uniformed Military Public Affairs capability is the first step in doing so.

**BACKGROUND TO THE AAPRS**

The tendency to focus on relationships with the media as the panacea to improve and maintain support for operations is not new. Following the US Civil War, Union Army General William Sherman made his disdain for journalists well known, but also identified the requirement to seek ways to better manage their impact.

Newspaper correspondents with an army, as a rule, are mischievous. They are the world’s gossips, pick up and retail the camp scandal, and gradually drift to the headquarters of some general, who finds it easier to make reputation at home than with his own corps or division. They are also tempted to prophesy events and state facts which, to an enemy, reveal a purpose in time to guard against it. Moreover, they are always bound to see facts colored by the partisan or political character of their own patrons, and thus bring army officers into the political controversies of the day, which are always mischievous and wrong. Yet, so greedy are the people at large for war news, that it is doubtful whether any army commander can exclude all reporters, without bringing down on himself a clamor that may imperil his own safety. Time and moderation must bring a just solution to this modern difficulty.
Given the widespread use of General Sherman’s contention, it remains surprising that most authors focus on his negative opinion of journalists and not his insight into the requirements of operational commanders. He quite clearly identified that the issues concerning media in his area of operations were part of a commander’s responsibility based upon guidance from higher headquarters. He also acknowledged that the outcome was unlikely to be tactically or operationally suitable but such was the strategic imperative, a commander must make certain allowances to support the requirement.

Current military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan reinforce each and every day that tactical or even operational successes do not readily or automatically equate to strategic triumph. Military victories on their own rarely gain and maintain strong domestic or operational-area public support for the activities of a military force. Moreover, the success of Australia’s commitment to these ongoing conflicts matters little if perception of the wider campaign is increasingly negative. As seen over the past few years, the great work of Australians in Afghanistan does little to sway the general public towards supporting the conflict if they believe, based on information presented into the global information environment, that the conduct of the wider Coalition campaign is flawed.

The information element of operations, in which media in the battlefield are but a part, was identified as a command issue more than a century ago. The relationship between the media and the Army is clearly one between the journalist and the commander. If it was this clear in 1875, why have armies the world over invested in capabilities and processes to place a firewall between the commander and the media? Moving forward a century may provide an insight.

Populist opinion that media coverage lost the war in Vietnam for the United States and its allies has been the predominant thought in military environs through the decades that followed the war. The result of this thought has been the deliberate attempts to ‘manage’ media in the operational area as part of campaign planning and the employment of uniformed Public Affairs Officers to ‘deal’ with the media on behalf of commanders. A study of the approaches used during Grenada, Panama and the Gulf War of 1991 highlights the various attempts of the US military to gain ascendancy and control over journalists in the operational area. These approaches, essentially the implementation of access limitations and the use of authorised proxies to engage with the media, also served the Australian Army well during its early inception.
The Australian Army took an almost unique approach of forming a specialist corps to perform this role. Army expected its Public Affairs Officers to ‘deal’ with the media and granted them freedom of action to do so as long as it did not interfere with the real job of soldiering. Together with highly proficient NCOs, Army’s PR Corps (originally an adjunct of Royal Australian Army Education Corps, which has been known as the Australian Army Public Relations Service since 31 March 199413) undertook a range of generally self-directed tasks to gather and provide product to their major customer: the Australian media. Public Affairs Officers were specifically recruited from among civilian media agencies as journalism qualifications were deemed essential if they were to build and maintain relationships with journalists. A civilian qualification was enough to see generations of uniformed Army Public Affairs Officers progress through the ranks as ‘specialists’, many of whom had never completed any formal military training beyond an abbreviated induction (and some did not even do this). Even a cursory review of the revised AAPRS competency requirements published in 1999 highlights a significant shortfall in requiring officers to be anything more than a civilian public affairs specialist wearing a uniform. While the requirement to contribute to planning is acknowledged, competencies are heavily weighted towards executing public affairs activities.14

The result of the specialisation and focus on civilian equivalency led to the creation of a uniformed Public Affairs Officer who was neither 100 per cent military nor a member of the media. Surprisingly, this approach was for the most part successful during the 1980s and early 1990s. That this just happened to coincide with that period in time when the ADF’s major activities were domestic exercises, not operations, is perhaps the single greatest factor in its success. The period is also characterised by communication technology that was only just starting to increase exponentially. The mainstream media’s wire and courier services up until the late 1980s were not that different to those employed during Vietnam. The immediacy of communication encountered today was but a mere dream until the 1991 Gulf War/1993 Somalia intervention and their resultant ‘CNN Effect’.15 What the Army, and wider ADF, required of its uniformed Public Affairs Officers then and now has significantly changed yet, for the most part, Army is still recruiting and organisationally managing these personnel as it did in the 1980s.

AAPRS – MISLABELLED AND MISUSED

The 2000 review of Defence’s public affairs capability sought to apply civilian best practice, centralised, strategically driven communications with key stakeholders across Defence. The result, the Public Affairs and Corporate Communications (PACC) branch of the Department, encompassed all civilian and uniformed personnel working within the public affairs role. It took personnel from the Services,
including the AAPRS Army personnel, and centralised them under a SES Band-1 Public Service officer in a Canberra-centric entity that was alternatively described as ‘making the leap from “managing public affairs” to “shaping organisational communication”’ by the authors of the strategy, through to a ‘nightmare or worse’ by the media that dealt with it day-to-day. Services lost the independence to operate in the information domain, and despite assurances that the new organisation would seek to move beyond it, the transition to PACC increased organisational focus on media relations while at the same time increasing complexity of the task by requiring a centralised approach. The transition to PACC inculcated Defence with a mindset of engaging in risk-free communication that continues to this day. From these beginnings, the role of Army’s Public Affairs Officers has morphed. Policy implemented by PACC removed their ability to engage with the media, and lessons from operations highlighted an increasing need to support operational commanders with specialist ‘information effects’ advice rather than just ‘media’ advice during planning and conduct of operations.

AAPRS officers moved from doing public relations to keep the Australian public informed about military activities and ‘dealing’ with the media, towards planning and conducting activities to create information effects in support of operations. They have, through natural evolution and operational demand, become staff officers in headquarters working to a commander’s intent rather than independent beings filling their days meeting media requirements. The AAPRS moniker is not only an inaccurate description of what is required in today’s operationally focused Army—current Military public affairs officers are not public relations practitioners in the civilian sense—the baggage associated with it continues to devalue the contribution that the new generation of communications professionals bring to the current and future fights.

This change in focus highlighted the significant shortfall in the management of the capability by Army. Military public affairs officers were increasingly required to turn out complex staff documents and work within dynamic planning teams, yet most had received little to no training in this role. Up until the introduction of the Army All-Corps Officer Training Continuum there was no requirement to attend the suite of officer training Army requires of its General Service Officers, and for a period it was the author’s experience that attendance on courses was actively discouraged by the Directorate of Officer Career Management as it was not required for promotion. This led to a core of mid- to senior-level AAPRS officers with severely atrophied civilian skills and limited military ones. The job that they had been employed for had changed.

The transition to PACC inculcated Defence with a mindset of engaging in risk-free communication that continues to this day.
significantly and they were ill-equipped to undertake it. The shortfall was clearly evident in the perceived performance of many AAPRS officers employed in any role beyond media escort or liaison during the 2003 Operation BASTILLE/FALCONER. Through no fault of their own, most simply did not have the skills required to operate in a high-stress, operationally focused, staff and planning environment.

**THE RISE OF INFORMATION OPERATIONS**

An associated factor in the lack of development within AAPRS is the rise of Information Operations (IO) in the ADF and its allies during the late 1990s. Australia, keen to embrace the concept, relied almost solely on US doctrine for the formalisation of the function. In so doing it failed to recognise the impact of the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948, which essentially forbids US Government information activities that may influence the US population. Correspondingly, the restrictions this act infers, coupled with self-imposed limitations following the organisation’s Vietnam experience, has left the US military with a uniformed public affairs capability which actively seeks to distance itself from activities designed to generate effects in the information domain. These self-generated separations were famously highlighted in the 2004 Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Memo ‘Policy on PA Relationship to IO’, a direct result of the decision to consolidate the Information Operations, Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy functions of the Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF-I) under one commander, and the more recent opposition to General McKiernan’s attempts to similarly merge the Public Affairs Office and IO functions within International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) headquarters.

The result of the ADF’s reliance on US doctrine has been threelfold. Firstly, the role and function of a uniformed Military Public Affairs Officer in supporting information effects has become distorted. Years of educational exchange at US Army colleges and institutions has created a cadre of senior Australian officers who naturally apply the same limitations on their return to the ADF …
of clarity in the doctrine and the sweeping changes across the field in recent years have left the capability open to exploitation by organisations and elements seeking to generate justification for activities. The term ‘Information Operations’ is variously and incorrectly used across the ADF as a euphemism for Psychological Operations, Computer Network Operations and even Information Warfare. The 2009 Defence White Paper furthers the misperception by placing reference to developing Army’s IO capability within the very same sentence as enhancing intelligence capabilities. The Chief of Army added to this confusion by releasing a supporting Order of the Day that described ‘information operations specialists’ as a ‘tactical intelligence capability’.

‘INFORMATION OPERATIONS 101’ OR ‘BUSTING THE IO MYTHS’

Despite the regularly reported mysticism incorrectly associated with it, IO, in the ADF context, is extremely straightforward. As the ADF definition clearly states, IO is simply a coordinating function. To take it further, IO coordinates and synchronises lethal and non-lethal effects during both planning and execution in support of a main effort. IO, in the Australian context, does not actually do anything beyond tying together a range of disparate activity to generate targeted effects in either the physical, information or cognitive domains—preferably all three. It is impossible to ‘IO a target’ in the same way that it is impossible to ‘Mobility and Survivability’ one. IO, or in Australian Army lexicon, Information Dominance and Influence, is simply one of the eight Battlefield Operating Systems that Army commanders should consider in operations. It is in essence an operational-level planning function that requires a strong understanding of the complex environments that the ADF routinely operates in and the wide variety of capabilities on offer to commanders.

Importantly, IO is not conducted at the operational level in isolation. In the ADF, IO planning is supported by two key documents: a whole-of-government strategic communications guidance and targeting guidance. The strategic communications guidance, an output of an interdepartmental committee, provides IO planners with agreed limits, a strategic narrative, and broad themes and messages for activities within the information domain; the targeting guidance provides formal authority to implement, and place restrictions on, the conduct of information actions. Actually carrying out the information effect tasking is, generally, a tactical activity which is well covered within Army’s new doctrine Information Actions.

It is also important to recognise that IO does not do anything by itself. IO planning supports the main effort as defined by a commander and is managed and executed.
by the operations branch of a headquarters. IO-trained personnel supporting the execution of a plan work to the principal Operations Officer and, ultimately, to the Commander. To not integrate the IO capability into the operations function is tantamount to ignoring doctrine which seeks coordination across the Battlespace Operating Systems. The Operations cell, through its IO specialists, coordinates the activities of all Information Actions task elements in accordance with the plan or the Commander’s direction. This is no different to the Operations cell mobility and survivability or combat service support specialist coordinating the activities of the tactical elements within their relevant Battlefield Operating System.

If IO only coordinates activities and is working to the principal Plans Officer or Operations Officer, why would the Army actually need specialists in this field? The answer is summed up well in Adaptive Campaigning (2009):

Influencing public perceptions of battlefield events will become both more important and more difficult. Commanders even at lower levels may find themselves as concerned with shaping the narrative of those events as with planning and conducting the operations that produce them.26

A commander would not think to go to war without officers in logistics, communications or offensive support to advise him, yet when it comes to the Information Dominance and Influence Battlefield Operating System we are stuck in a paradigm that provides a range of insular information task elements all operating within the global information environment, but no trained, qualified and practised officer to coordinate them. Army’s current maxim that every soldier is a media performer is simply not enough to generate well-considered, executable information effects in support of operations. The author’s experience has been that a trained and dedicated IO planner on any operational headquarters is an extremely valuable commodity to the commander. It is also the author’s experience that an untrained officer purporting to be an IO planner is disruptive and ultimately dangerous to both the mission and the force.

THE CURRENT REALITY

Plans developed within the Information Dominance and Influence Battlefield Operating System are severely constrained by policy, procedures and command decisions developed by operational commanders, policy advisors and the Australian Government. Neither the Information Actions task elements nor the IO planner...
have the freedom of action to implement tactics, techniques and procedures to engage in the global information environment to generate and sustain the ‘dominant narrative’ under the current manifestation of policy. The Army and ADF ethos of ‘Mission Command’ remains almost impossible to invoke for operations within the global information environment because of the constraints and limitations placed on the ADF as a whole. These constraints and limitations are, in part, a direct response to the effect the ‘strategic corporal’ can have on today’s battlefields and the immediacy of modern media capabilities. This issue and associated concerns, such as the centralisation of product approval, are well documented in the US military as a result of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is the author’s opinion that instead of adjusting to the new environment in order to exploit all that it offers, the ADF and government have instead sought to tightly control and restrict activities that occur within it. Mission Command, or at the very least a strong intent to apply Mission Command, is alive and well in every Battlefield Operating System, with the exception of Information Dominance and Influence. The ideals presented within Adaptive Campaigning (2009) will be difficult to achieve unless an understanding of coordinating the total information capability is improved and a better understanding of the global information environment is developed throughout the ADF. A key element of this must be professionalising the Army’s IO capability.

BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL ARMY IO CAPABILITY

The Australian Army, unlike its US ally, does not currently have a professional career stream for IO officers. It does have a range of IO task elements within various corps and organisations that allow junior officer specialisation such as Psychological Operations within Intelligence and Computer Network Operations, and Electronic Warfare within Signals. In addition, civil-military cooperation draws personnel from across the Army, as has Military Public Affairs in recent years. Army currently has a core group of individual specialists but only very few that have broadened their skills across a range of IO task elements. The author’s experience on operations is that an IO generalist, someone with training across several disciplines and exposure to many more, supported by specific IO and operational planning training, is always better than a task specialist that is simply thrust into the role. During the existence of MNF-I Strat-Com in 2004, the plans cell included both individual specialists and IO generalists. Their background was readily reflected in the breadth of the planning that was performed by the individuals. Excellence in the Information Dominance and Influence Battlefield Operating System requires coordination of all available assets with a scheme of manoeuvre. It also requires the ability to synchronise tactical actions to generate effects both inside an area of operations and beyond. Incorporation of strategic requirements into an operational-level IO plan is critical for success.
This requirement brings today’s evolved Military Public Affairs Officer to the fore. Recognising the increasing need to support Army’s requirements into the future, today’s AAPRS officers have moved to militarily professionalise their capability. The All Corps Officer Training Continuum formalised a process that was, for the most part, occurring since 2003 among some AAPRS officers, with all Army Military Public Affairs Officers now required to attend Grade 3, the complete Grade 2 and compete for Grade 1 Command and Staff Course selection. In addition, a training continuum has sought to maximise the focus on support to operational planning by completing a range of Australian Defence Force Warfare Centre Planning Courses, including mandatory attendance on Introduction to Joint Warfare and Joint Operations Plans Course as well as the Information Operations Staff Officers Course. Selected officers complete the Psychological Operations Staff Officers Course, the Civil-Military Cooperation Planners Course, the Joint Targeting Course and the Special Operations Plans Course. Several also complete training in US or other allied institutions in relevant IO and targeting fields. In addition, they usually hold post-graduate organisational communication qualifications by the time they are promoted to major (O4). Interestingly, it is only Army that has formalised this structure. RAAF and Navy Military Public Affairs Officers do not complete the range of military specific training now required of their Army counterparts unless they are selected for operational service in a specific role. For the most part, RAAF and Navy require only a media operations function and achieve this by attracting working journalists for reserve service. By the time Army’s AAPRS officers reach major (O4) they have usually worked at Division headquarters or higher, and have joint staff experience at Headquarters Joint Operations Command. Their exposure to levels of planning, and the requirements for operations in the global information environment, from strategic influences through to tactical actions, is unparalleled. An AAPRS officer, shaped by their formative experiences, brings information planning reality to the Information Dominance and Influence domain. They, more than most, are aware of the effect of perceptions, and approach all planning with a view towards the second and third order effects of proposed actions across the complete information environment, not just in the tactical area. They are also highly cognisant of the topical line in the sand when it comes to generating information effects.

The usual argument that Defence Public Affairs will lose credibility if it works with IO because it is associated with deception planning or psychological operations directed at the adversary loses relevance because one of the people developing the

Army currently has a core group of individual specialists but only very few that have broadened their skills across a range of IO task elements.
plan is inherently aware of the constraints and limitations in employing the capability. It is in effect no different to an offensive support planner using different ammunition natures for different targets. More relevant is the fact that the public affairs approach, under current policy, is actually executed by the commander or their designate and not the Military Public Affairs Officer. Their actual interaction with the media is now almost solely limited to escort tasks so the credibility argument becomes null and void. Most importantly, recent history proves that this level of integration and coordination is highly successful. The information successes in the 2004 Operation AL FAJR to secure Fallujah are directly attributable to the level of coordination that was achieved in MNF-I Strat-Com, working with its subordinate and superior headquarters, and the execution of that plan under the direction of the Deputy Chief of Staff Strategic Operations.

For the first time in the campaign an adversary spokesperson admitted to losing the 'media battle.' The dominant narrative had been generated and sustained by the Coalition and the Iraqi Government.

This shift in focus from media relations towards holistic and coordinated communications campaigns is not unique to the ADF. Australian and international universities are predominantly offering post-graduate communications courses to expand a civilian public relations practitioner’s scope beyond media relations and crisis communications. The Charles Sturt University course focuses on 'a world-class learning experience for communication professionals to develop their communication management and strategic skills,' and includes topics on strategy planning, research and communication audits, stakeholder engagement, crisis and issues management, culture and integrated communication. Similarly the School of Communication at the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom recognises the importance of coordination in its Masters-level program in international communication, which seeks to integrate theory and applied knowledge across a range of aspects for a communication effect. No longer are civilian public relations personnel simply focused on one area of communication. They seek to utilise all available elements to support their parent organisation’s raison d’être. The development path of Army’s AAPRS officers has taken a similar approach. They are now, more than ever, organisational communicators with a range of skills well beyond media management.

Problems associated with sustaining a small IO capability have often been cited as reasons why the Army has not sought to create a career field in this area. Generally, other specialists in IO disciplines have a career path that is managed through to the

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An AAPRS officer, shaped by their formative experiences, brings information planning reality to the Information Dominance and Influence domain.

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Army’s senior ranks, if they so choose, by drawing on their parent corps. An Army Psychological Operations specialist, for example, continues with a career in intelligence long after their time at 2nd Intelligence Company is finished. Career management of AAPRS officers is not that simple. Once they have completed their junior postings as a lieutenant and junior captain they are locked into a career progression that sometimes removes them from Army. Presently there are only six major and three lieutenant colonel positions for the Regular Army members of the corps and the vast majority of these are in the non-Army group. The opportunity to stream into and out of the IO field, competing against other qualified Army and ADF personnel enhances the sustainably of AAPRS in addition to providing a valuable commodity to Army and the wider ADF.

The Chief of Army’s recently released directive on an Officer Career Pathway Strategy may provide a vehicle to achieve the growth and maintenance of a small-group of IO generalists to support Army’s Information Dominance and Influence requirements and the ADF’s ongoing planning capability. By offering an IO generalist streaming option at senior captain (03) or major (04), Army’s requirement to fill IO/IA plans and operations functions on Brigade, Divisional, and Command staffs and to provide suitably qualified and experienced personnel for joint and combined operations is dramatically improved. With a clear streaming option comes a training burden, but generally the personnel seeking to stream into this area would already have completed several of the required courses and should possess strong tactical experience with at least one IO task element. To be successful, Army should be seeking to create an IO generalist, an officer with a strong planning background with training in and exposure to the widest variety of IO task elements. At present Army officers that fit this requirement are extremely limited and, despite strong operational experiences while attached to coalition partners, are all but forgotten in terms of this capability on their return to Australia. It is envisioned that with a generation of AAPRS officers who are meeting the requirements of the All-Corps Officer Training Continuum and the AAPRS internal qualification requirements, the desire to be seen as more than just a Public Affairs Officer is increasing. In addition, AustInt, RASigs and other corps contain experienced officers that would willingly form the cadre of the new streamed capability. Moreover, if the Army is to be truly adaptive they should form this cadre to develop and enhance what is a poorly managed and misunderstood capability. The key to providing the capability required of the ‘Adaptive Army’ is to clearly focus on individual talent and experience and maximise

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its use for the betterment of the organisation as whole. The IO stream cannot be seen as an opportunity for those not progressing in their parent corps. It has to offer a growth from those involved in the development and delivery of tactical information effects towards generalisation as a competent IO planning officer.

CONCLUSION

In his paper on ‘Rethinking IO’,34 the US Army’s retired Brigadier General Wass de Czege states ‘lessons from commercial advertising are not necessarily as directly applicable as some practitioners in the field believe. Soldiers and Marines are not selling soap.’35 His assessment rings true when considering how the AAPRS capability has developed over the past decade. It has sought to become more military and less civilian and has usually achieved that. The AAPRS, in spite of its size, organisational perspectives and tempo has developed well beyond what the Army originally envisioned for the specialist capability. Restructures and reviews have consistently adjusted internal structures and requirements but, for the most part, Army is still managing its global information environment specialists as it did in the 1980s. The Army Public Relations Officer of a decade ago bears little resemblance to the capability that exists in a Military Public Affairs Officer of today.

The recent adoption of the All Corps Officer Training Continuum, the release of Adaptive Campaigning and the 2009 Defence White Paper all provide the impetus for the Army to holistically review its individual information capabilities and identify a way to provide the subject matter expertise in the Information Dominance and Influence Battlespace. Expanding the role of a ready pool of trained specialists in this area is a relatively easy solution to getting the task underway. AAPRS officers are simply not what they were nor what they are often thought to be as a result of a corps label that is misleading and inaccurate. There is much to be gained by employing already highly qualified personnel in a role that is sadly lacking in the Army and the ADF.

ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., p. 1.
3 Ibid.
4 The single reportable metric from Defence Public Affairs provides information concerning responsiveness to media enquiries using the journalist-defined timeframe as the critical success criteria.
5 The ‘global information environment’ was defined by ABCA in 2001 as ‘processes and systems that are often beyond the direct influence of the military, but which may directly impact on the success or failure of military operations.’ The term has been removed from the latest edition of the Coalition Operations Handbook but remains useful to describe the environment.
8 ‘Information Warfare’, like its counterpart ‘Command & Control Warfare’, is a term that has been usurped in allied military doctrine by ‘Information Operations’ since early in this decade.
9 ‘Information Operations’ is a term that has been established as valid in the minds of members of one or more target audiences.
10 The Information Actions Line of Operations is described in *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept* as ‘actions that inform and shape the perceptions, attitudes, behaviour, and understanding of target population groups; assure the quality of our own information; while attempting to disrupt or dislocate enemy command capabilities’.
an *impediment* to the achievement of desired policy goals, and 3) an *accelerant* to policy decision making that is the direct result of two significant changes in the late 1980s and early 1990s. One is the end of the Cold War. With its passing the United States lacks an evident rationale in fashioning its foreign policy. The other factor is technological. Advances in communication technology have created a capacity to broadcast live from anywhere on Earth. As a result, the vacuum left by the end of the Cold War has been filled by a foreign policy of media-specified crisis management.  

24 *Australian Defence Force Publication 3.13. Information Operations*, Edition 2, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, 2006, p.1-1. IO in the Australian context is defined as: ‘The coordination of information effects to influence the decision making and actions of a target audience and to protect and enhance our decision making and actions in support of national interests’.  
26 *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept*, p.3.  
27 Mission Command is defined in *LWD 0.0 Command, Leadership and Management* as ‘a philosophy of command and a system for conducting operations in which subordinates are given a clear indication by a superior of his/her intentions. The result required, the task, the resources and any constraints are clearly enunciated; however,
subordinates are allowed the freedom to decide how to achieve the required result.’
Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept takes the Mission Command philosophy one step further stating ‘Subordinate commanders are also expected to exert themselves in command, seeking opportunities to proactively further the commander’s intent without waiting for formal orders.’

This term is described in ADDP 00.6 Leadership in the Australian Defence Force as ‘… the “strategic corporal” operating in an environment of immediate and long-range media coverage. It is not so much that every corporal has the desire to lead strategically and shape the ADF’s capability, but rather every corporal can have a strategic effect. Modern communication tools and the global presence of the media mean that the effects of tactical leadership decisions can have strategic consequences.’

A brief overview of how the information campaign was coordinated during Operation AL FAJR can be found in J Molan, J, Running the War in Iraq, Harper Collins, Sydney, 2008, pp. 164–222.


Ibid., p.12.

THE AUTHOR

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INFORMATION OPERATIONS

OFFENSIVE INFORMATION OPERATIONS
A KEY ENABLER FOR THE LAND FORCE

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES ROCHE

ABSTRACT

The ADF experience of Information Operations is heavily weighted towards ‘influence’ and civil-military interaction. This bias is reflected in our concepts and philosophical doctrine. Army needs to recognise the utility of offensive capabilities, such as electronic and computer network attack, in both conventional and intra-state war. Recognising this, Army should develop appropriate organic capabilities, while enhancing its capacity to harness current and future effects. This development will be fundamental to the success of the Land Force in the complex informational terrain of the near future.

Logic and experience suggest it will be more important to pursue three ever present... mission needs... win the psychological contest with current and potential adversaries; keep the trust and confidence of home and allied populations while gaining the confidence and support of the local one; and win the operational and strategic, cognitive
and technical ‘information age applications’ contest with current or potential adversaries.

Brigadier General Waas de Czege (Ret) US Army

The Australian experience of Information Operations (IO) has developed against a background of peacekeeping and stability operations within our near region. These operations have seen a heavy emphasis on pamphlet-eering, civil military liaison and limited electronic exploitation. This is best exemplified in the words of an International Force East Timor (INTERFET) IO officer:

The INTERFET information campaign falls into the broad classification of support information operations. Its dual aim was to shape the psychological perceptions of large elements of the population and to mould opinion where possible. In Operation STABILISE the campaign was not aimed at attacking the computer networks of an enemy or waging electronic warfare against an opponent. Rather, the campaign aimed to defend the reputation of the peacekeeper and to protect the local population…

Even the nature of Australian operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, while significantly more lethal than those mentioned above, lend themselves to the ‘strategic communications’ battle focused on public perception management. As a consequence the Australian Army’s concepts and doctrine regarding IO are substantially biased towards the defensive element and towards what is referred to above as ‘support information operations’.

Due to this emphasis, Army runs the risk of falling behind key allies in the development and use of offensive IO capabilities and losing one element of the capability edge within the ADF’s primary operational environment. Further, the Defence White Paper 2009 aspires to a future defence force that has a ‘winning edge’ enabled by information superiority. It is implied that this capability advantage is crucial to success across conventional war, intra-state conflict, and the broad range of supporting and enabling roles identified in the White Paper. To meet this wide range of requirements, the government undertook to enhance the ADF’s electronic warfare and cyber warfare capabilities. Given the active pursuit of offensive capabilities by our allies and the clear strategic guidance, Army needs to consider its requirements for offensive IO effects.
The purpose of this article is to stimulate discussion within Army regarding the integration of offensive IO effects into future concepts and capability development. The article will focus on the application of computer network attack and electronic attack given the broader understanding of other offensive elements such as destruction. The article will examine the current doctrinal and conceptual environment, and argue that the Army’s intellectual approach to IO has been skewed toward the non-offensive disciplines. The article recognises that this is partially due to the classified nature of the offensive capabilities and their use, and provides several open source examples to illustrate both the utility and limitations of these capabilities. The article will then identify the implications for Army: the principal element of the Land Force.⁶

THE INTELLECTUAL BASIS

As a concept-led, capability-based Army, the intellectual basis for Army’s approach to IO is particularly important. So too, is the recognition that any Army IO activities occur within a broader Joint and national framework. In this sense, it is notable that Joint concepts and doctrine provide little philosophical guidance for the conduct of offensive IO. Joint Operations in the 21st Century, the Future Joint Operating Concept, Defence’s capstone concept, provides limited guidance on any specific capabilities due to its effects-based approach. At the same time, the higher level doctrinal publications⁷ are heavily weighted, both in the level of detail and the examples used, towards psychological operations, civil-military liaison, and the ‘related discipline’ of public affairs. Offensive IO capabilities are only broadly and briefly described.

Army’s capstone concept, Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept identifies ‘Information Actions’ as one of the five mutually reinforcing and interdependent lines of operation of Adaptive Campaigning.⁸ Information Actions are defined as:

Actions that inform and shape the perceptions, attitudes, behaviour and understanding of target population groups: assure the quality of our own information, while attempting to disrupt or dislocate enemy command capabilities.

Adaptive Campaigning states further that this line of operation ‘will remain central to campaign success and will tie all other lines of operation together’.⁹

The Information Actions line of operation is further defined by the tactical sub-concepts of: influence, counter command, and command and information protection. Despite the inclusion of the latter two sub-concepts, the majority of

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... Joint concepts and doctrine provide little philosophical guidance for the conduct of offensive IO.
the Information Actions discussion focuses upon media and public affairs, ‘tactical ambassadors’ and ‘cultural competence’. The underlying philosophical approach is further emphasised in the statement:

…the contest to tell one’s story before an enemy is becoming more influential in the final outcome of conflict…all actors aim to rally support for their cause, create an impression of effectiveness and inevitably victory, discredit their oppositions…and destroy public morale. Consequently the primary purpose of Information Actions is to inform and shape the perceptions, attitudes, behaviour and understanding of targeted population groups…”

Army’s philosophical level of doctrine, including Land Warfare Doctrine 1: The Fundamentals of Land Warfare (2008) and Land Warfare Doctrine 3.0: Operations (Developing Doctrine 2008), pays scant attention to the function of IO or Information Actions. Both documents recognise the perception battle in terms of domestic and international audiences, establishing the dominant narrative, and exploitation and denial of media. So too, both describe the goal of ‘information dominance’ in terms of information acquisition, analysis and assurance. Despite this, neither document considers how such activities would be conducted, or how they would be integrated into the overall operational design. It is also worth noting that Army’s procedural doctrine publication Land Warfare Doctrine 3.2.0: Information Operations, while providing a balanced and coherent description of Information Actions, remains ‘developing doctrine’.

This brief review of the conceptual and doctrinal basis for Australian IO demonstrates that the philosophical approach is strongly biased in favour of psychological operations, civil-military liaison and public affairs. Unfortunately, this limited view does not allow for adequate consideration of the role and effects of offensive IO in both conventional and intra-state wars, and in both the perception and the information battle. Given the lack of philosophical and doctrinal information, a brief review of offensive IO in recent conflicts may provide a useful starting point to consider Army’s needs.

**OFFENSIVE IO IN AN OPERATIONAL CONTEXT**

While cyber warfare has gained increasing public prominence over the last twelve months, the use of computer network operations, in particular computer network attack, has been relatively commonplace in the conflicts of this decade. Principally,
this discipline has been used to support the perception battle, both within state-based ‘conventional’ conflict and counterinsurgency operations. At this stage there is little evidence of the use of computer network attack to target digital battlefield command and control systems. This may reflect both the technical difficulties of attacking ‘closed networks’ and the fact that in each case studied in this paper, one or more of the combatants did not field such a system. It is to be expected that techniques will develop to allow for their exploitation and disruption as these systems continue to proliferate.

Some of the more useful examples of computer network attack can be found in Russia’s conflicts at each end of the last decade: the second Chechen War commencing in August 1999 and the conflict in Georgia in 2008. Russia was one of the earliest exponents of ‘information warfare’ so it is not surprising that both conflicts demonstrated the use of computer network attack in support of an extensive ‘perception battle’. In each case Russia sought to establish and control the narrative, both in the traditional media and in cyberspace. The second Chechen War saw extensive hacking of websites supporting the Chechen cause. A number of sites were disabled, others were linked to the Russian Internal Security Service site, while others were defaced with pro-Russian slogans. Of note this activity reflected complete disregard of national borders or sovereignty. Many pro Chechen sites were hosted in third world countries; however, this did not protect them from manipulation or disruption.

Russia’s short war with Georgia in 2008 displayed a similar focus and techniques. The offensive into Georgia was preceded by a wave of cyber attacks against Georgian government websites, including defacement of public targets, such as government websites, and distributed denial of service attacks. These attacks had an impact on the availability of government websites and denied access to public services such as electronic banking through the National Bank of Georgia. While not officially attributed to the Russian government, these attacks appeared coordinated with indications of government guidance and support to private individuals and groups. Denial techniques, malware and target lists were made available and distributed on Russian or pro Russian forums and sites. The coordinated approach, including target lists of sites and the selection of the ‘best fit’ malware for the sites, also suggests a level of organisation and capability beyond that of amateur partisan supporters.

The Georgian conflict also demonstrated the dual effect of cyber attacks: the physical and the cognitive. Firstly, the actions denied access to the communications network supporting the Georgian leadership, undermining the Georgian ability to coordinate a response, maintain contact with the public, or develop their...
narrative for domestic and international audiences. Secondly, the denial of access to national institutions and the defacement of sites (particularly linking pictures of the Georgian President with Hitler) reduced the confidence and trust of the Georgian population.16

Similar actions were on display during the Israeli Operation CAST LEAD in Gaza in 2008. Both Hamas and Israel launched cyber campaigns, focusing on the promulgation of their narrative, enlisting online support, and attacking each other’s cyber activities. ‘The online war over Gaza was relentless. Hackers on both sides worked to deface websites...’17 Once again this conflict saw actions such as distributed denial of service attacks and defacement of both Hamas and Israeli websites conducted by ‘non-state actors’, such as the ‘Jewish Internet Defence Force’. There are also strong indications that both sides made ‘coordinated efforts to create supportive online communities that might act as force multipliers in cyberspace.’18 At the very least it is clear that the Israeli government provided information to sympathetic members of the virtual community through the Foreign Ministry ‘hasbara’ (public explanation) department.19

These cases demonstrate both the utility and limitations of computer network attack. Firstly, it can be seen to have contributed to the maintenance of the narrative by denying and disrupting the ability of the adversary to pass their story across the Internet. In each case, the obscuration of responsibility and the ability to mobilise a virtual community allowed for deniability by the respective nation-states. It also allowed for the mobilisation of the public and the creation of a groundswell of support through ‘active’ participation in the conflict. The Georgian conflict also demonstrated the contribution that cyber attacks can make to ‘isolation of the battlespace’. This concept is defined in Adaptive Campaigning as: ‘[preventing] the enemy from informing, supporting, controlling or reinforcing their forces and...unduly [influencing] the civilian population in a selected portion of the battlespace.’20

In none of these cases, however, did the offensive actions completely isolate their opponents. Both the Chechens and Hamas were able to maintain an Internet presence through re-routing sites and use of the global virtual community. It is also important to note that during the conflicts in Georgia and Gaza, Russia and Israel placed significant restrictions upon the traditional media, unlike their adversaries. Consequently traditional media still played a vital role in supporting the Georgian and Hamas narrative. Thus, while an important and effective tool in the perception battle, it is clear that computer network attacks must be undertaken within the context of a broader information campaign.
Offensive Information Actions also have a clear role to play in both the counter command battle: ‘attacking and eroding the enemy’s will to fight, diminishing their understanding…and their ability to make timely and effective decisions’. The growing military dependence on battlefield networks and public information infrastructure provides an increasingly broad target list for electronic attack. This includes both communications systems and non-communications emitters such as navigation systems.

While electronic attack appears to have disappeared from the Australian Army capability ‘golf bag’, the lessons from recent conflicts have led to a resurgence of this capability within other Western forces. Following the Hezbollah conflict in 2006, the Israeli Defence Force has invested significant effort in reviving their electronic attack capabilities. This includes establishing an electronic warfare centre and developing a range of new capabilities. During Operation CAST LEAD in 2008, the Israeli Defence Force conducted substantially more jamming than during the 2006 conflict. This included jamming radio, television and cellular phones. The effect was to disrupt information flows, steer Hamas onto systems that were easier for the Israeli Defence Force to monitor, and to create the perception that ‘everything was jammed’. The trust in, and access to, decision-making information was degraded.

Electronic attack has also risen in prominence in the US Army over the past decade. Open source information on US operational use of electronic attack is limited, often covered by comments such as the one below relating to Operation AL–FAJR conducted in Iraq in 2004:

MNC-A and MNF-A also controlled the enemy’s communications … restricting his access … and not only denying the enemy a means to communicate but also directing him to a means we could monitor.  

Despite the reluctance to provide details, the utility of electronic attack, both in the ‘conventional’ phase of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and the subsequent insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan has convinced the US Army to revitalise their offensive electronic warfare capabilities. Due to a focus on the signals intelligence function, the US Army had ceded leadership in electronic warfare to the other services. As a result the other services, particularly the US Navy, had to deploy large numbers of electronic warfare officers in support of the counter improvised explosive device (IED) fight. In response, the US Army established an electronic warfare division within the Army Asymmetric Warfare Office in 2006. This organisation aimed to drive organisational change as well as training and equipment
development. The division's focus has broadened over time from counter IED to include multi-spectral jamming that targets communications, weapons guidance systems and navigation aids.\textsuperscript{24}

The focus on attacking non-communications systems has also gathered moment in the last decade. In particular, targeting of navigational aids has become increasingly evident. During Operation IRAQI FREEDOM the Iraqi forces deployed at least four Global Positioning System (GPS) jammers in an effort to disrupt part of the overwhelming US technological advantage.\textsuperscript{25} This had limited effect, with all jamming systems destroyed very early in the war. That said, it highlights the obvious and growing reliance of most Western armies on satellite-based geo-location, and the consequent efforts by adversaries to counter this advantage. A more subtle and effective example was demonstrated during the Russian offensive in Georgia. GPS mapping of Georgia was not available for 48 hours of the short ground phase of the conflict.\textsuperscript{26} It has been alleged that this denial of service was engineered by the United States in support of their Georgian ally; however, this has never been confirmed.\textsuperscript{27} Given the incomplete state of the Russian satellite geo-location system,\textsuperscript{28} this ‘denial of service’ was significant. The Russians were unable to use precision munitions, and had to resort to 1960’s artillery targeting equipment and traditional methods of navigation. This introduced further friction in the command and control of the operation, increased global pressure upon Russia due to the lack of precision targeting, and bought time for the Georgian response.

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The Russians were unable to use precision munitions, and had to resort to 1960’s artillery targeting equipment and traditional methods of navigation.

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**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY**

These examples demonstrate the clear utility of these functions within modern operations. If this utility is accepted, the Australian Army needs to address a shortfall in both our conceptual and practical approach. Army needs to recognise the utility of these functions and determine our concepts of employment across the five lines of operation, in a range of operational settings. This needs to be considered at greater depth than the current broad functional descriptions in procedural pamphlets or the generic counter command warfare concept contained in *Adaptive Campaigning*. Army must also participate in the Joint and whole-of-government debate over the legal and ethical use of offensive effects against networks and systems that may exist in the ‘global commons’, or those that provide public utility.
IO as a capability. Army should engage in the ongoing debate regarding the utility of IO as a capability descriptor. Australian doctrine allocates eleven discrete functions to IO while the US Army allocates a number of core capabilities; psychological operations; electronic warfare; computer network operations, military deception and operational security; as well as a range of supporting and related capabilities. The utility of this ‘kit bag’ approach has been the subject of some debate in the United States for the last few years, based on lessons learnt from recent operational experiences. It has been argued that IO as a capability should focus upon psychological operations, civil military liaison and public affairs, with the other elements distributed across existing staff functions. Under this model electronic attack, computer network attack and destruction would be placed under the operations staff. At a practical level, the US Army plans to integrate its revitalised electronic attack capability into the fire support coordination process as ‘electronic fires’. The Australian Army should follow this ongoing debate closely to inform both concepts and capability development.

Joint Effects. Army must also determine which offensive IO capabilities it needs to ‘own’ and which can be provided from Joint and national capabilities. While this is nothing new, the distinction is important to ensure expectations are managed, capability development is not skewed, and that effective links to Joint and strategic organisations are developed. This latter point is crucial in order to leverage scarce assets which, in the case of a future computer network attack capability, would be coordinated at the highest level.

Education. It is also important that the offensive IO capabilities are, within sensible security constraints, demystified. In particular the intellectual capacity to integrate these effects into operational or tactical planning should not reside solely with corps-based subject matter experts or specialist staff. While the details of techniques, equipment and sources may need to be closely held, the effects available and the broad constraints and freedoms of action involved in their use should be part of the broader education and training continuum.

Organic electronic attack. Army should seek to reinvigorate our organic electronic attack capabilities. The ability to achieve electromagnetic spectrum control for a given time and in a specific location is a key tool for commanders in both conventional and irregular warfare. The Australian Army’s experience of electronic attack, in the main, has been based upon old shelter-based jamming equipment that allowed for few training opportunities and a limited ability to develop robust
capabilities. Technology is reducing the footprint for land-based electronic attack and developing the capability well beyond the traditional target of ‘push to talk radios’. Additionally the Army may look at electronic attack capabilities that can be configured as part of tactical unmanned aerial vehicle payloads providing both counter IED and communications targeting. Army should also consider the application of electronic attack on non-communications emitters, such as GPS ground stations or GPS dependent equipment. This could have particular utility during land based support to strategic strike.

Army should also ensure that it maintains and enhances land-based tactical electronic warfare capabilities as opposed to defaulting to the signal intelligence paradigm. While there are many benefits to be gained from developing a Joint electronic warfare centre as highlighted in the Defence White Paper 2009, Army needs to ensure that the unique requirements of providing tactical ground based electronic warfare support are not lost. Such capabilities will remain a limited resource and Army needs to decide between the unique capabilities required of the Land Force and those capabilities that can be drawn from joint and strategic assets. In particular the development of electronic attack capabilities, while closely meshed to the other elements of electronic warfare and signals intelligence, would break the paradigm that sees Land Force electronic warfare as just another collector in the broader signals intelligence network.

**Electromagnetic Spectrum degraded training environment.** An additional benefit from the development of a broad range electronic attack capability would be the ability to train in a degraded electromagnetic environment. Given the Army’s intent to become network enabled, the least we should expect from an adversary is to attempt to degrade the network. The Land Force must develop the ability to work through systematic electronic attack, computer network operations, and the physical loss of key communications hubs. This should be part of our foundation warfighting skills, but is a challenge that Army has not embraced for some time.

**CONCLUSION**

There are a number of decisions for Army to make if it wishes to enable effective offensive IO. Our conceptual basis is biased towards support and defensive IO elements. This limits the potential range of effects available to the Land Force in both conventional and intra-state conflict. The examples provided in this article
demonstrate the utility of both computer network attack and electronic attack in
the perception battle, in supporting efforts towards isolation of the battle space,
and in supporting counter command efforts. Not the least, offensive IO disciplines
provide one element of the technological capability advantage within the ADF’s
primary operational environment.

Army’s challenge is to understand the utility of these effects, validate the require-
ment for organic systems, and develop the ability to draw from and contribute to
joint effects. Perceptions must also be managed. These offensive effects are not
a ‘silver bullet’, rather they provide additional capabilities that support broader
operational and tactical goals. However, these capabilities provide additional effects
that will enable the Land Force to carry out operations successfully in a complex
information environment. Army needs to define its requirement for these effects
and progress appropriate conceptual and capability development.

ENDNOTES

1 As defined in Australian Defence Doctrine Publication (ADDP) 3.13: Information
Operations (Edition 2), ‘The coordination of information effects to influence the
decision-making and actions of a target audience and to protect and enhance our
decision-making and actions in support of national interests.’
2 K Beasley, Information Operations During Operation Stabilise in East Timor, Working
3 J Molan, ‘Do you need to decisively win the Information War? Managing Information
on Operations in Iraq’, Security Challenges, Vol. 5, No. 1, The Kokoda Foundation,
Canberra, 2009, pp. 39–42.
4 Generally accepted as Electronic Attack, Computer Network Attack and Destruction.
5 As defined in the Defence White Paper 2009: ‘from the eastern Indian Ocean to the
island states of Polynesia and from the equator to the Southern Ocean.’
6 The Land Force is defined as ‘task organised elements drawn from all Australian
Defence Force Services and the other government agencies…optimised for joint
operations, operating in the joint environment…’, Adaptive Campaigning – Army’s
Future Land Operating Concepts, Department of Defence, Canberra, 2009, p. xii.
7 ADDP 3.13 Information Operations (Edition 2); ADFP 3.13.1 Information Operations
Procedures and ADDP 3.0 Operations (Developing Doctrine).
8 These lines of operation provide a philosophical conceptual framework for
the conduct of adaptive campaigning and are present in all conflicts. Adaptive
Campaigning, p. 29.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., pp. 50–51.

12 Distributed denial of service is an attempt to make a computer resource unavailable to its intended users. One common method of attack involves saturating the target (victim) machine with external communications requests, such that it cannot respond to legitimate traffic, or responds so slowly as to be rendered effectively unavailable. A distributed denial of service attack occurs when multiple systems flood the bandwidth or resources of a targeted system, usually one or more web servers. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denial-of-service_attack> accessed 28 June 2010.


15 Ibid., pp. 13, 14.


18 Ibid.


20 Ibid., p. 46.

21 Adaptive Campaigning, p. 51.


28 Global Satellite Navigation System, GLONASS, is Russia’s native satellite-navigation constellation, currently consisting of eighteen satellites and providing coverage of two thirds of the Earth. Portable ground receivers are not widely distributed.

29 Operational Security; Psychological Operations; Deception; Electronic Warfare; Computer Network Operations; Destruction; Information Assurance; Counter Intelligence; Protective Security; Military Networking; Posture Presence and Profile; Civil Military Cooperation; and Public Affairs as a related element to IO. ADDP 3-13 *Information Operations* (Edition 2).


31 Ibid.

32 Buckhout, ‘Revitalizing Army Electronic Warfare’, p. 4.

33 For example the US Marine Corps has made extensive use of the twenty dedicated EA-6B Prowler electronic warfare aircraft in direct support of ground forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Australian Army should develop concepts to utilise any future RAAF E/A-18G Growler variants, unmanned aerial vehicles or allied assets in support of ground forces when ground forces are the main effort.

34 This idea recognises that there are temporal and physical limits to the ability to control or dominate the domain. It builds on the concept of sea control. ‘The condition that exists when one has freedom of action within an area of the sea for one’s own purposes for a period of time…’ as defined in the ADF online glossary. <http://adg.eas.defence.mil.au/adgms/results.asp?tab=index&q=Sea+Control&s=Search&terms=on&abbreviations=on&symbols=on> accessed 13 May 2010.

THE AUTHOR

Lieutenant Colonel James Roche graduated from RMC Duntroon in 1990 into the Royal Australian Corps of Signals. He held a range of regimental appointments within 1 Sig Regt, 5 Avn Regt, 139 Sig Sqn and 1 CSR. He has seen operational service as a troop commander in Western Sahara in 1993, as the X6 in Bougainville in 1998, and as the J6 for the ASNCE in East Timor in 2000. Lieutenant Colonel Roche commanded 17 Signal Regiment from 2007 until December 2008, before assuming his current appointment as Deputy Director Strategy – Army within the Directorate of Future Land Warfare and Strategy.
Congratulations to the *Army Journal* and Lieutenant Colonel Jason Thomas for publishing the article ‘Adaptive Campaigning – Is it Adaptive Enough?’. I found the article both thought provoking and informative.

I must declare some interests in writing this letter. First, as Director Future Land Warfare and Strategy (FLWS) in 2008–09 my Directorate authored *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept*, which is the subject of criticism in Jason Thomas’ article. Any flaws in *Adaptive Campaigning* are therefore my responsibility. Second, I am proud to note that Jason Thomas is a fellow classmate from the RMC Class of ’87. Third, in my opinion, Jason Thomas’ article is exactly the type of debate that Army and the Land Force should encourage and develop as we continue to fight, and think about, future wars.

In this letter, I am not going to defend *Adaptive Campaigning*’s ‘Adaptation Cycle’ against the ‘real’ observe, orient, decide, and act Loop (OODA Loop) developed by Colonel John Boyd, USAF. Instead I have recommended to FLWS and Jason Thomas that they collaborate and write an article for the *Army Journal* explaining how the Adaptation Cycle compliments Boyd’s OODA Loop. My regret is that we were unaware of the value Jason Thomas could have added to *Adaptive Campaigning* during our development of the document. This debate is important for Army, and I
think a FLWS/Jason Thomas article in the *Australian Army Journal* would be of great utility and perhaps generate more debate on this and other important topics.

For clarification, I will add some points regarding Jason Thomas’ comments on the Five Lines of Operation and the structure of *Adaptive Campaigning*.

In *Adaptive Campaigning*, a line of operation is ‘one of the five mutually reinforcing and interdependent lines of operation that comprise a philosophical conceptual framework for the conduct of Adaptive Campaigning in order to achieve accepted enduring conditions’, otherwise known as the Five Lines of Operation (5 LOO).⁴ Jason Thomas incorrectly cites *Adaptive Campaigning*’s 5 LOO as ‘five fixed lines of operation’.⁵ The differences between *Adaptive Campaigning*’s and Jason Thomas’ 5 LOO definitions are important, and demonstrate one area of value that *Adaptive Campaigning* can add, and has added, to Army’s thinking.

As noted in *Adaptive Campaigning*, the 5 LOO—Joint Land Combat, Population Protection, Information Actions, Population Support, and Indigenous Capacity Building—are present in all conflicts, and ‘the weighting between them is determined by the conditions, and changing conditions, of each conflict … [and] they are not prescriptive and are not intended to be a template for direct application in campaign design’.⁶ Using this language, *Adaptive Campaigning* aims to build as much flexibility as possible into the thinking and contextualisation of the 5 LOO, which is very different from prescriptive ‘fixed lines of operation’.

Jason Thomas also states that *Adaptive Campaigning* has ‘only … fifty-four pages [in a seventy-nine page document] directly dealing with the concept [of Adaptive Campaigning]’.⁷ This statement is important, and is best clarified via an understanding of the development of *Adaptive Campaigning* in 2008–09.

In order to gain wide support and maximise the usefulness of the document, *Adaptive Campaigning* needed endorsement by Army and agreement by Defence prior to publishing.⁸ To achieve this outcome, FLWS developed, as noted by Jason Thomas, ‘twenty-two versions [of *Adaptive Campaigning*]’ over a two-year period.⁹ Interestingly, during that two-year period, and despite extensive consultation by FLWS at the tactical, operational and strategic levels with Army, Defence, coalition partners, non-Defence Australian government agencies, eminent thinkers, scientists and private enterprise, the ‘fifty-four pages directly dealing with the concept [of Adaptive Campaigning]’ remained largely unchanged.

In contrast, the other twenty-five pages within *Adaptive Campaigning*—which established the need to adapt, a vision of the future, the complex operating environment, achieving the Adaptive Army, and force modernisation—were highly contested. This contest was partly generated by the May 2009 release of the Defence White Paper 2009, which heavily affected *Adaptive Campaigning*, especially in the areas of a vision of the future and force modernisation.¹⁰ These twenty-five pages within *Adaptive Campaigning* were also contested, in my opinion, because the need
to adapt, a vision of the future, the complex operating environment, achieving the
Adaptive Army, and force modernisation are all priority issues that affect the people,
at all levels and in all organisations, who were consulted by FLWS.

In contrast, the ‘fifty-four pages directly dealing with the concept [of Adaptive
Campaigning]’ provide guidance to Army in two parts. First, Adaptive Campaigning
describes ‘actions taken by the Land Force as part of the military contribution to
a Joint and Whole of Government approach to resolving conflicts and advancing
Australia’s national interests’.11 As Jason Thomas correctly observes there are
elements of Adaptive Campaigning, such as mission command, that Army has been
‘formally teaching … since the late 1980s’.12 This explains the less contested nature
of most of the ‘fifty-four pages’.

However, the second part of the Adaptive Campaigning ‘fifty-four pages’
provides a ‘conceptual and philosophical framework’ for Army ‘in order to ensure
that it remains postured to meet the demands of the future’.13 This was an area
of some contest, and stakeholders made changes to Adaptive Campaigning during
the two-year consultation period. Despite these changes, Jason Thomas’ article
indicates that the consultation was less than complete. Again I take responsibility
for this failure.

Like John Boyd who was ‘concerned that publication would freeze his views’, our
Army does not want to ‘freeze’ our thinking in relation to Adaptive Campaigning.14
Debate on Adaptive Campaigning is important for an Army seeking to learn and
adapt while in contact with the enemy. As noted earlier, Jason Thomas’ article is
exactly the type of debate that Army and the Land Force should encourage and
develop as we continue to fight, and think about, future wars.

Colonel Chris Field
Student CDSS
20 July 2010

ENDNOTES

1 Jason Thomas, ‘Adaptive Campaigning – Is it Adaptive Enough?’, Australian Army
2 Land Force: The Land Force will consist of task organised elements drawn from all
   Australian Defence Force services and the other Australian Government agencies,
   including the Australian Civilian Corps. The Land Force will be optimised for joint
   operations, operating in a joint environment, and relying on, and contributing
to, joint enabling capabilities for full effect. The Land Force is also required to
   be educated, trained, equipped, and resourced for effective interaction, where
   applicable, with affected states, coalition partners, commercial contractors, private
businesses, United Nations, International Red Cross / Red Crescent, donors, and non-government organisations (proposed definition). Note: This definition is a slight modification from the Land Force definition in Australian Army, *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept*, Department of Defence, September 2009, p. xii.

7 Ibid., pp. 94, 99.
8 *Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operating Concept*, was endorsed by the Chief of Army’s Senior Advisory Committee (17 April 2009), and agreed by the Chiefs of Service Committee (28 July 2009).
Almost exactly fifty years ago a teenaged schoolboy from Wagga Wagga visited Canberra with his family. At the Australian War Memorial his mother confidently disregarded old ornate wood-and-glass doors marked ‘Staff Only’ and they found themselves in the former library. There they met staff member Bruce Harding, also from Wagga. Rather than shooing them out, Bruce showed the Gammages around. (O for the days when casual visitors could simply drop by offices: long barred by the tyranny of the swipe card.) Bruce opened a filing cabinet and pulled out a file of letters written by a soldier from the Great War. ‘That stuck’, Bill recalled.

Two years later Bill, then a student at the Australian National University, was driving a wheat truck in the Riverina in the holidays. He parked his lorry in the queue at the Boree Creek silo and walked over to look at the local war memorial. He noticed ‘more names it seemed than then lived in Boree Creek’. That stuck too.

Bill might have become a pioneer historian of the depopulation of rural Australia. Instead, he became intrigued by the Great War. Soon after, he bought volumes of Charles Bean’s official history in a jumble sale. His honours year, 1965, coincided with the 50th anniversary of Gallipoli. Ken Inglis’ writings on its meaning for Australia encouraged Bill, and he wrote ANU honours, masters and doctoral theses on Australia and the Great War. So unusual was Bill’s interest in military history that he had difficulty finding a supervisor, and was able to find Bruce Kent more out of a shared interest in football than in their subject—Bruce was, and remains, a specialist in European political ideas. Perhaps they justified the choice by noticing that Bill was examining Australians who served in a European war.

Publishing has now produced a new illustrated edition. The latest, largest, illustrated edition of Bill Gammage’s The Broken Years appeared in time for Anzac Day 2010, fifty years after its genesis. It has attracted widespread admiration and deserves renewed critical attention.

The Broken Years was a pioneering work of history, partly because Bill practically invented the use of ‘soldiers’ letters and diaries’ in writing Australian military history, something that we take for granted today. As my National Museum of Australia colleague Anne-Marie Condé has shown, for a decade, from the mid-1920s, the energetic Arthur Bazley collected soldiers’ letters, diaries, memoirs and private papers for the War Memorial’s collection. Though justified by reference to Charles Bean’s official history, Bean had in fact barely used them. Hardly anyone had, until young Bill turned up to do his thesis.

Himself the grandson of an Anzac, Bill realised the potential of the contents of the cabinets Bruce Harding had opened to him. He did something no academic researcher had done and fronted up to the old library to ask to have a look. The rest, as they say, is history.

Bill used about a thousand men’s letters and diaries. The notes he took are now a part of the manuscript collection of the National Library of Australia, in themselves now a source for those following Bill’s lead—as dozens if not hundreds of students, post-graduates, colleagues and enthusiasts have done over the past thirty-odd years. It must feel odd to become aware that you have practically invented a form of or an approach to history. So short are our memories, so much do we take the prevailing health of Australian military history for granted, that we now must make an effort to understand how much the landscape of our field has been created and shaped by what Bill Gammage did.

Bill happened to write at a particular moment in the history of Australian military history. Great War veterans were still available as advisers and sources (and presumably critics). They were more plentiful then than, say, Second World War veterans are for us now. Bill had the immense good fortune to benefit from the advice and the astonishingly detailed recall of Arthur Bazley, Charles Bean’s confidential clerk, who had largely gathered those sources. He has described how he would look up from a diary and ask Arthur whether he recollected a man or an event. Bazley’s memory was retentive and his recall detailed and exact. Bill’s is likewise today, as he has become a second-hand link with that time, and now fields questions of the kind Arthur Bazley faced from Bill. Like Bazley’s, Bill’s memory is good and his willingness to respond mirrors that of his mentor. In the great chain of being that constitutes Australian military history’s practitioners, Bill’s generosity has in turn become a worthy model to emulate.

The Broken Years was a product of both its author’s questions and the approach he adopted. Naturally it did not need to do what Charles Bean’s volumes provided; that is, operational narrative. Bill was not interested in doing (and could not span within
the confines of one thesis) what many successors have done—that is, to undertake operational analysis. As a result, The Broken Years does some things superbly and other things not at all. Bill acknowledges that he missed some aspects of the AIF’s experience; sex, for one. Others may contest his claim that ‘the average Australian soldier was not religious’. Some continue to criticise his neglect of the AIF’s military performance, though the book proclaimed early on ‘this is not a military history of the First AIF’. Like any pioneering work it can be criticised for not saying all that has been said subsequently (though not for getting stuff wrong: there are remarkably few corrections to the text). A sign of its quality is that it continues to stimulate fresh questions.

In fact, The Broken Years was an attempt to write ‘an emotional history of the AIF’, though he didn’t call it that at the time—he saw it more in the stern (German) empirical tradition of describing the past ‘as it was’. But its emotional tone explains its continuing value. This is a book that explains what the Great War felt like at the time, an immediacy that explains its durability in continuing to be as insightful and informative as it was thirty-odd years ago, even after the massively productive scholarship that followed and, to an extent, was inspired by it.

The Gallipoli chapter, ‘Nationhood, Brotherhood and Sacrifice’, remains, I think, the single best thing written to explain what Gallipoli meant to Australia. It caught the imagination of David Williamson and Peter Weir, the writer and director of the great 1980 film Gallipoli, an indication of its influence in shaping popular as well as academic interpretation of the Great War.

Melbourne University Publishing’s new edition is handsome and expansive. Larger than any previous edition, it reproduces Bill’s text at a generous size. It includes his many source notes (though unfortunately as endnotes; how come publishers remain resistant to footnotes, when technology makes putting notes on the page easier than ever before?) But MUP retrieves itself with the lavish presentation of images.

Bill has gone on to write other books, all notable. He has written on the social and environmental history of rural Australia (Narranderra; perhaps the wait at the Boree Creek silo had other effects) and the Australian adventure in Papua New Guinea (Sky Travellers). His current research, on how Indigenous people shaped the landscape through fire, will be equally stimulating. But Bill will always be known for having the insight to realise that he could answer the question ‘What did the Great War do to Australia?’ by reading and thinking about those letters Bruce Harding pulled out that day fifty years ago.

It is extraordinary for a work of history to endure for half a lifetime. The Broken Years remains, to use an overworked complement, an Australian classic. An artefact of its time, it also speaks to generations of readers not even born when the last edition appeared.
BOOK REVIEW


Reviewed by Peter Leahy, University of Canberra

David Kilcullen has already earned a well deserved reputation as a practitioner, advisor and author in the field of counterinsurgency. In his latest book he substantially adds to his reputation. The book is a must-read for those struggling with counterinsurgency today and for those with an eye on the future of insurgency and terrorism.

Although initially distracting because he reintroduces previously published material, on reflection this is actually the strength of the book. In the fast paced globalised world of insurgencies and counterinsurgencies it is good to be able to sit back and consider what lessons have been learned. Kilcullen updates his previous publications, both books and articles, with new text and ‘Author’s Notes’ which add relevance and meaning to contemporary problems. This book is real and about today’s problems. It also looks into the future and offers a way of countering what Kilcullen calls a global Islamic insurgency.

Today many counterinsurgency practitioners rely on websites to exchange ideas and collect lessons. This gives them up-to-date information, but unfortunately some sites can be ephemeral and relatively shallow. The alternative is to wait for the once in a generation ‘blockbuster’ or refer back to the classics. Counterinsurgency straddles the middle ground between websites and the once in a generation classics. It suits the tempo of today’s operations.

In the last decade there has been much to learn about insurgencies and how to counter them. Unfortunately we started from a low base and our enemies are showing that they can adapt and learn more quickly than we can. We are frequently on the defensive and struggle to find the right strategy. We have much to learn and must become more versatile. Nothing is static in the world of counterinsurgency and Kilcullen provides a snapshot of warfare today. We should use it as a platform to propel us into the future.
Kilcullen adeptly combines his historical and cultural knowledge of insurgencies with present day observations to help present the best way to confront the enemy. He sees both the smallest detail and the strategic consequences. He puts people at the centre of his lessons and considers them the centre of gravity of an insurgency. He says loud and clear that we must treat them with respect. He is right to tell us that counterinsurgency is a competition for government with both the insurgent and the government trying to mobilise the people. He is strong here because he understands the people and the village.

He is also strong in his discussion on the future. He views terrorism as a principal but not the sole tactic of a global Islamic insurgency. Thus a global counterinsurgency not a counterterrorism campaign is required.

This book is well worth a read. It is real, timely, well expressed and accessible. It is an update from a practitioner and thinker. It deals with the dynamism of the present fight. Its strength is that Kilcullen keeps his ideas active and current. At times it is obvious that his thinking has changed. Perhaps ours should too.
BOOK REVIEW


Reviewed by Karl James, Australian War Memorial

After its successful campaign in the Libyan desert at the start of the year, in late March and early April 1941, the Australian 6th Division was sent to mainland Greece with other British and New Zealand troops. The British had promised the Greeks military assistance if Greece was attacked. When the anticipated German invasion came it was swift and strong. The Germans forced the Commonwealth troops from their positions in northern Greece back in a series of withdrawals, culminating in their evacuation from ports in the south during the last week in April. The poorly conceived campaign was brief and trying for the Australians who were ill-equipped for the cold, mountainous terrain, and continually harassed by German air attacks. The Australians were frustrated too, by their allies. While the Greek military and politicians had been fighting against the Italians on the Albanian front with determination since October 1940, many Greeks were reluctant to fight the advancing Germans.

The Germans followed their success on the mainland with an airborne invasion of Crete in May. The island was defended by a weak and poorly armed force of Australians, British and New Zealanders, cobbled together from units mainly evacuated from Greece. Nevertheless, these men, as well as the Cretans, inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. After ten days of desperate fighting, the island fell to the Germans.

The Greek and Crete campaigns cost the 6th Division heavily, with more than 1500 men killed and wounded, and more than 5000 taken prisoner. Many Australians made perilous escapes from enemy-occupied territory to Egypt and Palestine by small boat or overland through Turkey. It took months for the division’s units to return to strength.

Since the publication of Gavin Long’s volume of the official history Greece, Crete and Syria (1953) numerous books and soldiers’ memoirs have appeared relating
to the campaigns. Greece and Crete are far from ‘forgotten’ as many authors have alleged but, as Maria Hill rightly points out, the experiences of the Greek people themselves are nearly always overlooked.

A historian with a background in education, Hill utilised her Greek–Australian heritage to carry out extensive research in Greece and Australia. She skilfully highlights Greece’s diverse political, economic and social culture, discussing, for example, why many mainland Greeks were sympathetic to the Germans, activity supporting the invaders, in sharp contrast to the fiercely independent Cretans. Hill’s central theme concentrates on how the Australians interacted with the people of Greece and Crete, and the ways in which the diggers tried to understand the Hellenic world. Richly illustrated and easy to read, Hill approaches the campaigns with a fresh, though slightly skewed perspective.

In places the British, as well as the Germans, are portrayed as the common enemy, while the absence of any detailed description on the nature of the fighting or the conduct of operations on either campaign is frustrating. Hill clearly states that she did not want to write another traditional ‘military history’ but in neglecting the actions and experiences of the Australians and the Greeks in combat, she misses the campaigns’ most intense moments of drama.

Despite the impression given by the books size, most Australians only had a few weeks in Greece and their interaction with the local people was fleeting. Soldiers spent a pleasant day or two in Athens, which was a welcomed change from those spent in Palestine, Egypt and Libya, before being sent north and then a hurried evacuation. The interaction between the two peoples was largely limited to trying to control columns of civilian refugees and observing retreating Greek soldiers. Even in Crete there was little opportunity for much more than pleasantries. Not surprisingly, the strongest bonds were formed between Australians left behind in occupied territory and the Greek families who hid, fed and clothed them. Hill has done well to tell these stories which highlight the generosity and bravery of ordinary Greek people.

Diggers and Greeks is an interesting companion to Long’s official history and other military histories of the Greek and Crete campaigns. In this period of coalition warfare, it is a timely reminder of the importance of understanding our allies as well as our enemies.
BOOK REVIEW


Reviewed by Mark Thomson, Australian Strategic Policy Institute

Michael O’Hanlon is a prominent figure in the US national security debate. As senior author of the Brookings Institution’s Iraq Index and its Afghanistan and Pakistan variants, he has done as much as anyone to promote an evidence-based discussion of ongoing US military operations. What sets O’Hanlon apart from many of his colleagues is his embrace of quantitative analysis and technical information.

In his latest book, The Science of War, O’Hanlon shares the tools of his trade. In effect, he has written a textbook of defence analysis in four parts. The first three chapters explore defence budgeting, combat modelling and force sizing, and logistics and overseas basing. In each case, the reader is introduced to an area of defence policy and shown how it is possible to gain substantial insight with basic data and the right analytic approach.

Some of the subject matter is unashamedly specific to the United States. Much of the chapter on budgeting, for example, explores the labyrinthine ways of the Pentagon and is likely to be of limited interest to Australian readers—though the principles remain valid. Of greater interest are the chapters on combat modelling and force sizing, and logistics and overseas basing, each of which is rich in insights directly relevant to Australian defence policy. It would be an interesting exercise, for example, to apply O’Hanlon’s techniques for estimating the scale of forces needed to undertake particular missions to the military tasks and force structure proposed in the 2009 Defence White Paper.

The fourth and final chapter in the main body of the book deals with technical issues in defence analysis. O’Hanlon begins by casting a critical eye over the much-vaunted Revolution in Military Affairs by examining the interplay of technology and warfare. His conclusions are a useful antidote to the often breathless claims that
the future is about to depart radically from the past. The chapter continues with a survey of technical defence problems, including the military use of space, missile defence, and nuclear weapons and proliferation. O’Hanlon identifies and explains the essential technical issues in each of these areas with surprising clarity. The chapter concludes with a sensible discussion of the role of science in defence analysis.

Although the book’s subject matter is disparate and often technical, O’Hanlon maintains the reader’s interest by focusing on concrete problems. In part, this is achieved by posing and answering questions—fifteen in all—that range from evaluating the relative cost-effectiveness of B-52 and B-2 bombers, to estimating the scale of military operations necessary to secure Indonesia.

In answering these questions, as elsewhere in the book, there is never any suggestion that analytic techniques provide complete insight. To the contrary, O’Hanlon stresses the importance of also taking account of political and human factors when formulating defence policy. Nonetheless, by the end of the book, the case is made that policy without analysis is a second best option.

Although some familiarity with defence matters might be helpful, The Science of War can be read by interested non-specialists. Even the discussion of Lanchester equations (used for modeling combat attrition) has been rendered safe for those with rudimentary mathematics so that the results can be understood independent of the calculus. And for the reader wanting to know more, The Science of War contains numerous references and useful suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter.

Despite its focus on US policy, the techniques in The Science of War are relevant to the defence policy problems faced by Australia. Academics and bureaucrats concerned with Australia’s defence would do well to read it. Even military officers familiar with operations research will find the book a useful compendium of practical defence analysis. And for those officers without such a background, The Science of War should be compulsory reading—equally so for students who aspire to work on defence issues inside or outside of government.
BOOK REVIEW


Reviewed by Tristan Moss, Australian National University

Since the end of the Cold War the world has seen the significant growth in the profile and importance of humanitarian aid. Running parallel to this is the increasing currency of the concept of ‘humanitarian intervention’, an idea often used as a justification for government action in foreign crisis zones. Conor Foley successfully navigates the complexity of these two issues, offering an engaging study of the provision of aid in crisis zones, both topical and important to Western countries such as Australia.

The central tenet of Foley’s The Thin Blue Line is that those agents that subscribe to the concept of humanitarianism—such as aid agencies, the International Criminal Court and associated individuals—increasingly find themselves grappling with a number of critical dilemmas. These are centred on the conflict between ethical integrity on the one hand, and the necessary evils that are at times required to alleviate suffering on the other.

The chapters devoted to Kosovo and Afghanistan, for instance, examine the increasing ties between providers of aid and the military, and the problems that arise as a result. Military force is increasingly involved in operations with goals that are couched in humanitarian terms, and both the armed forces and providers of aid are more willing to use each other’s resources to achieve common objectives. The erosion of the boundaries between those who traditionally fight wars and those who are supposedly neutral has led to a number of significant problems. The conflict in Afghanistan, for example, has seen aid used to buy allegiances or funnelled into militarily important areas rather than neutrally providing aid to those who need it most, irrespective of their place within the wider conflict.

Elsewhere, the rise of the ‘disaster relief industry’ poses problems for aid agencies that must be reactive to public opinion in order to secure a portion of the outpouring
of funds, such as after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Agencies are now expected
to be at the latest humanitarian disaster, irrespective of the actual gravity of the
situation. They must apply themselves to each new crisis in the knowledge that there
are often other, more deserving peoples. It is indicative of the difficulties facing aid
agencies that they received over $7000 for each person affected after the tsunami
compared to just $3.00 per person for floods in Bangladesh the previous year.

Foley’s use of contemporary examples of the moral dangers inherent in the
provision of humanitarian aid creates a strong case for the need for increased
‘humanitarian accountability’. The Thin Blue Line presents a reasoned critique of
the aid situation in the world today; quite rightly, however, it does not suggest a
silver bullet. Rather, he argues, the erosion of the integrity of those providing aid,
and their lack of accountability represents the greatest impediment to improving
the lot of disaster and conflict victims. If aid providers continue to misinform the
public about the realities of crises, instead chasing funding through the emphasis of
catastrophe and promising unachievable solutions (or any solutions at all), there is
a very real danger of humanitarian aid doing more harm than good.

While the topic is of a political nature, The Thin Blue Line is, happily, not mired in
theory or otherwise abstract arguments. Instead, Foley’s own experiences are placed
at the centre of his examination of humanitarianism. This insight lends weight to
his arguments and no doubt furnished Foley with the raw material from which
to build his criticisms of the humanitarian aid industry. However, in some cases,
further knowledge of areas on the periphery of his expertise would have added to
the strength of the book. Foley asserts, for example, that humanitarianism has not
been subject to academic study; however, a number of academics, most notably
Michael Walzer, have examined humanitarian intervention.

‘First, do no harm’ is, or should be, the central mantra of all those engaged in
providing aid to those facing destruction or starvation. Conor Foley provides a
timely warning that this is not always the case. This is not a polemic on aid or its
misuse; rather, it is a well argued and thought provoking study of the dangers, the
misuse and misunderstanding of the important concept of humanitarianism.
Peter Singer’s *Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the Twenty-first Century* takes the reader on a twenty-two chapter journey through the space occupied by the mechanical, electronic and software world of real robots doing real stuff. Situated squarely in the combat zone for most of the book, the robot is portrayed, as evidenced by one letter from the frontline after another, as a helper that can do no wrong, that has saved the lives of soldiers. By the book’s end, I was encouraged that most of the big issues had been highlighted; new technology, the ethical issues of autonomous weaponised-robotic systems, operations in a complex evolving battlespace, and the challenges of fighting an adaptive enemy.

The book starts with Singer describing his perspective on robotics in the preface titled ‘Why a Book on Robots and War’. I found this section slightly annoying to read, with an upbeat tempo for the robot cause that did not seem to match my expectation of a sober analysis of robotics in war; perhaps too eager, perhaps irreverent. However, moving through the chapters, I was left with a sense of an author making genuine contact and engaging in meaningful dialogue with the people working at the edge of this field, scientist and soldier alike.

This book, while not highly technical, is laden with an impressive number of first-hand accounts and commentary from the scientists and soldiers, which are this book’s strength; sixteen pages of photographs; and a comprehensive list of references. The first half of the book deals more with the *what* of robotics: what they are and what has shaped society’s expectations of robotics. The second half deals with the *how, why* and *what-if* questions of robotics. The subjects covered include a good overview of the current state of robotics, deployed and under development by companies such as iRobot and Foster-Miller, with funding flowing freely from
DARPA; the changing nature of battle brought about by fighting alongside robots; leadership issues; the laws of war and questions of the reliability or allegiance of robots; and the impact upon our society by this new medium of warfare. For instance, the influence that video games have on the ability of soldiers, mostly young, to control the current generation of robots equipped with deliberately Playstation-like controllers, hints at a blurring of the edges between parts of our lives, perhaps diminishing the future shock of what is around the corner.

In a comparison of robot versus human capabilities, Singer cites an example of the perceived tensions or possible threats to human pre-eminence in military frontline action. Singer writes on page 253, ‘For Example, many believe that the air force cancelled its combat drone, Boeing’s X-45, before it could even be tested, in order to keep it from competing with its manned fighter jet for the future, the Joint Strike Fighter’. I found this intriguing and more than a little believable, considering the weight savings and aerodynamic performance improvements that are possible when the pilot is taken out of the aircraft: a robot needs no oxygen to breathe, no pressure suit to stop blood pooling in the legs, will not black-out when executing high-G manoeuvres, and needs no ejector seat to escape when things go wrong. This technological edge is, perhaps, diminished by the realisation that it is the human who still administers this technology in the battlespace, and it is still the human, in the guise of the enemy insurgents in places like Afghanistan and Iraq, who are adapting to this technological tool and presenting new challenges for the robot makers.

Wired for War, bridges the gap between an academic text and a popular magazine article, throwing at the reader example after example of robots and citing numerous retired admirals and senior US officers, now vice-presidents of various robot companies. The picture so painted is one that portrays this technology as making a real difference on the frontline, where soldiers place their lives on the line and show incredible courage and commitment to their duty, as to make any thought of slowing the pace of deploying robotic technology anathema to good sense.

Wired for War is a worthy book to add to the reference library of universities and schools, and one’s own bookcase. It provides the reader with a fascinating glimpse through the window of the robotics agencies, in the United States in particular, who are developing some extraordinary technology. It highlights important engineering and operational limitations, human fears and hopes, and the successes of robotic technology in this current century; it is after all a sober and moving analysis.
For most readers the mention of the Somme brings forth the image of a futile and tragic campaign in which a generation of fine British and Imperial soldiery was wilfully slaughtered by an incompetent and distant command. William Philpott, in his breakthrough book *Bloody Victory: The Sacrifice on the Somme and the Making of the Twentieth Century*, takes on this image and reveals it for what it is—a myth. The result is that in *Bloody Victory* Philpott has produced a work of revisionist military history at its best.

Philpott’s honesty is both refreshing and the source of his book’s strength. For him there is no doubt that the Somme was not a tragedy. Instead, it was a British and French victory, the campaign in which the armies of Britain and France demonstrated their dominance over their opponent while representing for Germany the onset of a gradual decline from which its forces never recovered. True, it took two more bloody years for the Entente powers to defeat the German Army, but for Philpott the Somme was the turning point. The author does not recoil from the campaign’s huge casualty toll, nor does he moralise about the high losses. Instead, he accepts that in an industrial mass-army war an attrition strategy was unavoidable. In making his case Philpott also challenges another orthodoxy of First World War interpretation. While Entente commanders such as Douglas Haig and Ferdinand Foch were admittedly not military geniuses, Philpott correctly credits them with recognising what was needed to be done and then having the strength of conviction to carry out the unpalatable but necessary task of trading their soldiers’ lives for those of the enemy.

For a military readership *Bloody Victory* also serves as a case study in adaptation. All too often the Somme is measured by the outcome of its first day, during which the British suffered over 57,000 casualties. By comparison, the story of the next
five months is underrepresented in the literature. Yet, as Philpott shows, it is what came after the first day that holds the campaign’s true lessons. For the British the Somme was the beginning of an evolutionary process that transformed raw troops and inexperienced officers into a skilled fighting force that developed the professionalism needed to achieve victory in 1918.

_Bloody Victory_ also breaks with tradition by giving the French Army its just due. English speaking authors tend to write of the campaign from a British perspective, forgetting the major role the French Army had in the battle. French writers, by contrast, prefer to identify with the struggle at Verdun, the other great Western Front contest of 1916. The Somme cost the French over 200,000 casualties and their sacrifice deserves greater recognition than hitherto accorded to them. This work is a useful start to the English language telling of their accomplishments. Philpott also devotes remarkable detail to the performance of the Australian forces in the campaign and includes Australian materials, such as C E W Bean’s writings, amongst his sources.

Despite its length, the reader will find _Bloody Victory_ worth the effort. Some chapters will be of less interest to the military professional, such as those dealing with the memory and interpretation of the battle, but these are also worth attention as they add richness and depth to this fine analysis of the Great War’s critical battle. _Bloody Victory_ should be read by anyone with an interest in the First World War as well as by those for whom warfare is their business.
Second Lieutenant Wesley Gray was a young Marine at Okinawa in 2006 when told he was being posted—at short notice—to Anbar Province to advise and train members of the Iraqi Army. It was a seven month tour. When Gray arrived, in July 2006, the insurgency was at a critical stage. The Golden Mosque bombing that year had been the catalyst for Sunni-Shia violence in Baghdad and other areas. This was characterised in the cities by mass-casualty attacks and by campaigns of executions and killings. Gray served for four years on active duty with the Marines and is now completing his PhD at the University of Chicago.

Marines, being Marines, had selected the hottest, driest and most unpleasant sector of Iraq, Anbar Province, as part of their area of operations. Within the area were Marine units, together with Iraqi Army units. Predominantly desert, Anbar includes the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, and the Haditha area. Anbar was and is primarily a Sunni Arab area. Some of the early actions of the 1920 rebellion against the British had occurred along the Euphrates where Anbar borders Syria, and later there was significant fighting against the British in Ramadi and Fallujah.

Critical to the region is the Euphrates River, and Gray’s adviser team is stationed near the Haditha Dam. Lake Qadisiyah and the Haditha Dam is the second largest electricity production plant in Iraq. During his tour, his team—a Military Transition Team—is advising a predominantly Shia Iraqi Army Battalion. As Gray remarks, the advisory effort is vital, as it is aimed at improving the Iraqi Army so it can take over security from the US and Coalition forces. Gray’s period was before the major effect of the Sons of Iraq, the tribal forces in Anbar. These tribal forces helped to change the security situation in 2007-08.

The book is a very honest tactical-level view of the war. It is not a strategic survey or a popular history of the Iraq insurgency. It contains some errors: the Euphrates
River is incorrectly described as slicing ‘straight through the heart of the city [of Baghdad]’ (page 13). However, the author did spend his tour in the provinces rather than the capital. The book does not attempt to discuss the substantive issues on US Marines and the Haditha killings in 2005, although there are some references to the affair.

Gray’s perspective is sharpened by his Arabic language skills and his insights into Iraqi culture. The book is at its best when it describes frankly the observations of Iraqi officers and US-Iraqi interpreters. It becomes clear to Gray that the Iraqis have a radically different world-view from the US advisers. Gray has an affinity with and liked the Iraqis. However, one experienced interpreter commented to Gray on the US presence, that for Iraqis, ‘the concept that somebody would actually want to help another person without some material benefit is ridiculous’ and that ‘violence is how politics and policy are solved in Iraq.’ The book discusses the Western desire to be ‘efficient’. It contrasts this with the benefits, when advising local forces, of supporting and accommodating the Iraqis in some degree, and trying to ‘win over’ the Iraqi unit.

The Iraqis are very critical of US policy and its execution. There are some clear criticisms in this book on Iraqi Army practices (including logistics). The book also discusses some of the ethical issues involved when a US adviser has to intervene in tactical questioning of detainees by the Iraqi Army.

Gray realises that, as an adviser, the Iraqis have to be allowed to develop in their own way. He also realises the importance of tact and ‘face’ when trying to persuade the Iraqi command chain to carry out missions in a professional manner.

*Embedded* is a well-written description of what it was like to be an adviser to an Iraqi Army field unit in Anbar Province. It is recommended reading for those interested in the Iraq war, and for those intending to advise local forces in other military conflicts.
BOOK REVIEW


Reviewed by Ian Kuring, Australian Army

Mud & Dust by Michael Cecil is the third book of a series sponsored by the Australian War Memorial. It is a well researched, interesting and easy to read reference book covering the armoured fighting vehicles, artillery, logistic vehicles and engineer equipment used by the Australian Defence Force in Vietnam. Also covered are the ships used to transport troops, vehicles and equipment between Australia and South Vietnam.

As well as technical descriptions, information is provided concerning the operational and/or logistic roles and tasks carried out by the vehicles, artillery, equipment and ships. Even Vietnam veterans who served with, on and alongside these vehicles, items of equipment and ships are likely to be surprised by some of the information provided concerning maintenance and repair issues as well as modifications carried out to meet operational requirements. Some brief personal essays provided by a small number of Vietnam veterans are included to provide insights into what it was like to operate and/or maintain specific vehicle and equipment types.

The book is lavishly illustrated with over 400 images in both colour and black and white, most of which come from the photographic collection of the Australian War Memorial. There are some great photographs and I am sure many of them will bring back memories for Vietnam veterans as well as provide inspiration for military model builders.

The author of this book is Michael Cecil, a man who has had an almost life-long interest in researching and writing about Australian military technology. He is currently a staff member at the Australian War Memorial. His meticulous research and eye for technical detail is revealed in the text and the picture captions for this book.

I was surprised that the author had not included lists identifying each of the Centurion Tanks and M113 family of armoured fighting vehicles that served with
the Australian Army in Vietnam by their Army Registration Number. Information about the fate of each of these vehicles would be interesting, especially as some have survived as historic display objects, and in the case of the M113 family of vehicles many are still in service with the Army. Another surprising omission is information and photographs related to the specific examples of the vehicles, artillery and equipment from the Vietnam War held in the Australian War Memorial’s collection. From the obvious research carried out by the author and the information he was provided it would appear that this would not have been an impossible task, and their inclusion should be a consideration for any future edition of the book.

I recommend *Mud & Dust* to all readers and researchers with an interest in the military technology used by Australians in Vietnam.
Listed below is a selection from the review copies that have arrived at the Australian Army Journal. Reviews for many of these books can be found online in the relevant edition of the Australian Army Journal at: <http://www.defence.gov.au/army/lwsc/Australian_Army_Journal.asp>


TITLES TO NOTE


Are you interested in writing a book review for the *Australian Army Journal*? Please contact the AAJ at army.journal@defence.gov.au, stating your areas of interest, and we can provide you of a list of the books available (you will be provided with a free copy that is yours to keep).
NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The editors of the Australian Army Journal welcome submissions from any source. Two prime criteria for publication are an article's standard of written English expression and its relevance to the Australian profession of arms. The journal will accept letters, feature articles, review essays, emails and contributions to the Point Blank and Insights sections. As a general guide on length, letters should not exceed 500 words; articles and review essays should be between 3000 and 6000 words and contributions to the Insights section should be no more than 1500 words. The Insights section provides authors with the opportunity to write brief, specific essays relating to their own experiences of service. Readers should note that articles written in service essay format are discouraged, since they are not generally suitable for publication.

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- Automatic word processed footnote
- No ‘opcit’ footnote referencing
- Australian spelling (e.g., –ise not –ize)
NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

GENERAL STYLE

All sources cited as evidence should be fully and accurately referenced in endnotes (not footnotes). Books cited should contain the author’s name, the title, the publisher, the place of publication, the year and the page reference. This issue of the journal contains examples of the appropriate style for referencing.

When using quotations, the punctuation, capitalisation and spelling of the source document should be followed. Single quotation marks should be used, with double quotation marks only for quotations within quotations. Quotations of thirty words or more should be indented as a separate block of text without quotation marks. Quotations should be cited in support of an argument, not as authoritative statements.

Numbers should be spelt out up to ninety-nine, except in the case of percentages, where arabic numerals should be used (and per cent should always be spelt out). All manuscripts should be paginated, and the use of abbreviations, acronyms and jargon kept to a minimum.

BIOGRAPHIES

Authors submitting articles for inclusion in the journal should also attach a current biography. This should be a brief, concise paragraph, whose length should not exceed eight lines. The biography is to include the contributor’s full name and title, a brief summary of current or previous service history (if applicable) and details of educational qualifications. Contributors outside the services should identify the institution they represent. Any other information considered relevant—for example, source documentation for those articles reprinted from another publication—should also be included.