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THIS PAPER DISCUSSES THE U.S. FEDERAL MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN DOMESTIC DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS. IT EXPLAINS HOW THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE IS TASKED TO PERFORM MILITARY SUPPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES (MSCA), AND HOW IT HAS ORGANIZED TO RESPOND TO THESE TASKINGS. THE PAPER FOCUSES ON THE OPERATIONAL (UNIFIED) COMMANDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO CONDUCT CIVIL-MILITARY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COORDINATION AND PROVIDE TIMELY RESPONSES TO MSCA MISSIONS. IT DISCUSSES HOW EVOLVING POLICY, DOCTRINE AND DETAILED PREPAREDNESS PLANNING HAVE ALL CONTRIBUTED TO IMPROVING THE MILITARY'S RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC EMERGENCIES. FINALLY, IT PRESENTS SEVERAL CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS THAT REMAIN FOR OPERATIONAL COMMANDERS TO ADDRESS IN THE FUTURE.			
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**TRANSLATING POLICY INTO ACTION,
THE FEDERAL MILITARY RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC DISASTERS**

By

KOBURN C. STOLL
Major, U.S. Army

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the U.S. federal military involvement in domestic disaster relief operations. It explains how the Department of Defense is tasked to perform Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA), and how it has organized to respond to these taskings. The paper focuses on the operational (unified) commander's responsibilities to conduct civil-military disaster preparedness coordination and provide timely responses to MSCA missions. It discusses how evolving policy, doctrine and detailed preparedness planning have all contributed to improving the military's response to domestic emergencies. Finally, it presents several challenges and concerns that remain for operational commanders to address in the future.

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PREFACE

The end of the Cold War has caused dramatic changes in the U.S. military and a shift in the focus for future employment of this new evolving force. Part of this shift in focus has turned to "operations other than war" and particularly the military's role in domestic disaster relief. This is due in part to the reduced military threats abroad. There is a perception that the Department of Defense no longer has as great of a military mission, therefore, military assets are available for an expanded role here at home. The other factor in this equation is the expanded media coverage of domestic natural and man-made disasters and the vast public outcry for immediate relief for the disaster victims. These two factors have combined to create enormous pressure on both the congressional and military leadership to expand the military's role as the best federal response asset to mobilize and provide rapid disaster relief.

Domestic disaster relief is not a new mission area for the military, but the focus has changed. When the military has provided disaster relief in the past, the aid has always been welcomed. The presence of soldiers in uniform has always reassured disaster victims and demonstrated the country's commitment to respond to their needs. Now, it appears that expectation levels are increasing. The media coverage has heightened the pressure on all levels of government to provide

immediate disaster relief. Frequently called the "CNN syndrome," the media monitors all relief responses, exposing problems and untimely efforts. This is a "high threat" environment, and the slightest flaw in the military response could have devastating results on both the military's reputation and future budget authorizations. We have got to get this right. It is essential that military disaster relief efforts are well planned and executed to maximize the aid to victims and maintain the confidence the citizens have in today's armed forces.

I was involved in providing military assistance for disaster relief for the San Francisco earthquake and Hurricane Hugo in 1989. For both of these operations the initial military responses were largely uncoordinated with other federal, state and local efforts. The military leaders deployed to these disasters deserve most of the credit for the successful operations. Their military training provided them with the ability to take initiative, focus on the mission, react quickly and remain flexible. These leaders, with minimal guidance, were able to organize their forces and immediately begin to improve the quality of life for the disaster victims. Many problems were identified and many lessons learned, so what has changed? Has the military response to domestic disaster relief improved, and are we better prepared today than we were in 1989? These are the questions that prompted this research.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Renewed Focus on an Old Mission.

The end of the Cold War has meant cutbacks in our Armed Forces and a rising expectation for an increased military role in disaster and humanitarian assistance operations. Policy makers have advocated an expanded military role in domestic support operations. Congress has determined and the National Command Authorities (NCA) have directed that the military become more engaged in supporting domestic needs. Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, stated in 1992:

"The American people have made an enormous investment in developing the skills, capabilities and resources of the armed forces. These resources, if properly matched to local needs and coordinated with civilian efforts, can make a useful contribution to addressing the serious domestic needs of the United States."¹

In October 1992, the House highlighted the need for federal military involvement in domestic disaster relief:

"The important role that the military can play in meeting domestic needs has been underscored by the critical role of the Armed Forces in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew....only the Department of Defense had the equipment and personnel to provide logistics and infrastructure...for a disaster of this magnitude."²

Congress has passed numerous laws that provide for domestic military support to augment the individual states, which have the primary responsibility for providing disaster relief. These

¹ Rick Maze, "Nunn Urges Military to Take Domestic Missions," Army Times, 21 September 1992, p. 16.

² Strategic Studies Institute, Domestic Missions for the Armed Forces, (U.S. Army War College: Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, February 1993) pp. 20.

laws and a new congressional focus for the military provide leaders throughout the Department of Defense (DOD) with new challenges and operational requirements.

Responding to domestic emergencies is not new to the military. Since the colonial days, the military has been responding to domestic crises, civil disturbances, and natural or man-made disasters. However, the federal responses to catastrophic domestic disasters have been traditionally less than adequate. The military portion of these responses have been successful, but were usually the result of dynamic leadership and quick thinking rather than the execution of sound military plans. This history, combined with the heightened expectations and coverage by the media, has resulted in the operational level Commander-in-Chiefs (CINC) putting more effort into understanding, planning and providing military support to civil authorities.

CHAPTER II

MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN DOMESTIC DISASTER RELIEF

Military Support to Civil Authorities.

Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA) includes disaster assistance for everything from civil defense emergencies to supplemental assistance for state and local governments responding to major natural or man-made disasters. This support can take two forms: 1) an immediate response initiated by a military commander, or 2) military cooperation with civil agencies as directed by the President under the

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. Disaster support is categorized in military doctrine as an "operation other than war" and more specifically as humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian assistance includes programs conducted to relieve or reduce the results of natural or man-made disasters that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property. Humanitarian assistance provided by U.S. forces is designed to supplement or complement the efforts of civil authorities or agencies that have the primary responsibility for domestic disaster relief. Potential roles for U.S. forces include: preparation and distribution of food, removal of debris, restoration of electrical power and water systems, management of donated goods and services, establishment of life support centers that provide shelter, security, medical care, counseling, bath, laundry and recreation services and immediate disaster response to prevent loss of life.³

The federal military role in disaster relief is to assist the local community until they are capable of resuming their own relief efforts. Clearly defined and attainable goals or objectives must be established early in the relief effort. Both the military leaders and the local officials must identify a clear end-state when military operations will cease and the

³ U.S. Department of the Army, FM 100-19 Domestic Support Operations, (Washington D.C.: 1 July 1993), p. 5-9.

community resumes full responsibility for the mission. Everyone must understand that federal military assistance normally will terminate before the mission is totally completed, which will be at some stage where the civil authorities can continue the recovery themselves.

Historical Perspective.

Military forces have participated in operations other than war in support of national interests throughout America's history, both internationally and domestically. The Chicago Fire of 1871 is the earliest recorded use of the military in a major domestic disaster relief operation.⁴ In August 1992 more than 17,000 active and 7,000 Reserve and National Guard soldiers participated in relief operations following the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew in Florida.⁵ The most recent employment of America's military in disaster relief was to provide aid to thousands of homeless victims after the Los Angeles earthquake in January 1994.

The inadequacies of governments (local, state & federal) in dealing with disasters were made clear repeatedly by poor responses to domestic disasters throughout the 60's and 70's. Legislation, meant to be corrective, was passed in the wake of these disasters but fell short of solving the problems. These

⁴ Harvard National Security Fellows, The Defense Department's Role in Humanitarian and Disaster Relief, (n.p.: final draft undated), p. 13-1.

⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations, (Washington D.C.: 14 June 1993), p. 13-1.

well-intentioned efforts often further fragmented and confused subsequent responses. Organizations were created, moved, divided and reorganized, and since 1950 six different federal agencies have been charged with the lead responsibility. By the late 1970's, concerns about the fragmented way in which the federal government dealt with emergency management, lead to the creation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).⁶

Throughout the 1980's, FEMA attempted to lead the federal planning efforts of nearly 30 departments and agencies for emergency relief responses. This was a monumental task for an organization with full responsibility for disaster relief but no authority over the agencies providing the support. Everyone of these agencies acknowledged the need for coordination in an emergency, but the specifics of such coordination was unclear.

The coordination problem was further complicated by the fact that disaster relief was a secondary mission for most federal agencies and often was assigned a low priority. This limited interagency coordination produced a stovepipe effect along functional lines for emergency planning and support. Therefore, FEMA became responsible for pulling all these functions together. Unfortunately, this interagency coordination was often done on the fly during an actual disaster response. Due to public dissatisfaction with the federal

⁶National Academy of Public Administration, Coping With Catastrophe: Building an Emergency Management System to Meet People's Needs in Natural and Manmade Disasters, (n.p.: February 1993), p. 13-15.

government's response to Hurricane Hugo in 1989, FEMA initiated a joint planning process with all the federal response agencies. Finally, in April 1992 FEMA published the Federal Response Plan (FRP) as the blueprint for responding to all disasters and emergencies.⁷

Prior to 1993, the integration of federal forces into domestic disaster relief was further complicated by DOD's distinction between two similar but separate relief programs. The Military Support to Civil Defense (MSCD) program provided life-saving and logistical assistance to civil authorities during a wartime disaster, while the Military Assistance to Civil Authorities (MACA) program responded to civil requests in peacetime disasters. Intended for different purposes and to provide different support, these programs added to the confusion and clouded the expectations of disaster relief planners.⁸ Another problem involved the military plans for these programs, which consisted of generic standard operating procedures (SOPs) for mobilization and reporting rather than detailed operation plans.

Despite a lack of detailed planning, most military responses to domestic disaster relief have been successful. The

⁷ U.S. General Accounting Office, "Testimony," U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Nuclear Deterrence, Arms Control and Defense Intelligence, Disaster Management: Recent Disasters Demonstrate the Need to Improve the Nation's Response Strategy, Hearing (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 25 May 1993), p.6.

⁸ Maxwell Alston, "Military Support to Civil Authorities: New Dimensions for the 1990s," The Officer, October 1991, p. 38.

key to success has been dynamic leadership capable of reacting to on-scene circumstances to achieve mission accomplishment. Another advantage the military possesses over other federal agencies is its inherent ability to operate in a crisis or austere environment and under extremely adverse conditions. Military forces can react almost immediately and are dispersed throughout the United States. These forces are generally self-sufficient and provide critical mission assistance without adding to an already over extended local support structure.

CHAPTER III RULES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR DOD'S RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC NATURAL DISASTERS

National Policy and Strategic Level Guidance.

Public Law 93-288 was amended, in 1988, and retitled the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. This law provides the authority for the federal government to respond to disasters and emergencies in order to save lives, and to protect public health, safety, and property. Under this law, the President may direct any federal agency to utilize its authorities and resources in support of state and local disaster assistance efforts. The Act also requires the state to share the cost of federal assistance, up to 25 percent, when a major disaster or emergency is declared. The President has designed FEMA as the principle planning agency and delegated to its Director the authority to carry out the provisions of the Stafford Act.

FEMA developed the Federal Response Plan (FRP), which represents an interagency agreement among 27 different federal departments and agencies. The plan organizes the federal disaster response into twelve Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). Each ESF is headed by a primary agency and has other supporting agencies assigned to augment the lead agency in meeting disaster response requirements. Figure 1 shows the twelve ESFs and designates which organizations have primary or supporting responsibilities within each function. DOD has been designated the lead agent for two of the twelve ESFs (#3 public works and engineering and #9 urban search and rescue). DOD also has a supporting role in all the others. FEMA coordinates the federal response to a domestic disaster through these ESFs and their designated primary agencies.

Both the United States National Security Strategy and the National Military Strategy address the national well-being and domestic needs⁹ coupled with humanitarian assistance and disaster relief at home¹⁰ as planning considerations for military leaders. In response to this national policy guidance and the FRP requirements, the Secretary of Defense has designated the Secretary of the Army as DOD's executive agent for domestic disaster support operations. Even though the Army

⁹ The White House, National Security Strategy of the United States, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., January 1993), p. 2.

¹⁰ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Military Strategy of the United States, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., January 1992), p. 15.

#	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
ESF ORG	TRANSPORTATION	COMMUNICATIONS	PUBLIC WORKS AND ENGINEERING	FIREFIGHTING	INFORMATION AND PLANNING	MASS CARE	RESOURCE SUPPORT	HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES	URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE	HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	FOOD	ENERGY
USDA	S	S	S	P	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	S
DOC		S	S	S	S	S	S			S		
DOD	S	S	P	S	S	S	S	S	P	S	S	S
DOEd					S							
DOE	S		S		S		S			S		P
DHHS			S		S	S	S	P	S	S	S	
DHUD						S						
DOI		S	S	S	S					S		
DOJ					S			S		S		
DOL			S				S		S	S		
DOS	S									S		S
DOT	P	S	S		S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
TREAS					S							
VA			S			S	S	S				
AID								S	S			
ARC					S	P		S			S	
EPA			S	S	S			S	S	P	S	
FCC		S										
FEMA		S		S	P	S	S	S	S	S	S	
GSA	S	S	S		S	S	P	S	S	S		S
ICC	S											
NASA					S							
NCS		P			S		S	S				S
NRC					S					S		S
OPM							S					
TVA	S		S									S
USPS	S					S		S				

FIGURE 1.¹¹ Emergency Support Functions Assignment Matrix

¹¹ Federal Emergency Management Agency, The Federal Response Plan, (Washington, D.C.: April 1992), p. 14.

has been designed the lead agent, all of the services may be involved in at least some of the disaster responses. These responses are very time sensitive, executed with minimal advanced warning and always are conducted in conjunction with other U.S. Government agencies.

Strategic Level Tasking, Structure and Coordination.

The President may commit DOD resources to emergency work prior to making an official disaster declaration. Emergency work is intended to save lives or preserve property and will not exceed a ten day commitment. Local active duty military commanders may also commit resources during an emergency. This is known as an "immediate response" intended to save lives, prevent human suffering and mitigate great property damage.¹²

State and local officials have primary responsibility for emergency preparedness planning and the response to emergencies. The National Guard, under the control of the state governors, has the primary responsibility for providing military assistance to state and local governments in emergencies. With the exception of a commander's immediate response, federal forces are only used after state resources have been exhausted and the governor has petitioned the President for federal assistance. The President, under the Stafford Act and based upon FEMA's recommendation, authorizes the use of federal resources by declaring a national disaster or emergency. The President has

¹² U.S. Department of Defense, Military Support to Civil Authorities, DOD Directive 3025.1 (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 15 Jan. 1993), p. 6.

delegated to FEMA the authority to appoint a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) to coordinate the federal response effort. The FCO becomes the on-site coordinator for all federal resources supporting local and state authorities in the assistance effort. (See Figures 2 & 3)

Once a Presidential disaster declaration has been made, the federal departments and agencies designated as "primary agencies" in the FRP begin to provide assistance directly to the state, under the overall direction of the FCO. The primary agency will establish liaison and direct coordination with their state agency counterparts to provide the assistance required by the state. The primary agency, in coordination with the FCO, may task designated support agencies to assist in carrying out the assigned relief function.

Operational Level Tasking and Command Structure.

DOD Directive 3025.1 identifies the Secretary of the Army as DOD's executive agent. This gives the Secretary of the Army the authority to task any DOD components, in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), to plan and conduct MSCA. The Directive also divides the United States into geographic mission areas with specifically assigned supported and supporting CINCs.¹³

¹³ U.S. Dept. of Defense, Directive 3025.1, p. 1-4.

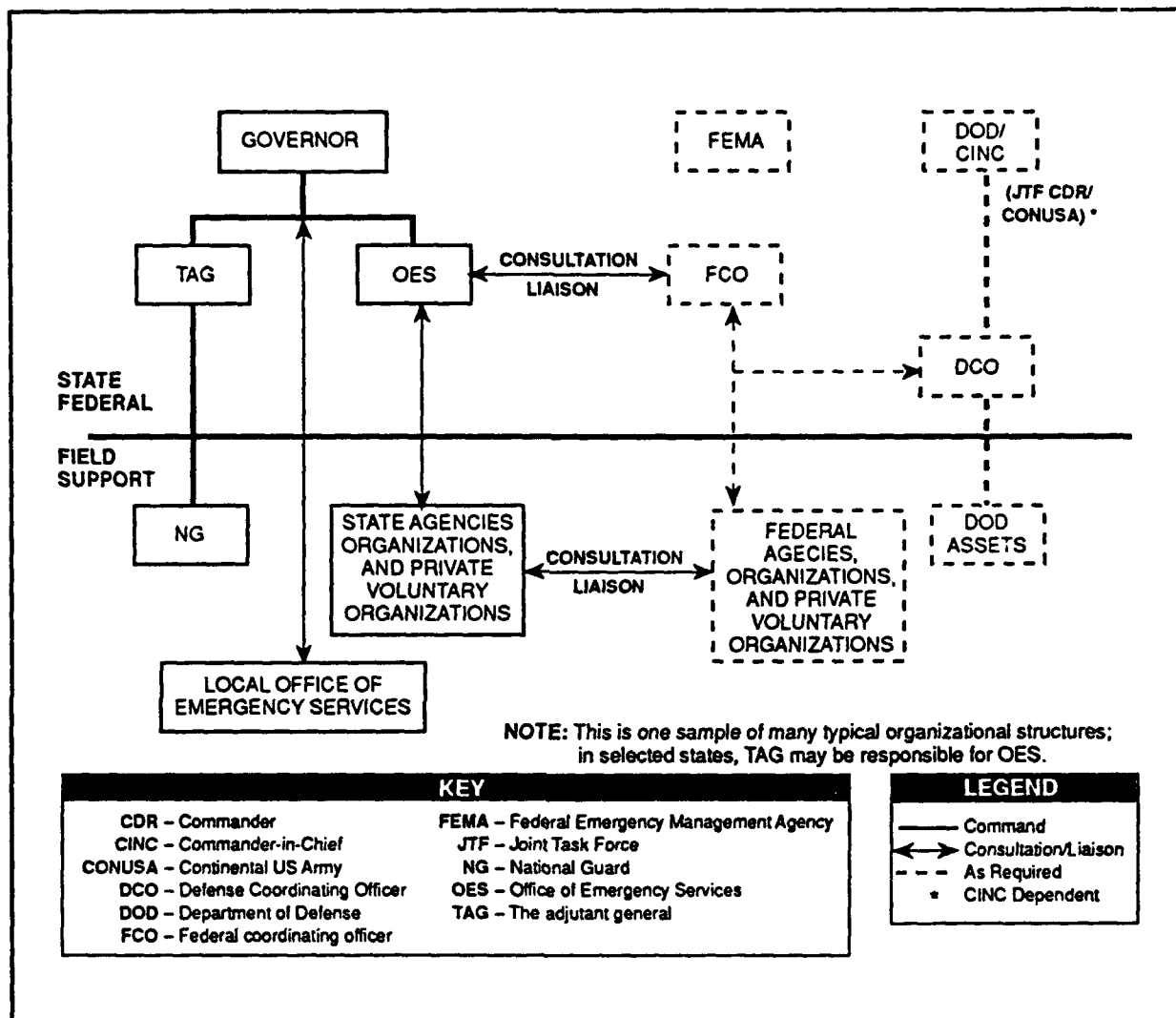


FIGURE 2.¹⁴ Federal, State & Local Emergency Services Agencies

¹⁴ U.S. Dept. of the Army, FM 100-19 Domestic Support Operations, p. 2-11.

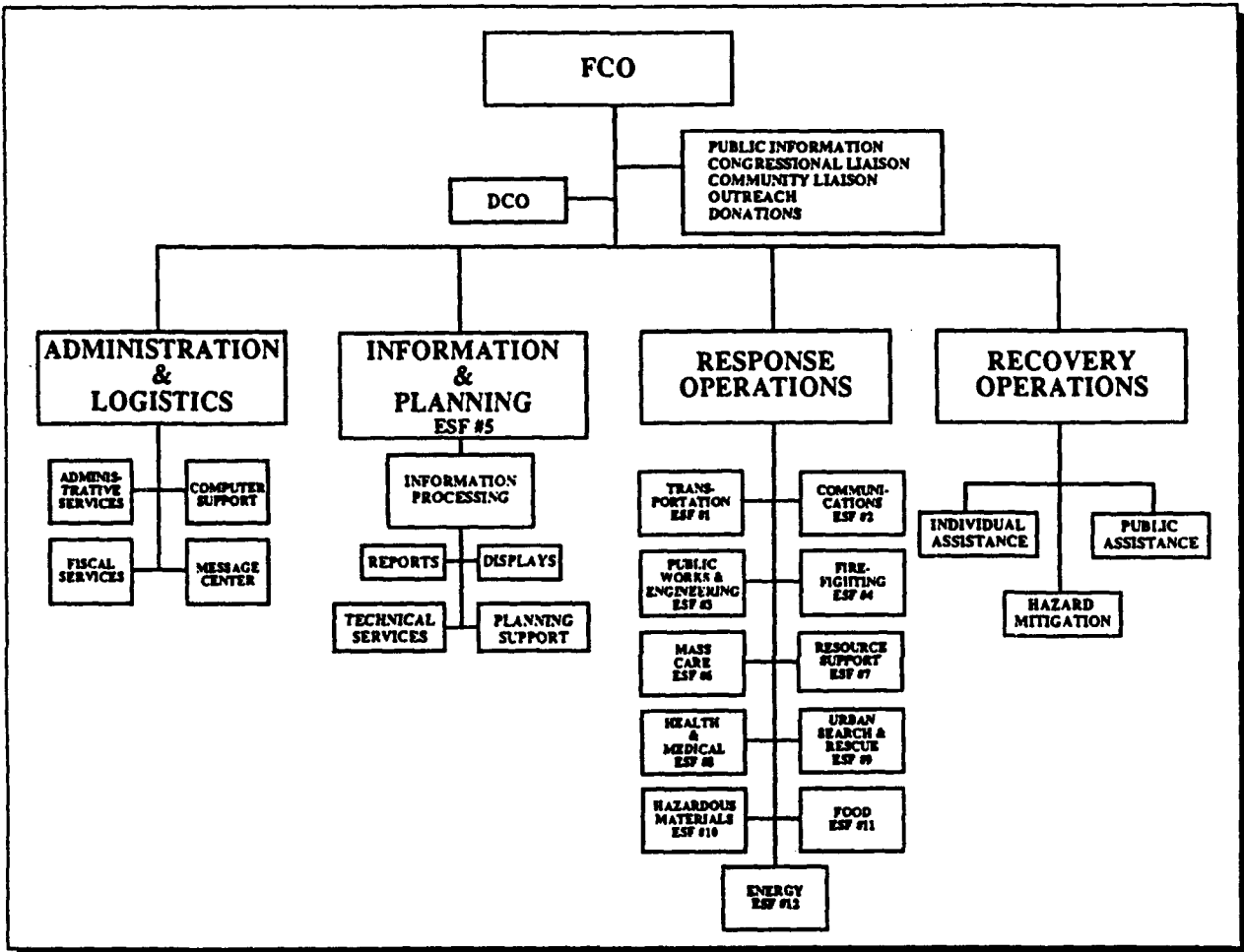


FIGURE 3.¹⁵ Federal Emergency Response Team Organization

¹⁵ Federal Emergency Management Agency, p. 23.

CINC, U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) serves as the DOD principal MSCA planning and operating agent for all DOD components in the 48 contiguous states, the District of Columbia, and all U.S. territories and possessions within the Atlantic command area of responsibility (Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands).

CINC, Pacific Command serves as the DOD principal MSCA planning and operating agent for all DOD components in Alaska, Hawaii and all U.S. possessions and territories within the Pacific command area of responsibility (Guam and Samoa).

CINC, Transportation Command serves as the DOD single manager for transportation, providing air, land and sea transportation.

The Secretary of the Army manages MSCA assistance through the Director of Military Support (DOMS) and a support staff within the Headquarters, Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations. This staff plans, coordinates, and manages domestic disaster response operations for all DOD assets. The staff also has the responsibility to develop and coordinate generic and incident-specific plans for MSCA. DOD Directive 3025.1 also tasked Forces Command (FORSCOM) to maintain liaison with FEMA to facilitate civil-military planning and to develop and maintain a DOD Resource Database.¹⁶ In 1993, FORSCOM was absorbed by USACOM but retained the MSCA mission and functions for USACOM. FORSCOM subsequently tasked each Continental U.S. Army, to provide disaster assistance planning, coordination and execution

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 12-13.

within their geographic boundaries.¹⁷ In an emergency, the CINC or the designated Army commander appoints a Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) to provide liaison with the FCO and local officials on the scene. For very large disaster relief operations, e.g. Hurricane Andrew in 1992, a joint task force may be established.

The DCO serves as the DOD's central point of contact for federal military assistance requests from the FCO, the ESF managers or the state national guard adjutant general. The DCO may assume control of all federal military units involved in disaster relief or the CINC may appoint a more senior officer as a task force commander. In the later case, the DCO then becomes a special staff officer for the task force commander.

Operational Level Coordination Requirements.

The planning and conduct of emergency disaster assistance operations requires a variety of perspectives, expertise, cooperation and coordination with multiple government agencies and services. Any senior military commander (lieutenant colonel and above) could be asked to provide an immediate response to a domestic disaster. These commanders must understand the mechanics for MSCA in disaster relief operations and their associated responsibilities and authorities.

¹⁷ U.S. Atlantic Command, USACOM Policy Directive for Military Support to Civil Authorities and Military Assistance for Civil Disturbance, USACOM Instruction 3440.1, (Norfolk, VA: USACOM J5CAR, 1 Nov. 93), p. 2.

The Atlantic, Pacific and Transportation Command CINCs must understand the FRP and ensure that their staff and subordinate commanders plan for domestic disaster assistance operations. These CINCs must identify and train DCOs well in advance of any actual disaster. These individuals must be involved in the detailed response planning and be familiar with the organizations and capabilities of various levels of federal, state and local government. A broad understanding of the different agencies and their respective capabilities is necessary to reduce confusion and redundancies as part of the relief effort. In addition to interfacing with these other agencies, the DCO must also have a comprehensive knowledge of the military assets at their disposal. And finally, the DCOs must possess the leadership and organizational skills to successfully synchronize the military assistance efforts with those of all the other agencies.

The Secretary of the Army provides centralized direction of peacetime planning with other federal agencies and has decentralized planning with local authorities, through the CINCs and CONUS Armies. Decentralized execution in times of emergencies is provided by the CINCs and the DCO, with DOMS acting to fill any unexpected requirements. Plans and preparedness measures, along with continuous coordination with civil authorities, are intended to provide for the efficient employment of all DOD resources to augment the local civil authorities' capabilities.

CHAPTER IV IMPROVING ON PAST PERFORMANCE

In the past five years, DOD has made significant improvements in disaster response planning and execution. New policy, doctrine and detailed response plans are evolving from the FRP requirements, increased civil-military coordination and lessons learned from past MSCA operations.

Evolving Policy, Doctrine and Mission Planning.

DOD Directive 3025.1 was revised in January 1993 to clarify and consolidate a multitude of directives and to define a single system for Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA). This directive eliminated the past confusion caused by the split between the civil defense and natural disaster response programs (MSCD & MACA). It cleared the way for an all-hazards approach to planning for MSCA.

The 1993 addition of FM 100-5 Operations acknowledges, for the first time in Army doctrine, the crucial role the military has in operations other than war including disaster relief:

"The prime focus of the Army is warfighting, yet the Army's frequent role in operations other than war is critical....Typical peacetime operations include disaster relief, nation assistance, security and advisory assistance..."¹⁸

In 1993 the Army also published FM 100-19 Domestic Support Operations, as the doctrine for the Army and Marine Corps response to domestic support operations. A draft joint services publication on humanitarian assistance operations is currently

¹⁸ U.S. Dept. of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations, p. 2-0.

being circulated for comments. These manuals demonstrate a clear effort to include the disaster relief mission in current doctrine and to increase the planning effort accordingly.

In the planning arena, detailed operations plans are slowly replacing the old procedure manuals (SOPs). A detailed earthquake plan exists and FORSCOM is beginning work on the "all hazards" response plan for MSCA. National defense is the first priority for DOD resources, which complicates the planning process. It is impossible to forecast what the disposition of DOD resources will be when a disaster strikes. Therefore, MSCA plans are developed using an "adaptive force package" approach. Initial response force packages have been developed to provide life-sustaining assistance, in five mission areas: food, water, shelter, medical and power generation. The DOD Resource Database, maintained by FORSCOM, is then used during the crisis response to match requirements against unit/package availability. Also, the Joint Universal Lessons Learned Database is helping MSCA planners to capture, share and recommend improvements for relief operations. This database provides all DOD agencies a medium to document lessons learned from exercises and actual operations. This information is then available simultaneously to all doctrine developers, mission planners and units identified for MSCA operations.

Improved Interagency Planning and Coordination.

The "CNN syndrome" has elevated the planning priority for MSCA and increased the pressure for better civil-military coordination. FORSCOM and FEMA signed an agreement in 1988 to begin exchanging liaison officers. The agreement also included the development of a trained cadre of joint service individual mobilization augmentees (reservists) to support emergency preparedness and strengthen the civil crisis management teams.¹⁹ FEMA and DOD have exchanged liaison officers and jointly present MSCA training courses. DOD Directive 3025.1 increased this interaction by requiring each of the services to designate regional planning agents to coordinate MSCA with USACOM and the FEMA regions. USACOM has expanded the regional planning cells to include emergency preparedness liaison officers for each state. Each service (Army, Navy and Air Force) provides one volunteer reservist to assist each state in emergency preparedness planning and civil-military coordination.

A tremendous amount of planning and coordination has been put into improving the military's response to domestic disasters. New doctrine, all-hazard response plans, automation efforts and decentralized civil-military coordination are all major improvements from past disaster efforts, but there are still some challenges to overcome.

¹⁹ U.S. Forces Command and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Memorandum of Agreement: Organizational Relationships, 15 Aug. 1988, p. 7.

CHAPTER V
FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR DOD AND THE UNIFIED CINCs

Policy and Strategic Level Concerns.

Urban Search and Rescue, ESF 9, is not a mission area DOD is well suited to perform. DOD accepted the lead role in 1992 because it could respond quickly and had the manpower to commit to the task. However, DOD does not have the highly specialized equipment or technicians required for search and rescue, particularly for multi-story buildings. USACOM has recognized this short-fall and has requested the ESF be reassigned to another federal agency. A possible solution is for FEMA to become the primary agent for ESF 9. FEMA has numerous search and rescue units across the U.S. on contract for short notice deployments and currently provides these assets to DOD upon request.²⁰ By giving the lead to FEMA, the current interagency coordination loop could be reduced and the requirements for specialized equipment and training for DOD would be eliminated. DOD would continue to perform a supporting role as they do for all the other functional areas.

For long-term disaster recovery active duty forces may not be available or possesses the required expertise to accomplish the mission. Currently, only active duty forces or volunteer reservists can be employed to augment civil authorities in disaster relief. U.S. law, Title 10, expressly prohibits involuntary activation of reserve component soldiers for

²⁰ National Academy of Public Administration, p. 96.

assistance to either federal or state governments in times of natural or man-made disasters. This creates a problem because sufficient volunteers are not always available. Also, many of the desired capabilities for disaster recovery are located within the guard and reserve (civil affairs, logistics, water purification etc.). As the military continues to draw down, this problem of accessing the reservists will become critical. The CINCs through the NCA need to convince Congress to amend the law to allow selective call-up legislation. One possible solution being proposed to Congress is to give the NCA, when requested by a combatant CINC, through the CJCS, statutory authority to call-up limited numbers of unique reserve units to perform contingency operation planning and execution.²¹

Force Synchronization.

Disaster responses are time sensitive, reactive, complex and situation specific. Just like other military missions, the CINC needs to rapidly develop an estimate of the situation, wargame and select the best course of action, publish a directive and deploy the forces necessary to accomplish the mission. To be successful, operational commanders must: produce a clear mission statement for the operation with the desired end-state conditions, have previously established liaison and coordinated response plans, and obtain intelligence on the current situation.

²¹ Walter E. Wright and Ronald L. Fiegle, "Civil Affairs Support in Operations Other than War," Military Review, October 1993, p. 32.

In operations other than war, including MSCA, it is imperative that commanders develop a clear mission statement. The mission objective is defined as desired end-state conditions. These are the conditions that must be achieved before the military transfers the mission to civil authorities. The end-state conditions will normally be achieved by the military before the mission is totally complete from the civilian authorities' perspective. This transfer of mission and withdrawal of federal forces is one of the most difficult tasks for unit commanders. The CINC's mission and end-state conditions must be clear to both the military unit commanders and local authorities. This will prevent misperceptions and "mission-creep". There is a tendency for the civil authorities to rely too heavily on military support and attempt to expand the military requirements.²² This is known as mission-creep and must be avoided to preclude prolonged military involvement.

Historically, MSCA has been totally reactive with very limited advanced knowledge of the actual mission requirements and conditions. Individual states have the primary responsibility for responding to domestic emergencies and often delay requesting federal military assistance. There are a multitude of potential reasons for this delay including poor intrastate disaster assessments or concerns over funding the state's cost share. In the case of Hurricane Andrew, Florida had an inadequate damage assessment capability which delayed

²² Harvard National Security Fellows, p. 23.

their request for federal assistance for four days. This is precious planning time that is often lost. The CINC can not wait for the state's assistance request to work its way through the Governor's office, FEMA and DOMS. Immediately after any major disaster, the responsible CINC must begin the military planning process. This proactive process requires extensive prior coordination of civil-military response plans, capabilities and limitations. Dynamic contingency plans, training exercises and a commitment to an enduring civil-military partnership are critical for mission success. Plus, to effectively mobilize resources for disaster response, agencies (local, state and federal) must know what is required and their combined capabilities and limitations.

To increase federal responsiveness, a FEMA disaster assessment team could be deployed immediately to any major disaster. This team of federal and volunteer agency representatives, including DOD, would make an initial assessment and provide their agencies with some warning of anticipated local government shortfalls.²³ The DOD representative would provide the CINC with the vital on-scene intelligence required to begin the military planning process. Space assets are another means for the CINCs to obtain useful intelligence. Satellites have just begun to be used for disaster assessments. They provided an effective means to track the flood waters of the Mississippi in 1993. The Army Space and Strategic Defense

²³ U.S. General Accounting Office, pp. 11-17.

Command received \$10 million in the 1993 budget to begin helping with civilian disaster relief planning.²⁴ These space assets combined with a FEMA disaster assessment team will help the CINCs in planning and executing timely disaster assistance.

Impacts on Warfighting Skills and Unit Readiness.

The CINCs are attempting to balance the current combat training requirements with new training requirements involved with operations other than war. All military services must focus their training efforts on tasks required to accomplish their wartime combat missions. These training demands usually exceed the time available to satisfy them, so there is concern about any increased mission requirements and their impact on unit combat readiness.

Fortunately, the military's capability to provide domestic disaster relief is derived from wartime mission training. Each service has a vast array of units and trained personnel to draw from during emergencies. Therefore, the CINC's disaster response force packages can be tailored to meet the exact relief mission requirements. Units trained in combat support and combat service support, such as logistics, communications, engineering, transportation and medicine are particularly useful in emergency response missions. There is one caution; the prolonged employment of military forces in disaster relief operations will erode warfighting skills and possibly lower unit combat readiness.

²⁴ "Disaster Relief Planning," Army, November 1993, p. 52.

There are specialized individual training requirements for military staffs and DCOs. This training does not involve significant numbers of personnel and hence does not have an adverse impact on combat readiness. Most of this individual and staff training can be absorbed through professional development programs within existing staff functions.

Once trained, the CINCs need to protect these special staffs and liaisons from the on-going DOD budget cuts. Robust civil-military liaison must exist for disaster preparedness planning and mission execution. These special staffs and liaison officers provide the critical link between the civil authorities and deployed federal forces. The designated force package units can smoothly transition from wartime missions to disaster assistance. However, they need these liaison officers to coordinate their efforts with a variety of government and nongovernment agencies, and the other services. Also, the CINCs need to exercise this interface. Staff coordination and interoperability can be enhanced through combined multiagency disaster response exercises and computer simulations. These staff exercises require no unit participation and have no adverse impacts on unit combat readiness.

Adapting to Changing Roles and Missions.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of the Iraqi military, the potential military threat to the U.S. has dramatically changed. The military's roles and missions are changing to response to this new environment. The services have

all recognized their increased involvement in operations other than war. In this regard, MSCA can help build the characteristics required of a military that is attuned and responsive to the needs of local civilian governments. This civil-military interface will be of great benefit to the military as future roles and mission evolve more toward international peacekeeping and nation-building.

Following WWII, the military successes of the British in Malaya and the U.S. in the Philippines are excellent examples of the importance of the military role in nation-building. Both successes were founded on close cooperation between the military and the local governments. In these operations other than war (low-intensity conflicts), the military's role in direct combat was less important than its' domestic efforts aimed at winning the hearts and the minds of the population. To be effective in operations other than war, military leaders must be sensitive to the special needs and interworkings of civil government. Military support to domestic disaster relief provides the training environment to sensitize today's military forces to these special considerations. MSCA will improve the military's ability to foster civil-military cooperation and may simultaneously familiarize other federal agencies involved in humanitarian assistance with the military planning techniques (ends, ways, means) for achieving unity of effort.

The primary mission of the military is warfighting, however its role in disaster relief will never disappear. The military

leadership must continue to recognize the importance of MSCA and remain actively engaged in operational planning and interagency coordination. These are high visibility relief operations with tremendous media scrutiny and assured political interests. Specialized staff training and multiagency MSCA exercises will have no detrimental effects on unit readiness and the civil-military interaction may prove beneficial for international humanitarian assistance operations.

CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION

Military assistance for humanitarian and disaster relief missions is important for the welfare of the Nation. The U.S. military plays a major role in supporting operations other than war and domestic disaster relief in particular. The military has participated in these types of operations throughout the Nation's history and possesses many capabilities and attributes that make it extremely effective for emergency response.

Federal military support is always provided to state and local governments in conjunction with numerous other agencies. The federal government and the U.S. armed forces have taken many actions in the past five years to ensure support is provided quickly to meet the needs of disaster victims. New policy guidance and directives govern and guide the employment of federal troops in disaster relief efforts. FEMA, DOD, Secretary of the Army and CINCs all have planning, coordinating, training and operational responsibilities to ensure relief efforts are

provided in a timely and adequate manner. Military wartime missions, organizations and training can all be easily adapted to emergency relief operations with minimal specialty training.

Despite budget cutbacks, force reductions and the changing military threat, MSCA for domestic disaster relief is a mission growth area. The challenge for the CINCs right now is to recognize the potential for increased involvement and optimize the assets at their disposal to improve civil-military planning and coordination. Also, MSCA, as the interagency coordination and local government interface, provides a unique training opportunity for the growing involvement of U.S. military forces in international peacekeeping and nation-building.

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