

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

*Form Approved*  
OMB No. 0704-0188

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<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 16-05-2006			<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> FINAL		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b>	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> Combating Terrorism in the Regional Combatant Command - A Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) Approach					<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b>  Frank G. Penha, COL, US Army  Paper Advisor (if Any): N/A					<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>	
					<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>  Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207					<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b>					<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b>	
					<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.						
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> A paper submitted to the faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.						
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b> The United States contends that it is in a "Long War" against terrorism on a global scale and had made several governmental organizational changes to deal with the changing transnational nature of terrorism. These changes include creating the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice's National Joint Terrorism Task Force system led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Our regional combatant commands, however, continue to use an ad-hoc approach to finding and engaging terrorists and their organizations. The RCC is the logical focal point for integrating Interagency (IA), Intergovernmental Organization (IGO), and Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) coordination because it has a senior military commander with requisite authority over assigned forces, a robust planning and execution staff, and standing forces to respond to actionable intelligence. This paper addresses the need to adapt our current strategies to meet the changing nature of terrorism, examines the proposed Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) approach for improving interagency coordination, and concludes that creating a Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) is the best approach for synchronizing interagency capabilities for combating terrorism at the regional combatant command level.						
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Counterterrorism, JIATF-CT, Global War on Terrorism						
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>				<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b> Chairman, JMO Dept
<b>a. REPORT</b> UNCLASSIFIED	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b> UNCLASSIFIED	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b> UNCLASSIFIED	<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)</b> 401-841-3556			

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**Combating Terrorism in the Regional Combatant Command – A Joint Interagency Task  
Force (JIATF) Approach**

**by**

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

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**16 MAY 2006**

## **ABSTRACT**

The United States contends that it is in a “Long War” against terrorism on a global scale and had made several governmental organizational changes to deal with the changing transnational nature of terrorism. These changes include creating the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice’s National Joint Terrorism Task Force system led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Our regional combatant commands, however, continue to use an ad-hoc approach to finding and engaging terrorists and their organizations. The RCC is the logical focal point for integrating Interagency (IA), Intergovernmental Organization (IGO), and Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) coordination because it has a senior military commander with requisite authority over assigned forces, a robust planning and execution staff, and standing forces to respond to actionable intelligence. This paper addresses the need to adapt our current strategies to meet the changing nature of terrorism, examines the proposed Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) approach for improving interagency coordination, and concludes that creating a Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) is the best approach for synchronizing interagency capabilities for combating terrorism at the regional combatant command level.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Background	5
National Strategic Guidance	8
The Regional Combatant Command as the Tip of the Spear	9
The Joint Interagency Task Force Solution	11
The Argument for Joint Interagency Coordination Groups	15
Conclusion	16
Bibliography	20

*The attack took place on American soil, but it was an attack on the heart and soul of the civilized world. And the world has come together to fight a new and different war, the first, and we hope the only one, of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. A war against all those who seek to export terror, and a war against those governments that support or shelter them.*

– President George W. Bush, White House Press Conference, 11 OCT 01

## **INTRODUCTION**

To focus interagency capabilities at the regional combatant command level, commanders should consider a standing joint interagency task force approach. The September 11, 2001 attacks on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the failed attempt that ended in a plane crash in Pennsylvania forever changed the way that the United States would view and respond to terrorism. At the national level, the President created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Similarly, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has made several changes to harness the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to combat terrorism. We have also created national counterterrorism task forces that coordinate intelligence support and responses to terrorist threats. We have not made significant changes in our national military strategy and counterterrorism approach at the regional combatant command level. The United States contends that it is in a “Long War” against terrorism on a global scale; however, our regional combatant commands continue to use an ad-hoc approach to finding and engaging terrorists and their organizations.

The regional combatant command is a logical place to optimize the combined effects of national power because it is a forward deployed element that has regular interaction with the key enablers of United States national power. The forward presence and regional focus of the regional combatant command helps to overcome obstacles that other lead agencies of national power may have when dealing with the problem of transnational terrorism. One such lead agency is the US State Department (DOS), which is the focal point for US diplomatic relations.

The DOS may interact with foreign governments with the goal of creating a hostile international environment for terrorist organizations, but there is no means to directly interact with the terrorists themselves. The international political framework is not designed for interacting with terrorists for conflict resolution. The international political system recognizes the nation-state as the primary actor in international relations. While there are many other actors in this system such as non-governmental organizations and multinational corporations, the nation-state leader or representative is the focal point for international engagement and conflict resolution.

Transnational terrorists present a problem for the international political system for two main reasons: they do not qualify as nation-states, and they do not follow the rules of international law. There is no means to politically engage transnational terrorist organizations, and if there were such a means, the country team system of US political engagement is not regionally focused; therefore, the regional combatant command has the greatest potential to synergize our regional military capabilities with the international political framework to defeat terrorists as a threat to international peace and stability.

Although our national strategy for combating terrorism includes using the economic element of national power, the regional combatant command may not have a large amount of influence in this arena other than to create better trust and access through its ongoing interaction with governments in the region. In order to disrupt terrorists' finances, we have mainly used our diplomatic and economic instruments of national power to build international cooperation in freezing their financial assets worldwide. President Bush's policy was clearly stated in his November 7, 2001 statement to the Financial Crime Enforcement Network when he said that "We put the world's financial institutions on notice: If you do business with terrorists, if you support them or sponsor them, you will not do business with the United States."<sup>1</sup> While we have

not completely eliminated terrorist funding, this policy seems to be working effectively by measurement of numbers of terrorists identified and the value of frozen assets from those terrorists. The regional combatant command may not be able to assert the US economic element of national power, but again, its forward presence and interaction with foreign governments puts it in a unique position to regionally focus the other elements of national power to create the best conditions for success in this area.

Perhaps the most significant contribution the combatant command can make to combating terrorism is to fuse intelligence, law enforcement, and military capabilities within a particular geographic region. This is necessary because if we are to be successful, we must be able to disrupt terrorist attacks before they occur. This is problematic because we often must track individuals rather than military formations or organizations, and in many cases no crime is committed until the terrorist strikes. We have several governmental agencies, to include military organizations, that provide intelligence on a daily basis; however, information sharing among these organizations and with foreign governments on an individual or group basis can create problems with disseminating actionable information in a timely manner. We have made some progress in law enforcement in terms of international agreements to share intelligence and extradite wanted terrorists. Unfortunately, these efforts are only marginally effective because while they disrupt actions through arrests and deportations, they have resulted in few incarcerations and terrorists remain on the battlefield to plan and conduct attacks in the United States and elsewhere. The regional combatant command has the potential to fuse these capabilities in order to detect and disrupt terrorists before they can successfully attack their targets, and if necessary, confront terrorists in armed conflict to interdict terrorist personnel and logistics movements or retaliate in response to an attack.

“The intent of our national strategy for combating terrorism is to stop terrorist attacks against the United States, its citizens, its interests, and our friends and allies around the world and ultimately, to create an international environment inhospitable to terrorists and all who support them.”<sup>2</sup> In order to meet this intent, we must be able to synchronize joint and interagency capabilities at the regional combatant command level. Without specific governing guidance, we cannot expect to be successful; working within a “coalition of the willing” framework will not suffice. Over the years, ad hoc task forces and working groups have been formed on several occasions where interagency coordination is required. Unfortunately, we have had only limited success with these groups because the ad hoc nature of their organizational structure has typically limited their scope of operations and did not provide the requisite authority to break down the barriers of culture and distrust among the interagency resource providers.<sup>3</sup> Another limiting factor is the short-lived duration of their existence; they were organized for a specific purpose and disbanded once that purpose was achieved or abandoned.

It is time to provide our regional combatant commands with an interagency capability complete with interagency participation and cooperation, enduring focus, and requisite authority. This cannot be accomplished through an ad hoc group to address a specific threat of attack, nor can it be accomplished with a part-time coordination effort relying on the goodwill and generally common goals of the participants. Our national leaders have communicated the message that we are in a long war on terrorism, and that the scope of the war is global in nature. Our regional combatant commands would not have prosecuted a war with any other adversary without providing a means of unity of command or effort. Whatever system might have been chosen to facilitate unity of command or effort, one can reasonably argue that it would not have been a committee system.



The international community has made positive strides to organize for more effective counterterrorism effort, and the United States has made some sweeping changes to address protection against further homeland attacks, but we have not sufficiently addressed change at the regional combatant command as a first line of defense. The United Nations passed several resolutions, most notably United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1373, to better organize international efforts to combat terrorism<sup>4</sup>. In addition to specifying guidelines for combating terrorism, UNSC Resolution 1373 created the Counter-Terrorism Committee which was tasked to monitor international compliance with the mandatory requirements of the resolution.<sup>5</sup> The United States has centrally organized for combating terrorism; we created the Department of Homeland Security, National Counterterrorism Center, and FBI-sponsored Joint Terrorism Task Forces. Regional combatant commands are in the best position to synergize the elements of national power in any particular region outside the United States and should also consider organizational changes for combating terrorism. The Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) may be the best organizational solution for this challenge.

## **BACKGROUND: TERRORISM IS NOT A NEW PROBLEM**

While the United States recently increased its emphasis on combating terrorism due to the September 11, 2001 attacks, terrorist tactics themselves are not new to this country, nor are terrorist attacks a new phenomenon for the United States Government or the American people. Over the past half century, America regularly witnessed terrorist attacks against the international community in incidents ranging from hijackings, to kidnappings, bombings and executions. Beginning in the 1980s, the American experience with terrorism became more intimate as Americans increasingly became the target of terrorist attacks.

Before September 2001, combating terrorism was not a major national focus although we had ample experiences that would cause us to be concerned with protecting the United States and its citizens from this rising threat. During the Lebanese Civil War in 1983 and 1984, America experienced terrorist bombings at the US Embassy, US Embassy Annex, and US Marine Barracks in Beirut, killing hundreds of US citizens. On December 21, 1988, Pan Am Flight 103 was destroyed by terrorists as the aircraft was flying with over 200 passengers, mostly Americans, over Lockerbie, Scotland. On April 19, 1995, a truck bomb exploded in front of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, killing 168 people and wounding approximately 500 other innocents. In November 1995 and June 1996, two car bombs exploded in Saudi Arabia. One exploded at the Office of the Program Manager, Saudi Arabian National Guard (OPM/SANG) in Riyadh, and one at Khobar Towers, a military housing complex near Dhahran. These attacks killed 24 Americans and injured hundreds more. On August 7, 1998, American Embassies in the African cities of Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam were bombed with a death toll of 224 people and thousands more wounded. Finally, on October 12, 2000, a terrorist attack on the USS Cole in Yemen's Aden Harbor killed 17 sailors and wounded another 39. These incidents put America on its guard, but did not result in drastic changes in emphasis or processes at the national level.

The "9/11" attacks were the catalyst for national change because they were not remote events that happened in a foreign land. The attacks were personal to many Americans; ordinary citizens and national leaders alike. The attacks occurred in the United States, we witnessed the attacks live on national television, and the death toll was significantly higher than we had ever experienced in the past. The "9/11" attacks changed our national outlook on combating

terrorism because Americans would no-longer accept a passive strategy for defending against terrorists and terrorism.

While we can view our current proactive approach to combating terrorism through a positive lens, we have initially focused too narrowly on the Middle East and Al Qaeda. Because Usama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda were the perpetrators of the attack, our national and military response seems to focus, perhaps too narrowly, on terrorist organizations affiliated with the Middle East and Islamic fundamentalism. Despite the tendency to focus on Radical Islamists due to our preoccupation with Al Qaeda, the scope of terrorism extends far beyond Al Qaeda or any other single radical terrorist organization affiliated with a single geographic area or ideological cause.

There are several examples that show us why we should not focus on any single geographical area, terrorist organization, or ideological cause. In Western Europe, while the Irish Republican Army (IRA) formally ordered an end to their armed campaign, other terrorist organizations in Ireland continue to conduct attacks.<sup>6</sup> In Spain, the Euskadi ta Askatasuna (ETA) leftist group, initially thought to be responsible for the Madrid train bombings in March 2004, continues to operate although it has not recently conducted terrorist attacks. In Russia, Chechen rebels have staged several terrorist attacks against hospitals, government facilities, public transportation venues, and varied civilian gathering places, dating back to 1995. China also struggles with terrorism in their Xinjiang Province, where Tibetan separatists and Muslim Uighurs conduct sporadic attacks against the Chinese government and its people. Other examples of terrorist organizations operating throughout the world would be the Jemaah Islamiya in Indonesia, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, Aum Shinrikyo in Japan, the Armed Islamic Group (AIG) and Popular Front for the Liberation of

Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro (POLISARIO) in the African countries of Algiers and Western Sahara. In short, terrorism is a worldwide problem that cannot be solved by focusing on a single region, organization or ideology.

## **NATIONAL STRATEGIC GUIDANCE**

Terrorism may not be a new problem, but it has evolved over time and the United States has had to adapt its strategy in response to this evolution. The ease of transnational communication, commerce, and travel has enabled terrorists to take on a transnational nature and the benefits of an increasingly open, integrated and modernized world has allowed terrorist organizations to become multinational entities with access to sophisticated means of coordinating, financing, and executing their operations.<sup>7</sup> To combat this changing nature of terrorism, our current national strategy contained in the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism has a four-tenet approach: defeat terrorists and their organizations through relentless action; deny terrorists the sponsorship, support and sanctuary they need to survive; diminish the underlying conditions that promote the despair and destructive visions of political change that terrorists seek to exploit, and defend US citizens and interests at home and abroad.<sup>8</sup>

Because we realize that we are fighting an enemy with global reach, the 2006 National Security Strategy of the United States recognizes that we need the support and concerted action of our friends and allies. To that end, our strategy is to join with others and strengthen alliances to deny safe haven, financial support, and support and protection that certain nation-states have historically given to terrorists and terrorist organizations.<sup>9</sup> “In the short run, the fight involves using military force and other instruments of national power to kill or capture the terrorists, deny them safe haven or control of any nation; prevent them from gaining access to WMD; and cut off

their sources of support. In the long run, winning the war on terror means winning the battle of ideas, for it is ideas that can turn the disenchanted into murderers willing to kill innocent victims.”<sup>10</sup> Although written in 2004, the National Military Strategy of the United States provides complementary guidance that points our military organizations toward working with foreign militaries and agencies to establish favorable security conditions, deny safe havens in failing states or ungoverned regions, and diminish conditions that permit terrorism to flourish.<sup>11</sup>

### **THE REGIONAL COMBATANT COMMAND AS THE “TIP OF THE SPEAR”**

The Regional Combatant Command (RCC) is the logical place to synergize US efforts to combat terrorism on a regional basis. Within a theater, the geographic combatant command is the focal point for planning and implementing regional and theater military strategies that require Interagency (IA), Intergovernmental Organization (IGO), and Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) coordination.<sup>12</sup> The RCC has a senior military commander that is nominated by the President and confirmed by Congress, a standing planning and executing staff, standing forces to respond to actionable intelligence, and unlike individual State Department country teams, it has a regional focus. Under the auspices of Title 10 of the United States Code, the regional combatant commander has the inherent ability to employ forces, assign tasks, and designate military objectives in the region to achieve the national goals and direction set by the President and communicated through the Secretary of Defense.

The RCC Commander exercises authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics that are necessary to complete the mission. Many of these operational or training missions involve cooperation, coordination, or participatory interaction with foreign militaries. The State Department is the lead US foreign affairs agency; however,

the RCC Commander, subordinate commanders, and staffs routinely interact with foreign militaries and government officials. This interaction is often on a personal level which leads to an environment of increased mutual trust and confidence. The result is that the RCC generally complements the State Department's diplomacy efforts which facilitate all elements of national power by building political will and strengthening international cooperation for combating terrorism and working together for regional stability.<sup>13</sup>

RCCs also have doctrinal support for establishing Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs) that establish regular, timely, and collaborative working relationships between civilian and military operational planners. Composed of USG civilian and military experts accredited to the combatant commander and tailored to meet the requirements of a supported combatant commander, the purpose of the JIACG is to provide the combatant commander with the capability to collaborate at the operational level with other USG civilian agencies and departments.<sup>14</sup> This concept has not fully matured. It is a well-intentioned and proactive start to harnessing the capabilities of intergovernmental coordination; however, the intent of this paper is to suggest that regional combatant commands go one step further and create a JIATF for combating terrorism.

## **THE JOINT INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE SOLUTION**

Empirical evidence gained through exercises and operations of varying complexities strongly suggest that we need to find a better way to conduct interagency coordination. When training or conducting complex military operations, the most common organizational approach for command and control is the Joint Task Force (JTF). The JTF is a proven means commanding and controlling joint military forces; however, it is not optimized for interagency coordination.

JTFs typically synchronize operations and functions through task organized functional centers that report directly to the commander. The Joint Operations Center (JOC) is the principal staff element that has overall responsibility for synchronization and situational awareness. The JOC maintains general awareness of critical military functions and capabilities on a day-to-day basis as well as for specific operational actions. Interagency elements are not necessarily synchronized in time and purpose with the JTF, and there is no standing organization to provide that synchronization.

We should avoid the temptation to conduct interagency coordination for counterterrorism within the J-3 staff element of the RCC or JTF. The J-3 is already tasked with a myriad of tasks and is ill resourced to deal with the complex and persistent nature of terrorism. Adding this task to the J-3 will almost surely result in a fragmented scheme of resourcing and prioritizing counterterrorism coordination and operations. Terrorism has been named as a priority on several national strategy documents, indicating the emphasis and commitment of our senior leaders. A committee approach does not seem to be an appropriate and proactive means of achieving the guidance set forth in these documents.

Creating a Counter Terrorism JIATF will provide the RCC with a real time capability to coordinate between military, national, and international organizations, giving the RCC commander a means of integrating operational and interagency functions and facilitating operational and interagency communication and coordination.<sup>15</sup> Implied in our National Security Strategy and National Strategy for Combating Terrorism is the fact that we must be able to fuse our intelligence, law enforcement, economic, military, and home security efforts.<sup>16</sup> Many of these functions will not be under the direct purview of the RCC, but again, the RCC can facilitate the most effective employment of these capabilities from a forward deployed headquarters.

Since many of our efforts will involve law enforcement cooperation with other nations, we must also be able to effectively coordinate with host nations; they will determine what is permissible within their sovereign territory and will have final decision authority concerning organizations and methods of conducting counterterrorism operations within their borders. Creating a full-time task force that is formally endorsed, resourced with funding and personnel, and responsible to the RCC Commander will ensure that the RCC has the capability, flexibility, and authority to fuse US efforts to the maximum possible extent.

In November 2001, General Franks, USA, Commander, USCENTCOM, created a Joint Interagency Task Force – Counterterrorism (JIATF-CT) to coordinate counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan. This organization included representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Diplomatic Security Service, Customs Service, National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, Defense Human Intelligence Service, New York’s Joint Terrorism Task Force, and the Justice, Treasury, and State Departments. This JIATF achieved significant results, but lacked the resources to develop or shape a theater-level national-level interagency strategy.<sup>17</sup> The JIATF approach was discontinued not because of a lack of ability or inefficiency, but because of a lack of resources.

The FBI has also recognized the prudence of the interagency task force approach, bringing together the strengths of law enforcement, the Intelligence Community, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Energy, and Industry. Their method is to establish a Counterterrorism Watch that consolidates information concerning terrorist threats and passes that information to all appropriate agencies as well as the FBI’s National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF) and its 84 subordinate Joint Terrorist Task Forces (JTTFs). Using this methodology, the NJTTF and subordinate JTTFs fuse threat information and coordinate local responses to



those threats. This system comprises representatives from 35 government agencies representing the intelligence, law enforcement, diplomatic, defense, public safety, and homeland security communities. The FBI's NJTTF approach highlights what can be achieved when adequate resources are devoted to terrorism and formal partnerships are created between interagency organizations to harness the strengths of law enforcement, intelligence, and other federal agencies in order to respond quickly and efficiently to terrorist threats.<sup>18</sup>

Two positive examples of the benefits of the JIATF approach are the JIATFs East and West. The primary purpose of these organizations is to synchronize interagency efforts to disrupt drug production and smuggling activities and to disrupt and dismantle drug-related transnational threats. JIATF East comprises military and civilian representatives from the Joint Military Services, Coast Guard, FBI, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Customs and Treasury Departments, and liaison officers from Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. JIATF West comprises approximately 82 uniformed and civilian members of the Joint Military Services, Coast Guard, and representatives from the national intelligence community and U.S. federal law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement representatives include the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Together, JIATFs East and West activities have been directly responsible increasing the counterdrug capabilities of several partner nations and seizing and destroying hundreds of metric tons of illicit drugs.

Because the RCC faces the same terrorist threats we face in the United States and has the same interagency coordination concerns, it makes sense to investigate the possibility of using a JIATF approach to combating terrorism in RCC geographic areas of responsibility. As with the

USCENTCOM, FBI and Counterdrug JIATF models, we should acquire representatives within reason from every agency that collects and processes terrorist intelligence or responds to terrorist threats and place them into one formal organization. As with the NJTTF/JTTF concept, the key to success is melding personnel and capabilities from various agencies into a single focused unit.<sup>19</sup> We should provide this organization with the resources to link its interagency representatives to their parent organizations and give them the requisite authority that will allow them to break down the barriers of distrust and stovepiped individual agency methodologies. If we can successfully implement this concept, we will be able to more effectively fuse and disseminate information and coordinate proactive approaches to combating terrorism at the combatant command level.

## **THE ARGUMENT FOR JOINT INTERAGENCY COORDINATION GROUPS**

Some would argue that the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) is sufficient for synergizing interagency capabilities to combat terrorism at the RCC level. According to Joint Pub 3-08, the JIACG will be able to participate in deliberate, crisis, and transition planning as a multi-functional advisory element that represents civilian departments and agencies and facilitates information sharing across the interagency community.<sup>20</sup> This approach offers great improvement to the previous gap in coordination and leaves ample flexibility for interagency coordination that extends beyond the scope of combating terrorism.

Because this concept is codified in Joint doctrine, guidelines are available to generally conceptualize the structure the JIACG and show potential interactive relationships that will maximize the potential contributions of this type of organization at the RCC. Generally, the JIACG will form a core element for interagency coordination. It will have a civilian and military

Director/Deputy, and will include representatives from DOD, DOS, DOJ, Department of Transportation, Department of Homeland Security, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Through face to face and virtual communications, the JIACG will form habitual links with the RCC and JTF Commander and their staffs, Country Teams, Washington Agency Planners, and International or Regional Planners.<sup>21</sup> If the JIACG is properly resourced and follows the guidance set forth in Joint Pub 3-08, it would seem to be the best approach for coordinating interagency actions at the RCC for the purpose of combating terrorism.

The structure and interactive relationships outlined in Joint Pub 3-08 are excellent conceptual beginnings for improved interagency coordination at the RCC, but there is no glue to facilitate cohesiveness. The problem with the JIACG approach is that it fails to organize the interagency participants into a single focused unit under the direction of the RCC. While the participants may have the best intentions, their day to day priorities and activities are controlled by their parent organizations and they do not have a single focus on the RCC's efforts to combat terrorism. The RCC cannot effectively control the JIACG's output because there is no formal relationship that provides for day-to-day direction of the JIACG's personnel, priorities, and resources.

Because the RCC cannot effectively set priorities for the JIACG, nor manage its personnel and other resources, the potential still exists for distrust and limited information sharing among interagency organizations to fragment JIACG efforts and effectiveness. This is highlighted by the fact that very few RCC JIACGs have been resourced at this time; there is no forcing function that mandates interagency participation. While the JIACG improves the previously experienced gap in interagency coordination effectiveness, it still amounts to a near ad hoc organizational approach to synchronizing interagency capabilities. In short, to date the

JIACG conceptual approach has resulted in very little change in the formal manner of coordinating interagency efforts at the RCC.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, to focus interagency capabilities at the regional combatant command level, commanders should consider a standing joint interagency task force approach. The United States contends that it is in a “Long War” against terrorism on a global scale and had made several governmental organizational changes to include creating the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice’s National Joint Terrorism Task Force system led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. We have not invested the same thought and effort on improving the interagency fusion capabilities of the Regional Combatant Command, which is a logical place to synergize US efforts on a regional basis. Our regional combatant commands continue to use an ad-hoc approach to finding and engaging terrorists and their organizations.

While the September 11, 2001 attacks increased our emphasis on terrorism, we cannot claim that terrorism is a new or unfamiliar threat to the United States. Terrorism itself is not new, but the ease of transnational communication, commerce, and travel has enabled terrorists to take on a transnational nature and the benefits of an increasingly open, integrated and modernized world has allowed terrorist organizations to become multinational entities with access to sophisticated means of coordinating, financing, and executing their operations. As we adapt to this changing nature of terrorism, we should not allow our emotions to box us into an unnecessarily narrow focus on Radical Islamists. There are several examples that show us why we should not focus on any single geographical area, terrorist organization, or ideological cause. Establishing areas of special emphasis is certainly a prerogative of our national leaders, but

terrorism is a global threat. We should organize all RCCs to effectively harness the capabilities of interagency organization in a manner that will optimize the effects of all elements of national power in every geographic region.

Within a theater, the RCC is the focal point for planning and implementation of regional and theater military strategies that require Interagency (IA), Intergovernmental Organization (IGO), and Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) coordination. The RCC is uniquely suited for this role because it has a senior military commander with requisite authority over assigned forces, a robust planning and execution staff, and standing forces to respond to actionable intelligence. We should maximize the advantages of such a capable forward presence and focus our efforts on the RCC as our first line of defense for combating terrorism.

Creating a Counter Terrorism JIATF will provide the RCC with a real time capability to coordinate between military, national, and international organizations, giving the RCC commander a means of integrating operational and interagency functions and facilitating operational and interagency communication and coordination. As with the USCENCOM, FBI and Counterdrug JIATF models, we should acquire representatives within reason from every agency that collects and processes terrorist intelligence or responds to terrorist threats, and place them into one formal organization, possibly beginning with the JIACG conceptual structure and interactive relationships outlined in Joint Pub 3-08.

We must consider a more persistent and cohesive approach for combating terrorism, and a committee-style JIACG approach is not sufficient to significantly change RCC interagency coordination capabilities. Using a formal JIATF approach, RCCs will be able to effectively improve interagency coordination because there will be an authoritative relationship that provides for day-to-day direction of assigned interagency personnel, priorities, and resources.

## END NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> George W. Bush, “The President Announces Crackdown on Terrorist Financial Network,” *The White House, News and Policies, November 2001*, November 7, 2001; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011107-4.html>; Internet; accessed April 10, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. President, *National Security Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2003: 11

<sup>3</sup> Matthew F Bogdanos, “Joint Interagency Cooperation: The First Step,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* no. 37 (April 2005): 11.

<sup>4</sup> Ward, Curtis, A Ward, “Building Capacity to Combat International Terrorism: The Role of the United Nations,” *Journal of Conflict & Security Law* 8 no. 2 (October 2003): 294

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>6</sup> MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, “Irish Republican Army Group Profile,” *National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism Website*, April 30, 2006; available from <http://www.tkb.org/Group.jsp?groupID=55>; Internet; accessed May 12, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. President, *National Security Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. President, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006: 8.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *National Military Strategy*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004: 9.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations Vol I: Joint Pub 3-08*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006: xii.

<sup>13</sup> J. Cofer Black “Building an Effective Hemispheric Counterterrorism Strategy” *DISAM Journal of International Security Assistance Management*, 26 no.2 (Winter 2003/2004): 60.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Pub 3-08*, II-14.

<sup>15</sup> Michael G. Dana, “The JIATF Fusion Center: A Next-Generation Operations Cell for Consequence Management,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 84 no. 2 (February 2000): 39.

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<sup>17</sup> Bogdanos, "Joint Interagency Cooperation," 11.

<sup>18</sup> Larry A. Mefford, "FBI Infrastructure Awareness – Testimony Before the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Science, and Research and Development, and the Subcommittee on Infrastructure and Border Security of the Select Committee on Homeland Security," *Federal Bureau of Investigation, Congressional Testimony 2003*, September 4, 2003; available from <http://www.fbi.gov/congress/congress03/mefford090403.htm>; Internet; accessed May 10, 2006.

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<sup>20</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Pub 3-08*, II-14.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, II-21.

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