

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 10-05-2007		2. REPORT TYPE FINAL		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Can Interagency Cooperation Be Fixed?				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Jana A. Vavasseur Paper Advisor (if Any): Professor David Carrington				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution Statement A: Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES 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.					
14. ABSTRACT Recent struggles with stabilization and reconstruction in both Iraq and Afghanistan have forced the United States to take a harder look at these post-conventional conflict situations (the Phase IV and V) in order to figure out the root of our failures and fix it. That introspection has drawn many academics, politicians and military officers alike to examine interagency coordination for a solution. Although agreement on a solution seems distant, all agree that lack of interagency coordination must be addressed. This paper cites specifics of the interagency coordination problem and outlines some of the significant attempts at solutions to date. It analyzes those solution attempts, specifically where, how and to what degree they succeed and fail. The paper then uses that analysis to conclude that the Department of Defense, with its undeniable capacity and funding resources, would best serve itself and the other agencies by making several changes internal to the department. The paper groups these improvements into categories of education, organization and planning and describes how each proposed change would improve interagency coordination and thus better serve the nation.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Interagency, Department of Defense, Reform, S613, S3322, Goldwater-Nichols Act II					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 18	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Chairman, JMO Dept
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556

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CAN INTERAGENCY COORDINATION BE FIXED?

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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: _____

10 May 2007

Abstract

Can Interagency Coordination Be Fixed?

Recent struggles with stabilization and reconstruction in both Iraq and Afghanistan have forced the United States to take a harder look at these post-conventional conflict situations (the Phase IV and V) in order to figure out the root of our failures and fix it. That introspection has drawn many academics, politicians and military officers alike to examine interagency coordination for a solution. Although agreement on a solution seems distant, all agree that lack of interagency coordination must be addressed. This paper cites specifics of the interagency coordination problem and outlines some of the significant attempts at solutions to date. It analyzes those solution attempts, specifically where, how and to what degree they succeed and fail. The paper then uses that analysis to conclude that the Department of Defense, with its undeniable capacity and funding resources, would best serve itself and the other agencies by making several changes internal to the department. The paper groups these improvements into categories of education, organization and planning and describes how each proposed change would improve interagency coordination and thus better serve the nation.

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Introduction

Interagency coordination is dysfunctional in much the same way the military services were twenty years ago before the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. Interagency problems are cited extensively and significant time and effort is devoted to fixing those problems. The solutions, though, have not taken root and the problems have plagued many internal and international efforts of the US government for more than a generation. Most frustrating is the fact that under our current legislated system, the problems of interagency coordination are not fixable. There is no viable Goldwater-Nichols solution for the interagency process because the problem is too complex.

The Department of Defense (DOD) must look beyond the successes of becoming a joint force and mandate further internal reform to better address problems with interagency coordination. Specifically, DOD must address interagency education requirements, organization and planning requirements. This paper will first enumerate and analyze the biggest problems with interagency coordination. Then it will describe some of the government's major attempts to apply solutions to the problem. The third section will explain why previously described solutions were unsuccessful or only partially successful. Finally, the paper will outline proposals for Department-of-Defense-driven solution sets in the arenas of education, planning and organization.

Progression of Solutions

There are several changes that have been implemented since the end of World War II in order to improve the interagency process. The resources and potential within each agency of the government are enormous, but we fail to find a means to tap them efficiently. Four significant solutions pursued to date are:

- the formation of the National Security Council

- the issuance of National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 1
- NSPD 44—a narrowed focus on security, stability, transition and reconstruction
- and The Reconstruction and Stabilization Act of Civilian Management (S316.)

This list illustrates significant, high-level attempts at a long term solution to the conundrum of interagency coordination. By specifically exploring NSPD 44 and S316, discussion is narrowed to stabilization and reconstruction (SSTR.) Although the SSTR topic is currently high-profile, there is certainly more concern regarding interagency coordination than SSTR alone. Concentration on SSTR, however, helps to focus analysis and provides a boundary for the paper’s scope. Narrowing the field of vision to SSTR alone through NSPD 44 and S316 is not an attempt to oversimplify the interagency process and the challenges it presents, but it is meant to represent some of the most difficult issues.

The National Security Council (NSC) was established in 1947 under the National Security Act. It was to “reconcile diplomatic and military commitments and requirements.... The Council’s role is to foster collegiality among departments... (and provide) a means of controlling and managing competing departments.”¹ The NSC was the first structure implemented to enable interagency cooperation. Through the years, US Presidents have shaped and utilized that structure in different ways to suit their leadership style and administration’s needs.

NSPD 1 established President Bush’s system for running the National Security Council in March of 2001. It expanded the role of the Principle Coordination Committees (PCCs) which were commissioned “to provide a day-to-day forum for interagency

¹ Carafano, James J. “Herding Cats: Understanding Why Government Agencies Don’t Cooperate and How to Fix the Problem.” *Heritage Lectures*, no. 955, 26 July 06, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/> (accessed 24 April 2007).

coordination of national security policy.”² The PCCs were also organized under this directive into regional and functional divisions with State-Department-appointed leadership. NSPD 1 is precise, organized and directive, yet allows for expansion and situational flexibility.

NSPD 44 was issued in December 2005 “to empower the Secretary of State to improve coordination, planning, and implementation for reconstruction and stabilization assistance for foreign states and regions.”³ Recognizing that the necessary expertise and manpower for the job of reconstruction and stabilization *do* reside within the interagency structure, the Bush administration specifically issued NSPD 44 to provide further direction and empowerment. NSPD 44 has all the ingredients for success since it addresses many key issues most often identified as sources of downfall in SSTR efforts, including:

- improved civil-military coordination
- strengthened capacity to respond to crises from each agency
- collaboration among international and non-governmental partners
- and a common planning framework⁴

NSPD 44 is much more specific and directive in nature than NSPD 1 and appears to be a strong step in the right direction for a better interagency process with respect to SSTR.

Prior to and since NSPD 44, Senators Luger and Biden sponsored the “Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2007” (S613), which is significantly more specific on several issues of contention with SSTR. This bill was

² *Organization of the National Security Council System, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-1* (13 Feb 2001). <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-1.htm> (accessed 1 May 2007).

³ *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-44* (14 Dec 2005). <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44fs.html> (accessed 1 May 2007).

⁴ Ibid

originally introduced in 2004 and it finally passed through the Senate (only the Senate) in the 109th Congress in May 2006. It has been presented to both houses again in this, the 110th Congress. Its passage would significantly bolster NSPD 44. S613 states that the “armed forces have been burdened by having to undertake stabilization and reconstruction tasks”⁵ and that “an effective expert civilian response capability to carry out stabilization and reconstruction activities”⁶ is needed. Furthermore, it specifically demands:

- the strengthening of the civilian portion of civilian-military efforts
- the institution of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, appointed by the President and assuming the rank of Ambassador at Large
- the creation of a ready response corps of civilian experts
- the provision of adequate resources and a robust education program
- a new system of planning, organization, policies, education and training
- participation in exercises with the military and coordination of operational planning
- coordination of plans with the United Nations and NGOs
- compensation for deployed teams
- and appropriate promotion, incentives and benefits for assignment and service⁷

The direction of this bill is more thorough and decisive than any previous formal direction aimed at interagency performance improvement. It also outlines funding which is a big area of concern among interagency players. On the surface, Congress appears genuinely serious about enabling a functional interagency process, but most unfortunately, the opportunity for positive action has passed through more than two sessions of Congress.

⁵Senate, Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2007, 110th Cong, 1st sess, 2007, S 613 <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext> (accessed 6 May 2007).

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

Another failure in Congress is that of S2600, the Warner Bill, which was a bill to propose equalization of authorities to provide fiscal equity for all personnel assigned in Iraq and Afghanistan matching the incentives that the Department of State is empowered to provide.⁸ Indecision and inaction throughout Congress further compound interagency coordination difficulties. The lack of equity between agencies and the inability to correct even the most obvious of shortfalls causes dissention and destructive competition. Low morale and a defensive nature between agencies are fostered with what appears to be Congressional committee favoritism or indifference.

Why the Solutions Fall Short

Actually, these aforementioned solutions did work on some levels. There are three different levels to address: strategic, operational and tactical. Both the strategic and tactical levels have seen some success through the years. Between the two, however, there is an operational environment that is lost and confused in an interagency quagmire of diverse cultures, structures, experiences, histories, skill sets and personnel.⁹ To better identify and analyze success and failure, the solutions discussed above are again addressed below to outline their degree of success.

Strategically, the NSC is a good solution, as proven through the Cold War outcome.¹⁰ As Clausewitz wrote in the 19th century, war is an extension of politics by other means. Policy must match strategy, and the NSC, in varying ways under different presidents, fulfilled this role and continues to do so. It is not perfect, but it did prove to work.

⁸ Senate, A bill to equalize authorities to provide allowances, benefits, and gratuities to civilian personnel of the United States Government in Iraq and Afghanistan, 109th Cong, 2nd sess, 2006, S 2600 <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=s109-2600> (accessed 6 May 2007).

⁹ Carafano, James J. "Herding Cats: Understanding Why Government Agencies Don't Cooperate and How to Fix the Problem." *Heritage Lectures*, no. 955, 26 July 06, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/> (accessed 24 April 2007).

¹⁰ Ibid

On the tactical level, where operators on the ground must make real actions happen, coordination is most dependent on personal relationships and work ethic. On this “deck plate” or tactical level, successful interagency coordination is very much the norm¹¹ due to the pride and efforts of dedicated professionals, whether they are in or out of uniform. Success abounds at this level *despite* most obstacles--A true testament to the spirit of individuals or small teams and their incredible patriotism. The NSC does not necessarily enable tactical interagency success, but it does not hinder it, either.

In the operational realm, where planning--mapping an intentional course to a defined end-state--is the process, interagency coordination is severely lacking.¹² The NSC was designed to address a strategic level of coordination and it does so sufficiently. Though the NSC itself is not the solution to an operational shortfall, it is not the problem, either. The solution to a lack of interagency operational planning capability must lie elsewhere because the NSC simply does not address the operational level of interagency coordination problems.

NSPD 1, by definition, was written to coordinate “national security policy” with respect to interagency efforts.¹³ It is also written to address the strategic level of interagency coordination and that is what it does. NSPD 1 then also fails to offer a much-needed operational solution since it addresses the strategic level of interagency coordination.

NSPD 44 and S316, however, both specifically address operational planning and S316, in particular, is very specific in its direction to adopt operational planning practices across the interagency organization. The lead agency is defined as the Department of State and specific direction to coordinate with military planners in order to synchronize efforts is

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

¹³ *Organization of the National Security Council System, National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD-1* (13 Feb 2001). <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-1.htm> (accessed 1 May 2007).

strongly asserted.¹⁴ This specific Congressional direction remains stranded in legislative committees, though, where it has been for five years, and the operational portion of the interagency process remains crippled. S316 and S2600 may not be the solutions necessary for SSTR and they may prove to be unfit models for any follow-on efforts for an improved interagency process. For better or worse, though, this solution set is yet untested.

Examples of operational success do exist, but they are really examples of fortunate circumstance which more closely reflect the nature of tactical, personality-driven success that happened to occur at a higher rank. For example:

The Combined Civil Affairs Task Force, which assisted in the reconstruction of Kuwait after the Gulf War, was able to obtain interagency cooperation and establish subordinate interagency support based largely on personal relationships. Colonel Randall Elliot, USAR, who put the organization together, was also the senior analyst in the Near East Division of the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. He knew the US Ambassador-designate to Kuwait, Edward "Skip" Gnehm, and was able to recruit Major Andrew Natsios, USAR, whose civilian job was Director of United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance. Major Natsios brought Mr. Fred Cuny from INTERTEC, a contractor specializing in disaster relief, into the task force. Thus, USAID and its contractors were integrated into the operation based on these personal relationships.¹⁵

Although an outstanding story that emphasizes the power of personal relationships, the operational success here was not a result of sound interagency operational planning.

The Problem is not Fixable

There is a loud outcry found in articles and professional journals from both civilian and military authors to stretch "beyond Goldwater Nichols." Referring, of course, to the

¹⁴ Senate, Reconstruction and Stabilization Civilian Management Act of 2007, 110th Cong, 1st sess, 2007, S 613 <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext> (accessed 6 May 2007).

¹⁵ Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, ¹⁵ Interagency, Intergovernmental Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations Coordination During Joint Operations, Joint Publication (JP) 3-08, Vols I and II, (Washington, DC: CJCS, 17 March 2006), I-8,9 (accessed 6 May 2007)

Goldwater Nichols Act of 1986 which defined a new structure for the Department of Defense and mandated a joint effort among the services,¹⁶ the mantra of “going beyond Goldwater Nichols” is a desire for a similar jolting reform within the agency structure of the entire US Government. Efforts to go beyond Goldwater Nichols, as illustrated thus far, have produced meager results. Problems with interagency coordination have been scrupulously identified. Solutions have been proposed and attempted, most notably, those already discussed. The above pages attempt to pave the road to the conclusion that there is no solution to the interagency coordination problem within the realm of our current government structure. Valiant efforts have been attempted and failed because without complete destruction and re-creation of the entire agency system, the stovepipes that make up the interagency will never be knocked down.

Governmental agencies, non-governmental agencies and inter-governmental agencies (GOs, NGOs and IGOs) are most accurately described as stovepipes. Each agency has its own history, culture, processes, self-interests, and people. Breaking the concrete on any one of those requires a brute-force oversight that simply does not exist. The cultures and specific interests that make each of these agencies strong and enable their success and very existence also isolate them from one another. Cooperation for operational planning may be possible, but is so painstakingly difficult due to myriad differences that good plans rarely result. Communications between the different languages within each stovepipe must be constantly re-established by rotating members of each agency. Even when an agency is empowered by Congressional act or Presidential authority as the “lead agency” and even when cooperation is truly desired on all sides (or within all stovepipes,) significant cultural barriers or

¹⁶ *Goldwater Nichols Act, U.S. Code, Title 10, Subtitle A, Part I, Ch 5 (1986).*

personnel shortfalls or funding difficulties further complicate planning. Agreement on a desired end-state is another insurmountable hurdle.

The number of difficulties encountered with interagency operational planning is overwhelming—insurmountable even by Congressional edict or Presidential order. Without wiping the slate to rebuild the whole system, neither Congress nor the President can make the inherent differences that impede operational planning disappear. If there is no solution, then, where does one go from here?

A Prayer for the Department of Defense

A conclusion of “no solution” cannot be the end. The Department of Defense is inextricably caught in this unsolvable problem. The reality is that, solvable or not, this problem will not only remain, it will get worse. As time progresses, new conflicts will arise and they will be just as vexing as the problems of today, if not worse. Our solution must be one of significant introspection.

An oft-quoted prayer written by Reinhold Niehbur says, “God, give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.”¹⁷ In other words, realize what you can control and control it. The rest is chaff. The solution lies in our perspective on the problem—We must stop lamenting over that which the Department of Defense cannot control and fix what we can control.

What can the Department of Defense (DOD) accomplish internally to affect the interagency cooperation problem in a positive way? The possibilities are greater than we have realized. The more creative and aggressive we become with respect to tackling our end of the problem, the better we will become as an armed force and a nation. DOD is so self-involved in realizing Goldwater-Nichols that we may be too quick to point fingers at the

¹⁷ Niehbur, Reinhold, *Serenity Prayer*, 1943, http://skdesigns.com/internet/articles/prose/niebuhr/serenity_prayer/ (accessed 30 April 2007)

other agencies with respect to interagency coordination. Possible internal solutions are categorized here in three groups, all of which affect one another: education, organization and planning.

Education

Education is probably the most robustly developed of the three groups. This is due in large part to the thorough efforts of the Interagency Transformation, Education and Analysis Program (ITEA.) Established by the National Defense University, the ITEA is managed by the National Strategic Gaming Center. Their charter recognizes most of the problems described here and mandates action toward their solution with a focus on education.¹⁸ The ITEA leads aggressive educational initiatives to cast a net over all interagency customers. Action of their caliber is the kind of muscle needed to overcome interagency difficulties and that fact is recognized by the US Government. ITEA's role continues to grow through the latest Quadrennial Defense Review where they are tasked to

transform the National Defense University, the Department's premier educational institution, into a true National Security University....It will be tailored to support the educational needs of the broader U.S. national security profession. Participation from interagency partners will be increased and the curriculum will be reshaped in ways that are consistent with a unified US Government approach to national security missions, and greater interagency participation will be encouraged.¹⁹

In addition to continued support and intense promotion of ITEA's dedicated and professional work, education could be furthered throughout DOD in other ways:

1. Understanding the culture of other agencies is a critical enabler for coordination and planning. More other-agency exposure is needed to truly fulfill an interagency education. DOD should increase exchange opportunities by sending officers to other-agency

¹⁸ Interagency Transformation Education and Analysis (ITEA), "Charter," <http://www.ndu.edu/itea/>.

¹⁹ *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 6 Feb 2006, p. 79. <http://www.comw.org/qdr/qdr2006.pdf> (accessed 8 May 2007).

schools and programs. DOD could also entice other agencies to send more members from their ranks through professional defense education programs by offering funds or other incentives. Money and people are precious resources, and generosity with either is difficult. Sacrifice is necessary, though, and it is part of the courage needed to change what we can.

2. Interagency awareness, including an introduction to its many problems through professional reading and seminar discussion is a regular part of the Naval War College and other professional curricula throughout DOD. The meatier that education is, the better. Content should be carefully scrutinized. Specifically, classes on how to be an good liaison officer (LNO), or seminars about specifics of facilitating other-agency relationships would be granular lessons worth every minute of contact time used. Even though this may cross the education line into the realm of training, there are currently few opportunities for this “training” and it is desperately needed. Whether received at a War College or during orientation before taking over as an action officer on a staff, DOD must find a way to convey this skill to mid-grade officers who need it.

3. DOD should publish and disseminate other-agency (and IGO and NGO) “gouge” to provide a package of information on its background, mission, structure, eccentricities, important similarities and differences between itself and DOD and suggestions on how to best mesh their organization with that of DOD. All that information exists somewhere, but its presentation, organization and ready-availability do not necessarily exist.

4. Whether teaching a first grader to read, or a Naval Officer to be on a joint staff, education is better received when the audience is willing and best received when eager. Interagency education must be required, tracked and attached to an incentive or promotion. Saying that interagency intelligence is important constitutes talking the talk. DOD must

prove its importance and demand its emphasis to its members by walking the walk and incentivizing that education. Time inside the constraints of a 20 or 30 year career is short, as are resources, but this expanded education is a force multiplier that must be exploited.

These specific means of improving education must be codified either in addition to the Joint Professional Military Education requirement, or as an additional requirement altogether, to ensure, as President Bush might say, no officer is left behind. Current programs already skim the surface or better, but improvement in quantity, quality and size of the audience is vital. There are already curricula very-well suited to this and the Joint Doctrine (JP 3-08) is impressively concise, organized, understandable and thorough. It addresses organization, coordination, command relationships and other very useful specifics of the interagency.²⁰ Like the ITEA, JP 3-08 is an excellent tool. It should specifically be utilized by commanders for expanding professional education.

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.”²¹ The more education we have, the more sense Sun Tzu makes. We usually automatically think of education as helping us to “know” the enemy. The United States’ long-standing dilemma with interagency operations suggests that we have neglected to focus on the “know yourself” portion of Sun Tzu’s time-tested advice. It is time to focus on both sides of the conjunction without losing sight of either.

Organization

Just as the Department of Defense is finally coming to terms with a re-organization that is joint-centric, comments abound suggesting that there are even more effective means of

²⁰ Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, ²⁰ Interagency, Intergovernmental Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations Coordination During Joint Operations, Joint Publication (JP) 3-08, Vols I and II, (Washington, DC: CJCS, 17 March 2006), I-8,9, [http://bits-berlin.de/NRANEU/others/jp-doctrine/jp3_08v2\(96\).pdf](http://bits-berlin.de/NRANEU/others/jp-doctrine/jp3_08v2(96).pdf) (accessed 6 May 2007)

²¹ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Chapter III. “Attack by Strategem,” <http://www.kimsoft.com/polwar.htm> (accessed 2 May 2007)

organizing to better accommodate interagency coordination. Those comments have merit. The following addresses suggestions for organizational adjustment on the biggest scale within DOD as well as ideas on the personnel level.

In some areas, DOD is already organized well for optimal interagency coordination. US Southern Command's Joint Inter-Agency Task Force-South (JIATF-S) for counter-narcotics operations is "already used very effectively on a small scale."²² There have been many suggestions proposed from establishing more JIATFs to completely re-organizing the Unified Command Plan (UCP) with new boundaries to match those of State and foster cooperation vice competition.²³ There are myriad possibilities for improved command structure within DOD which would better facilitate interagency operations. DOD should explore those options as much as possible and make changes where suitable without delay.

The creation of a new Africa Combatant Command (AFRICOM) is an outstanding opportunity to step out of the current organizational box and strive for organizational innovation to best suit interagency cooperation and set a new standard. A new standard, after all, is exactly what is needed, especially to address the tangled political and humanitarian issues on the African continent. The Department of Defense may not have total control over the AFRICOM structural design, but it certainly has the preponderance of the decision-making opportunity. DOD cannot afford to waste a great opportunity for taking the lead in earnest improvement on the interagency scene.

At a more grass-roots level, DOD and the services, in their "organize, train and equip" role, should consider developing a Phase IV Professional (P4P.) The Phase IV

²² Carafano, James J. "Herding Cats: Understanding Why Government Agencies Don't Cooperate and How to Fix the Problem." *Heritage Lectures*, no. 955, 26 July 06, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/> (accessed 24 April 2007).

²³ Ibid

Professional community would be created by recruiting select transferees from conventional military operational specialties (MOS's) or career paths. Transfer from these career paths instead of initial accession would ensure a critical knowledge and experience base in the military organization. Once selected, individuals would spend a single short tour (18-24 months) in a joint training pipeline to include planning, other-agency exchanges to schools and similar educational opportunities. National Defense University's ITEA should be commissioned to develop the entire training pipeline. The community could also develop individuals with specific other-agency sub-specialties. The officers of this new community would then serve as DOD's agency resource specialists. The rest of their career would be devoted to leveraging the interagency process and its resources for decisive mission accomplishment. Operational planning teams and operational staffs would benefit considerably from such expertise. Such an initiative would also contribute considerably to fulfilling the requirements of DOD Directive 3000.05 which directs the Department of Defense to take all necessary action for "planning, training, and preparing to conduct and support stability operations."²⁴ Creating the P4P community is a means of pulling interagency power into the fold instead of waiting for "the interagency" to push it.

The Department of Defense is trying to march to the drum of transformation. "Transformation" is the buzz word of the quarter, but it is a good one in that no organization can remain stagnant and simply hope for continued success, or even a continued lack of failure. Transformation has been all-too-often thought of in terms of weapons and technology improvements for the battlefield in order to better facilitate the domination phase of conflict (the doctrinal "Phase III.") DOD needs to transform its ideas on transformation

²⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, "Military Support for Stabilization, Security, Transition and Reconstruction," Directive 3000.05, 28 November 2005, <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf> (accessed 3 May 2007)

and shift greater effort to reconstruction and stabilization (Phase IV) efforts as well as transition to civil authority (Phase V).

Planning

Operational planning capability is the biggest missing link in the interagency process. The Department of Defense is the only organization that really has a thorough and functional planning process. Although there is currently a draft US Government interagency planning process under further revision, it is not only months away from publication and implementation; it is limited to reconstruction and stabilization planning alone.²⁵ Even if this product reaches final form and is implemented, it does not solve a broad spectrum interagency planning dilemma. A planning process must be comprehensive enough to cover the full range of military operations (ROMO)²⁶ so that all situations, branches and contingencies can be properly addressed.

The planning and decision making process used by an agency is defined by its culture and core values. Attempting to force a change in culture is not only nearly impossible, but it takes a minimum time frame of about 20 years (a generation), usually more. “Each agency will continuously cultivate and create external sources of support and maneuver to protect its core values.”²⁷ As stated, DOD has a strong planning process, but it severely lacks desperately needed other-agency input. That input is *needed* at every step of the planning process starting with mission analysis. Even when invited, other agencies do not have the manpower to abdicate to a DOD planning staff. Without this input, DOD’s planning process,

²⁵ US Government Draft Planning Framework for Reconstruction, Stabilization, and Conflict Transformation, United States Joint Forces Command J7 Pamphlet, Version 1.0, Preface, p 4.

²⁶ Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Operations, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, (Washington, DC: CJCS, 17 September 2006), I-11, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp3_0.pdf (accessed 6 May 2007)

²⁷ Chairman, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, ²⁷ Interagency, Intergovernmental Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations Coordination During Joint Operations, Joint Publication (JP) 3-08, Vols I and II, (Washington, DC: CJCS, 17 March 2006), I-8,9, [http://bits-berlin.de/NRANEU/others/jp-doctrine/jp3_08v2\(96\).pdf](http://bits-berlin.de/NRANEU/others/jp-doctrine/jp3_08v2(96).pdf) (accessed 6 May 2007)

which is intended to cover the full range of military operations, becomes stunted. An operational planning team requires expertise across all instruments of national power in order to plan effectively across the entire range of military operation.

This dilemma brings us full-circle to some of our original problems, as well as back to the first two groups of solutions: education and organization. The joint force is placing a higher and higher emphasis on planning capability, starting with the development of planning skills and sub-specialties among its mid-grade officers. This is an important effort, but the product of this education and training should have a greater interagency process emphasis. While training their core of officer planners, services need to more aggressively pursue the enticement of other-agency participation. It is critical for the planning education process to start building these interagency relationships because with it will come a more inherent base knowledge of relationships and cultures and realms of possibility, to include the realities of the boundaries of possibility. Planners are taught to address and utilize all instruments of national power. This broader outlook is very logical, but it is impossible to bring about with such minimal sense of the diplomatic, informational and economic pieces of the puzzle and how they integrate. With best knowledge of the military, that is what planners naturally clutch. It is difficult to remain open-minded to a full range of options when no one in the room can answer any questions beyond those of military capability. The time constraints of planning force the team to continue with what they do know—the military solution.

In addition to an increased education and experience base, since other agencies do not have the capacity to fill positions on planning teams, the DOD-developed Phase IV Professional previously discussed would prove an absolutely priceless asset to an operational planning team. The possibility of broadening horizons in operational planning to better

leverage the interagency is critical. If DOD can crack the code on the lack of interagency cooperation with operational planning, the tactical players in theater will succeed with the help of the interagency process instead of despite it. More importantly, their successes will be productive in that they will actually be driven in coordination to the desired end-state.

Conclusion

The Joint Staff knows why interagency coordination does not occur. According to a Joint Staff memorandum, "in the past it has been extremely difficult to achieve coordinated interdepartmental planning" for two reasons: other agencies of the US government do not understand "systematic planning procedures," and each agency has its own approach to solving problems....²⁸

This is another good summary of reasoning regarding the shortfalls of interagency coordination. Its content alone is not surprising, but its context is since it is an excerpt from a Joint Staff memorandum written in 1961. As a strong and capable agency, the Department of Defense needs to take a significantly proactive approach to this 50-year-old problem before we find our grandchildren in uniform pointing out the shortfalls of the other agencies and struggling with an inability to coordinate. We must act before those grandchildren have to deal with a world-wide catastrophic consequence of our inaction today.

The Department of Defense did not become joint because it was the right thing to do. Jointness between the services was achieved begrudgingly over an entire generation under the direct pressure of an Act of Congress and with the prodding of many sticks to make every step happen. DOD must learn from that difficult journey and realize that self-motivation to improve the interagency from the inside-out is absolutely essential. DOD must be the catalyst because that is all we can control.

²⁸ Joint Staff draft memorandum, "Organizational Aspects of Special Operations," (20 March 1961): quoted in Tucker, David, "The RMA and the Interagency: Knowledge and Speed vs. Ignorance and Sloth?" *Parameters*, Autumn 2000, pp. 66-67

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