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Bringing the Interagency and Stability Operations Into the Planner's Realm

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.

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27 October 2010

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Abstract

Bringing the Interagency and Stability Operations Into the Planner's Realm

The State Department has been directed to coordinate and lead all U.S. Government stabilization and reconstruction efforts. Subsequently, the Defense Department added “stability operations” as a U.S. military core competency, equal in importance to combat operations. This paper examines stability operations planning doctrine to determine what interagency coordination authorities exist at the operational level, and analyzes the level of coordination necessary to encourage timely and effective planning. Stability operation planning requirements are reviewed and existing doctrine analyzed to determine if it provides a sufficiently detailed framework for operational level planning. Finally, the paper offers a critique of current stability operations planning policies and doctrine, recommending that interagency coordination be increased and Annex V modified to provide a relevant planning framework.

Introduction & Background

3rd ID transitioned to Phase IV SASO with no plan from higher headquarters. There was no guidance for restoring order in Baghdad, hiring government and essential service employees and ensuring that the judicial system was operational.

-Tom Ricks

Fiasco: The Military Adventure in Iraq

In the context of ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. Military has struggled with the planning and execution of post-conflict stability operations. While the circumstances and reasons surrounding these difficulties are still very much in debate, it is generally accepted the military did not have a sufficient plan for conducting stabilization operations. In an effort to remedy this problem and prevent its reoccurrence, President George W. Bush issued National Presidential Security Directive (NPSD)-44 tasking the Secretary of State with responsibility for coordinating and leading all U.S. Government stabilization and reconstruction planning and preparation efforts. NPSD-44 also tasked the Department of Defense (DOD) to integrate and harmonize its contingency plans, when appropriate, with the stabilization and reconstruction plans of the State Department.¹

Following the release of NPSD-44, Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 3000.05 directed that stability operations were a core military mission and on equal footing with combat operations.² Current joint doctrine indirectly links stability operations with interagency coordination yet inadequately integrates the interagency into stability operations planning and does not offer a sufficient planning framework for post-conflict stability operations support.

¹ *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization. National Security Presidential Directive /NPSD-44* (December 7, 2005), <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd-44.html> (accessed 8 September 2010), 2-5.

² U.S. Department of Defense, *Stability Operation*, Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 3000.05 (Washington, DC: DOD, 16 September 2009), <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf> (accessed 23 September 2010), 2.

Stability operations span the spectrum of operational planning phases.³ While all stability operations require significant interagency coordination and planning, post-conflict operations have proven exceptionally challenging and will be the focus of this paper. Drawing a close association between interagency coordination and post-conflict stability operations, this paper will analyze current doctrine regarding each. Joint doctrine will be examined to see if it allows for appropriate operational planning and coordination, capitalizes on recent lessons learned and provides a sufficient framework for operational planners. Based on the requirements for timely interagency coordination and thorough post-conflict stability operations planning, recommendations will be made regarding doctrinal changes to operational level planning and coordination.

An informed discussion of stability operations can occur after some critical definitions are understood. Stability operations are “military and civilian operations conducted across the spectrum from peace to conflict to establish or maintain order in states and regimes.”⁴ Interagency coordination is defined as coordination occurring between the Defense Department and other government agencies in order to achieve an objective.⁵

Discussion & Analysis

The above definitions clearly show stability operations necessitate the military working with other elements of national power. In fact, joint publications seldom mention stability operations without also referring to the interagency and other elements of national power. For example, when discussing interagency operations, JP 5-0: *Joint Operational Planning* pointedly states that stability operations require a significant amount of

³ U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operational Planning*, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 26 December 2006), IV-34.

⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *Guidance for Employment of the Force: 2008-2010(U)* (Washington DC: DOD, May 2008, 39. (Secret) Information extracted is unclassified.

⁵ U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 22 March 2010 with change 2), GL-17.

coordination with the interagency community in order to provide a coherent and harmonized effort.⁶ JP 3-0: *Joint Operations* directs that stability operations “should include conducting collaborative interagency planning to synchronize the civil-military effort, confirming the feasibility of pertinent military objectives and the military end state, and providing for adequate intelligence, an appropriate force mix, and other capabilities.”⁷

With the link between stability operations planning and interagency coordination well established, it is important to examine current policy to determine its effect on interagency coordination at the operational level.⁸ As highlighted by JP 3-08, interagency coordination is coordination among U.S Government departments. It follows then that authority for interagency coordination at the operational planning level should be clearly encouraged, if not mandated, by the Defense Department.

Combatant commanders are required to integrate stability operations tasks and considerations into all plans and strategies, aligning their efforts with the strategies, capabilities and plans of other U.S. Government agencies.⁹ This requirement implies operational level planners have the authority required to coordinate with the interagency. However, the same document cautions combatant commanders that planning support to other U.S. Government agencies must be done in coordination with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)).¹⁰ This is a daunting requirement for any planner and one that effectively thwarts timely coordination. Despite the inherently obvious need to

⁶U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operational Planning*, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 26 December 2006), II-8.

⁷ U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 22 March 2010 with change 2), V-4.

⁸ Hoekstra, Robert and Charles E. Tucker, Jr, “Adjusting to Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations,” *Prism* 1, no. 2 (March 2010), 23.

⁹ U.S. Department of Defense, *Stability Operation*, Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 3000.05 (Washington, DC: DoD, 16 September 2009), <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf> (accessed 23 September 2010), 14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

coordinate planning efforts, operational planners may feel compelled to plan stability operations without interagency input, hoping any difficulties can be ironed out once the plan is provided to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) for approval.

The *Guidance for Employment of the Force* (GEF) reinforces this stovepiped approach by stating: “Contingency plans, where possible, will identify *assumed contributions* and requested support of interagency partners while complying with *guidance issued in this document related to interagency input into DOD planning.*”¹¹ [emphasis added] The use of the phrase “assumed contributions” implies contingency plans do not require interagency coordination as much as the military’s assumption of what the interagency could provide and what would be needed in addition. Further, the GEF directs coordination only with those agencies that have members detailed to the command in question with any additional coordination facilitated by USD(P) and the Joint Staff.¹² Considering the well documented shortfalls of interagency representatives assigned to combatant commands, this severely restricts the population available to operational planners for coordination.¹³

It is only when one looks at JP 3-08 *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations Vol I*, in conjunction with JP 5-0 *Joint Operational Planning* and Annex V from *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume II Planning Formats* that requirements for interagency coordination become more clear. JP 3-08 states USD(P), supported by the CJCS,

¹¹ The GEF is a classified document published by SECDEF and USD(P) to provide planning guidance, requirements and strategic guidance. U.S. Department of Defense, *Guidance for Employment of the Force: 2008-2010(U)* (Washington DC: DoD, May 2008, 38-39. (Secret) Information extracted is unclassified.

¹² *Ibid.*, 119.

¹³ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Military Operations: Actions Needed to Improve DoD’s Stability Operations Approach and Enhance Interagency Planning* (Washington DC: GAO, 2007), 28.

is responsible for discussing stability operations strategy and policy with other U.S. Government departments and agencies and that “COCOMs are responsible for engaging relevant partners in coordination with USD(P) and CJCS.”¹⁴ What is not clear is what constitutes sufficient “coordination with USD(P) and CJCS” to allow the combatant commander to initiate interagency coordination. According to JP 3-08, Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACG) assigned to each combatant commander are intended to compliment the strategic coordination taking place at the National Security Council (NSC). This implies that before the interagency is consulted at the operational level, strategic level decision makers need a document from which to work. The approval of this document will serve to initiate coordination and planning at the operational level.

Doctrinally, the document that informs and represents interagency coordination at the Office of Secretary of Defense (OSD)/CJCS level is the Annex V: *Interagency Coordination*. According to JP 5-0, Annex V represents the combatant commander’s understanding of the situation, objectives and what capabilities will be needed from the interagency to support the mission.¹⁵ As part of the plan refinement process, the completed contingency plan with associated Annex V is presented by the combatant commander to the Secretary of Defense for approval. At that time, the combatant commander can request a “Joint Staff/ OSD Annex V Working Group” be established to coordinate interagency support.¹⁶ Considering the current deliberate planning maturation cycle is between 18 and 24 months, and the Joint

¹⁴ COCOM refers to combatant commanders. U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations Vol I*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-08 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 17 March 2006), I-6.

¹⁵ U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operational Planning*, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 26 December 2006), II-8.

¹⁶ U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume II Planning Formats*, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM) 3122.03B, (Washington, DC: CJCS, 28 February 2006), E-V-1.

Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) requires many plans with an Annex V, this process prevents timely and effective interagency coordination at the operational level.

Based on concerns from Congress, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conducted a number of congressionally directed investigations into stability and reconstruction planning and coordination. In May 2007 a GAO report found combatant commanders had not received the interagency planning support they needed because the Department of Defense had not provided guidance required to integrate non-DOD organizations into the planning process. Furthermore, the same report also stated that “DOD practices inhibit the appropriate sharing of planning information with non-DOD organizations.”¹⁷ The GAO found combatant commander’s JIACGs served primarily as liaisons and while they offered advice, they were not uniformly engaged in planning. In part, they blamed this on the fact that “DOD does not have a process in place to facilitate the sharing of planning information with non-DOD agencies, when appropriate, early in the planning process without specific approval from the Secretary of Defense.”¹⁸ According to the GAO this hierarchical approach limited interagency input into military plans at all levels.

A November 2007 GAO report titled *Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Are Needed to Develop a Planning and Coordination Framework and Establish the Civilian Reserve Corps* included a Defense Department rebuttal to the accusation that their stovepiped planning process prevented timely interagency coordination:

DOD officials stated that DOD’s policy is not to share DOD contingency plans with agencies or offices outside DOD unless directed to do so by the Secretary of Defense, who determines their need to know. However, these officials also noted DOD’s planning policies and procedures state that a Combatant Commander, with Secretary of Defense’s approval, may work in

¹⁷ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Military Operations: Actions Needed to Improve DoD’s Stability Operations Approach and Enhance Interagency Planning* (Washington DC: GAO, 2007), 5.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

coordination with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Joint Staff to seek input on plan development from other U.S. government agencies.¹⁹

By 2009 the situation, from the perspective of the Defense Department's interagency partners, had not improved and a third GAO report noted near universal agreement from all organizations that more interagency planning coordination was needed.²⁰

Whether for reasons of security or organizational politics, it is evident the interagency coordination process is confusing and there are considerable constraints within Department of Defense regarding interagency coordination. The inexorable link between this coordination and stability operations leads one to conclude that planning for stability operations, although a core military mission, will be neither timely nor complete. A recent article lamented "the planning community finally realized why integrated political-military planning in the government was so abysmal: It was always treated as an afterthought.... Ironically, we no sooner learned that lesson than we turned around and violated it again with regard to Phase 4 planning and execution in Operation Iraqi Freedom."²¹ Those who blame the non-military interagency partners for their lack of planning resources need first acknowledge the organizational obstacles erected by the Department of Defense that stymie an already challenging coordination process.

Setting aside the lack of clarity regarding coordination authority, the next step is to determine if joint doctrine provides a sufficient operational level framework to guide stability

¹⁹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Stabilization and Reconstruction: Actions Are Needed to Develop a Planning and Coordination Framework and Establish the Civilian Reserve Corps* (Washington DC: GAO, 2007), 19.

²⁰ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Interagency Collaboration: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight of National Security Strategies, Organizations, Workforce, and Information Sharing* (Washington DC: GAO, 2009), 21-22.

²¹ Phase IV refers to the "Stability" phase in the operational phrases planning framework. T.C Greenwood et al., "War planning for wicked problems: Where joint doctrine fails," *Armed Forces Journal*, December, 2009, <http://www.afji.com/2009/12/4252237/> (accessed 6 September 2010).

operations planning. However, before analyzing current doctrine it is useful to determine what the planning requirements actually are. Historical case studies reveal two pertinent observations.²² 1.) Detailed, long term planning involving all interagency partners was essential to success and sped the transition to local civil authority. 2.) It was ideal for the military to approach post-conflict operations with a pre-planned detailed list of post-crisis tasks and responsibilities. These findings should surprise no one and are reinforced by joint doctrine.

JP 3-0 *Joint Operations* was updated following the publication of DODI 3000.05 and is prescriptive regarding the sort of tasks the military can expect to conduct in stability operations. “Of particular importance will be CMO; initially conducted to *secure and safeguard the populace, reestablishing civil law and order, protect or rebuild key infrastructure, and restore public services*. U.S. military forces should be prepared to lead the activities necessary to accomplish these tasks.”²³[emphasis added]

Synthesizing doctrine and the case studies, it is clear any effective planning framework for stability operations must include interagency input, be detailed and planned well in advance. Furthermore, this detailed planning should provide specific tasks and responsibilities for non-security related missions such as establishing civil authority, rebuilding key infrastructure and restoring public services. Because these tasks are outside the military’s traditional area of expertise, coordination with interagency experts becomes all the more important. There are two joint documents that specifically provide planning guidance for stability operations requiring interagency coordination: JP 3-07 *Stability*

²²Conrad C. Crane, “Phase IV Operations: Where Wars Are Really Won,” *Military Review*, May-June 2005, 33.

²³ CMO refers to Civil Military Operations. U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 22 March 2010 with change 2), V-25.

Operations (first draft), and Annex V: *Interagency Coordination* contained in JOPES volume 2. Each will be examined from an operational perspective in the context of identified requirements for a stability operation planning framework.

From the outset, JP 3-07 seems to limit the scope of military stability operations to primarily that of security. After noting the State Department has the lead for stability operations, JP 3-07 states “the *primary military contribution to stabilization is the provision of the security* on which stability can be built, thus creating a platform for economic and political progress.”²⁴ [emphasis added] The draft publication also introduces the “golden hour”, defined as the critical period when the military transitions from sustained combat operations to stability operations, and warns that plans must address this period in great detail so momentum is not lost. JP 3-07 further notes that during this period “U.S. military forces should be prepared to lead the activities necessary to accomplish these tasks when indigenous civil, USG, multinational or international capacity does not exist.”²⁵

The limited framework provided by JP 3-07 *Stability Operations* consists of five tasks: Establish Civil Security; Establish Civil Control; Restore Essential Service; Support to Governance; Support to Economic and Infrastructure development. However, when it comes to listing detailed military considerations under each of the essential stability tasks, JP 3-07 provides little in way of substance and recommends the commander coordinate with other agencies of the U.S. Government. In short, DOD’s authoritative document for stability operations makes a convincing case for a detailed planning framework yet fails to provide one, forcing the operational planner to search for another doctrinal source for planning.

²⁴ U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Stability Operations*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-07 (First Draft) (Washington, DC: CJCS, 25 November 2009), I-1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I-8,13.

Having established the link between interagency coordination and stability operations planning, Annex V: *Interagency Coordination* from JOPES volume 2 is another joint document that could provide a stability operations planning framework. Currently, Annex V highlights the combatant commander's perception of the situation and requests for interagency support. The annex contains three appendices: Humanitarian, Economic and Political/ Diplomatic. While these appendices can be roughly correlated to some of Department of State's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) stability sectors, they certainly do not cover all aspects of a stability operation.²⁶ A cursory glance shows these appendix formats, each less than a page and a half, are designed to highlight the capabilities the combatant commander believes he will need to perform his mission. They do not provide a planning framework based on recent stability operations experience and serve as little use for the operational planner. A note at the top of each appendix recommends inclusion of some information from Annex V so the NSC can use the appendix as a "stand-alone planning guide."²⁷ This implies Annex V will not result in operational input to the tactical commanders, but instead serve as a vehicle for strategic level discussion. As currently designed, Annex V provides no useful framework for the operational planner and does not provide doctrine for simultaneous and synchronized planning of stability operations.

Despite the recent addition of stability operations as a U.S. military core competency and the JP 3-0 statement that "JFCs must integrate and synchronize stability operations with

²⁶ S/CRS is tasked by NPSD-44 as the lead USG coordinator for stability operations. U.S Department of State, *Post Conflict Reconstruction Essential Tasks* (Washington, DC: Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, April 2005), i-ii.

²⁷ U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume II Planning Formats*, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM) 3122.03B (Washington, DC: CJCS, 28 February 2006), E-V-5.

offensive and defensive operations within each phase of the campaign or operation,”²⁸ joint doctrine does not provide operational planners with a suitable planning framework. Without a detailed, multidisciplinary framework based on recent lessons learned, operational planners lack the tools to successfully plan something as unfamiliar as post-conflict stability operations.

Recommendations

The requirement for stability operation planning to be conducted simultaneously with offensive and defensive operations is well established in joint doctrine. With this requirement; however, comes the fact that the Department of State is the U.S. Government lead for stability operations and the Department of Defense is tasked with a supporting role. This serves as tacit acknowledgement that stability operations are something the military is not well equipped to perform independent of interagency support. Due to the non-linear nature of post-conflict stability operations, the military must plan to implement stability requirements across the S/CRS stability sectors until the security environment allows non-DOD agencies to assume the lead. In order for transition to non-DOD agencies to be conducted as quickly and effectively as possible, military operational planners need two things. First, planners need to have early and enduring access to interagency expertise in order to determine tactical tasks and assessment tools needed to accomplish stability responsibilities. Second, a detailed stability operations planning framework based on recent lessons from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Currently, JP 3-07 *Stability Operations* cedes interagency coordination initiative to the Interagency Management System (IMS). The IMS is a series of interagency elements

²⁸JFC refers to the Joint Force Commander. U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 (Washington, DC: CJCS, 22 March 2010 with change 2), xxi.

that are activated incrementally when certain “triggers” are reached with the purpose of providing a whole-of-government process in response to a specific international crisis. The IMS is designed as a crisis response mechanism and not available for a day-to-day planning and coordination. JP 3-07 acknowledges IMS has never been activated and states: “Though the IMS shows promise, there is no *single process model that describes integrated planning between military and civilian agencies of the USG.*”²⁹[emphasis added] This is a damning admission. Without a process for integrated planning between the U.S. Military and its interagency partners the Defense Department will continue with the status quo, a posture that has been shown by the GAO to prevent early and thorough interagency coordination and planning.

To rectify this well identified shortcoming the Defense Department should make some fundamental changes in the way it provides strategic guidance to combatant commanders. The GEF originates with the Secretary of Defense and provides strategic guidance to military commanders and planners. While providing strategic assumptions and end states, the GEF must also provide specific guidance necessary for early interagency coordination. By highlighting policy concerns and hot-button issues up front, the GEF can clear the way for timely and thorough operational level planning. The GEF is updated every two years, allowing policy makers to modify or change guidance based on changing political and resourcing environment. Specifically stated under the GEF’s “Interagency” sub-heading should be guidance encouraging interagency coordination, reminding all concerned that such coordination is pre-decisional until reviewed and approved at the NSC level. By permitting

²⁹ USG refers to the United States Government. U.S. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Stability Operations*, Joint Publication (JP) 3-07 (First Draft) (Washington, DC: CJCS, 25 November 2009), II-15-16.

early coordination, policy makers will be presented with a more complete plan containing distinct options and agency-lead transition points. This plan will have the benefit of being generated at the operational level and will therefore require less work to translate into missions and tasks for the tactical commanders.

Once interagency coordination is encouraged to flourish at the operational level, Annex V can assume the role of informing the strategic level of the interagency coordination that has been conducted. This will provide integrated interagency insight regarding required resources as well as anticipated transition criteria between agency partners. Annex V can fill the current doctrinal void by providing a detailed planning framework and linking agency planners at the lowest operational level where interagency integration currently exists – that of the combatant commander. A detailed Annex V generated at this level would provide the framework for tactical requirements while incorporating input and expertise of the interagency. Once vetted and approved at the strategic level, the Annex V would serve as the operational template for integrating interagency resources in a unity-of-effort approach to stability operations.

In its current form, Annex V does not represent a dialogue between agencies. It is a military monologue that spells out the perceived situation and end states and requests the interagency support anticipated by a combatant commander. Presented at the strategic level at the end of a contingency operation planning cycle, the Annex V is then subject to strategic level planning where it cannot produce a timely product that can easily be translated into tactical actions. This process removes operational planners from planning a core military mission that is doctrinally intended to occur, simultaneously and by phase, with offensive and defense planning. The results of this sequential strategic level planning are injected into

the contingency plan after it is complete and without having been synchronized with the rest of the plan. Lacking the interagency context in which the plan was generated, operational planners are hard pressed to successfully integrate and synchronize approved stability operation plans. Equally important, by not being part of the process planners may not recognize when stability sector assessments are indicating critical decision point and are thus hindered in their ability to implement the plan and provide direction to tactical commanders.

To provide operational level commanders with the planning framework needed to address the interagency complexities of stability operations, Annex V should be modified. The intent of Annex V should be changed to reflect a dialogue between the U.S. Military and its interagency partners. Annex V appendices could reflect S/CRS stability sectors with each appendix providing detailed planning steps and considerations across a single sector. Fortunately, the detailed doctrine for these steps currently exists in the Army's FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*. Written prior to JP 3-07, FM 3-07 uses the same military stability tasks and associates them with the S/CRS stability sectors. However, FM 3-07 goes into greater detail by breaking each of the primary stability tasks into categories with sub-tasks. It identifies those categories, usually security related, where the military will retain primary responsibility. It also highlights those categories where civilian agencies have responsibility, but which the military must be prepared to execute. For example, under the primary task of "Establish Civil Control" resides the category of "Establish Interim Criminal Justice System" with one of the sub-tasks being "Establish mechanisms to review the legality of detentions and minor cases to minimize pretrial detention."³⁰ These categories and sub-tasks, based on recent lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan, provide operational planners a framework to

³⁰ U.S. Army, *Stability Operations*, Field Manual (FM) 3-07 (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 6 October 2008), 3-6.

guide their coordination with the interagency and create a relevant stability operations plan for the tactical commanders.

By adopting this format for Annex V, each stability sector would have its own appendix that could be referenced as appropriate. Post-conflict stability operations, the most complex and difficult, would require all appendices to be used while Phase Zero theater campaign planning could reference them individually. This detailed framework would provide a valuable reference and stepping-off point for conversations with non-DOD members of the interagency, resulting in a more comprehensive and integrated plan for strategic level discussion and approval. Having been engaged throughout the planning cycle, operational planners would understand the integrated nature of the plan and could quickly modify and translate it into tactical tasks for subordinate commanders.

Counter Argument

Some would argue difficulties in stability operation do not stem from military doctrinal shortfalls, but instead from resource and planning culture deficiencies within non-DOD interagency partners. Furthermore, if the U.S. military makes doctrinal changes that allow it to address operations across the stability sectors, it would remove the impetus for its interagency partners to fulfill responsibilities implied within NPSD-44. The GEF supports this perspective and restricts access with the interagency because other departments and agencies “only have the capacity to support development of a limited number of DOD plans.”³¹ In addition, the GEF requires that DOD “speaks with a unified voice in exchanges with interagency partners” to allow the department to “better balance competing global

³¹ U.S. Department of Defense, *Guidance for Employment of the Force: 2008-2010(U)*, (Washington DC: DoD, May 2008, 119. (Secret) Information extracted is unclassified.

requirements”.³² Stated another way, if DOD develops the planning framework that allows it to perform as the lead agency, it will become the de-facto lead for stability operations. In short, the more DOD says it can do, the more it will end up doing and this mission creep will occur at the expense of other DOD priorities.

While protecting other agencies from excessive coordination may be noble, it does not send the organizational demand signals needed to initiate change. By discouraging interagency participation in operational planning, DOD encourages the status quo and prevents interagency partners from realizing the need to adjust their focus. Furthermore, if two organizational cultures do not mesh as well as required – more interaction is needed to improve relationships, not less. Exposing leaders and planners in all agencies to the capabilities and cultures of their partners will eventually result in an increase of effectiveness. The initial confusion and frustration that accompanies interagency coordination would be a symptom of organizational learning and should be accepted as a part of the learning process that leads to improvement.

The concern that developing a detailed military planning framework would discourage other agencies from fulfilling their stability operations requirements may be savvy organizational politics, but it is irresponsible in the context of contingency planning. Until interagency capacity exists across the stability spectrum, the military must be prepared to conduct those operations; this operational imperative requires a relevant planning framework. Ideally, as the non-DOD partners build operational capacity the military will be required to perform fewer non-security stability functions.

³² Ibid., 118.

Conclusion

*To a conscientious commander, time is the most vital factor in his planning.
By proper foresight and correct preliminary action, he knows he can conserve
the most precious elements he controls, the lives of his men.*

*-General Mathew B. Ridgway
The Korean War*

Time is a critical factor in conflict and the failure to pursue mechanisms that optimize time jeopardize a commander's efforts to plan and may well result in an increased cost in terms of lives and national treasure. In post-conflict stability operations, current Department of Defense doctrine and policies do not allow for timely and effective planning at the operational level. Through more detailed strategic guidance and removal of hierarchical interagency coordination constraints, operational level commanders and planners will be better positioned to plan accordingly. By adopting a detailed doctrinal planning framework for stability operations, operational commanders and planners will have a tool based on current lessons learned that facilitates timely, thorough planning. Incorporating these two recommendations will serve to balance the factor of time in favor of the commander, allowing for well integrated and synchronized plans and resulting in saving lives and treasure. The U.S. military cannot avoid the imperative to establish relevant and effective stability operation planning doctrine. It must take the necessary steps to address the problems identified in fulfilling its newest core military competency.

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