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**COMBAT SEARCH AND RESCUE (CSAR):
Time to find a real fix**

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

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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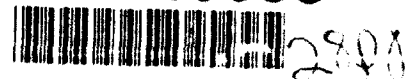
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ABSTRACT of

COMBAT SEARCH AND RESCUE: . TIME TO FIND A REAL FIX

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This paper will discuss the history of Combat Search and Rescue, the current doctrine and capabilities provided the warfare commander, and alternative solutions to provide a real fix to this dilemma for the operational commander.

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GLOSSARY

AAA	Anti-aircraft Artillery
CinC	Commander in Chief
CONUS	Continental United States
CSAR	Combat Search and Rescue
CVBG	Carrier Battle Group
JCSAR	Joint Combat Search and Rescue
JFC	Joint Force Commander
JRCC	Joint Rescue Command Center
JSOC	Joint Special Operations Command
MAGTF	Marine Corp Air Ground Task Force
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
NVG	Night Vision Goggles
OPCON	Operational Control
PLS	Personnel Location System
RCC	Rescue Coordination Center
SAM	Surface-to-Air Missile
SAR	Search and Rescue
SARTF	Search and Rescue Task Force
SERE	Survival, Escape, Resistance, and Evasion
SOC	Special Operations Command
SOF	Special Operations Forces
TAF	Tactical Air Forces
TRAP	Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel
UNAAF	Unified Action Armed Forces
USAF	United States Air Force
USCG	United States Coast Guard

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF COMBAT SEARCH AND RESCUE

Combat Search and Rescue is a fairly recent addition to our war fighting capabilities. It was not until the Second World War that Search and Rescue came to the forefront as a necessary war fighting mission. In the hectic first months of the "Battle of Britain", the Royal Air Force lost over a quarter of its trained pilots, mostly over the English channel.¹ The loss of these highly trained aircrew severely taxed the air defense capability of the British against the German Luftwaffe. Had these losses continued, Britain may have lost the war before the United States had intervened. Search and Rescue became a national priority and the first joint combat rescue organization was established between the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy. Immediately the success rate of recovering downed aircrew improved and continued throughout the war. The birth of Search and Rescue was at hand and the United States was soon to follow in developing this operational capability. Improvements were made throughout the war in equipment, training, and doctrine. By the end of the Second World War, the United States had a very sound Search and Rescue capability, but this was not to last. After WW II the military was greatly down sized and one of the first missions to fall by the wayside was Search and Rescue. Mainly because there is a perception that there is little peacetime requirement in maintaining the mission of Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR). Why spend valuable training and equipment dollars in a mission that may never be used, or so it was thought. The United States soon found itself in Korea ineptly prepared to conduct CSAR. The establishment of the Air Rescue Service within the Army and advancements in the Navy, both in equipment and capabilities led to many success stories

throughout the Korean conflict. But again, after the Korean conflict was over, the CSAR mission was forgotten.

In Vietnam, technological advancements in warfare with the addition of surface-to-air missiles (SAM) and concentrated antiaircraft artillery (AAA) greatly complicated the ill prepared CSAR capabilities. During the Vietnam conflict, 1.4 rescue aircraft and 1.8 rescue aircrew were lost for each successful overland rescue.² This is totally unacceptable for any warfare commander. The Navy lost 109 aircraft during Vietnam CSAR operations, 27 were helicopter and 82 were supporting fixed-wing aircraft. Over 75 percent of the fixed-wing aircraft were lost to ground fire from either small arms fire or antiaircraft artillery (AAA).³

The "orphan" mission of Combat Search and Rescue always becomes a primary concern to the operational commander during times of hostilities. Why does the United States military go to such great lengths to try and recover a downed airman?

- 1) The US has the basic desire to preserve human life, especially if it is a comrade.
- 2) There has been a considerable investment in training that is reusable as long as the individual is recovered
- 3) The capture of an aircrew could lead to propaganda (as it did in Vietnam) and possibly compromise our intelligence, intentions, and capabilities.⁴

Even during "Desert Storm" the CENTCOM commander found it difficult to implement a joint rescue organization based on individual Service limitations. The United States military has a fifty plus year history of being unprepared to conduct the mission of CSAR and for the operational commanders of the future it is time to find a real fix.

CHAPTER II

SERVICE DOCTRINE AND CAPABILITIES

In previous years, the primary publications that governed standardized tactics, techniques, and procedures were developed and maintained by the individual Service doctrines. Today, after the Goldwater-Nichols DOD reorganization act of 1986, the military has been required to incorporate individual doctrines into a single joint publication to "enhance the combat effectiveness of US forces." By developing universal principles, guidelines, and a working framework, duplication of efforts and voids in Service doctrine could be identified and corrected under this new system. These new procedures should guarantee *unity of effort*, standardization, and identify responsibilities of forces under the Unified or Specified commanders. Recently published, the Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), prescribes how joint force commanders (JFCs) should plan and conduct CSAR operations. Although this joint CSAR doctrine is new, it appears to contradict all the Goldwater-Nichols principles and continues a "business as usual" approach to conducting a joint CSAR operation.

This chapter will look at this new doctrine, analyze what each Service's current capabilities are, and how they support or conflict with the joint publication system. Joint doctrine should: establish "tactics, technique, and procedures for directing, planning, and executing joint military operations."⁵ Particular attention will be focused on the ability of this doctrine to meet the principles of unity of effort, centralized direction, interoperability, while reducing duplication of effort and resource allocation mismanagement.

The doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), Joint Test pub 3-50.2 states:

Each service is responsible for providing forces capable of performing CSAR in support of its own operations, consistent with its assigned functions. In so doing, each service should take into account the availability and capability of CSAR forces of other services, including the US Coast Guard (USCG).

Service component members of a joint force should participate as soon as possible in the operation of the joint rescue coordination center (JRCC) and provide sufficient qualified personnel to ensure adequate and equitable manning of the center.⁶

This is a very contradicting statement to be coming from a document based on jointness. "Each Service is responsible to support it's own CSAR operations" and at the same time provide manpower to operate the JRCC. This first sentence in the joint CSAR publication is counter to the principle of unified action and allows for the misallocation of resources and the duplication of effort. Why is the JRCC necessary if each Service is tasked to recover it's own aircrew? This is just one of the gray areas in this the "latest and greatest" doctrine which alleges to provide guidance to the CinC and his staff.

The joint CSAR doctrine goes on to address some of the deficiencies identified on the battlefield today that require changes in the way the United States military historically conducted CSAR.

Typical operational constraints that pertain to joint CSAR operations include a limited capability to conduct the search portion of CSAR in a medium-to-high threat environment, a scarcity of dedicated CSAR resources in Service forces, and shortages of trained SAR and CSAR controllers to staff JRCCs and component RCCs.

The increasingly sophisticated weapons, especially air defense weapons, that are available to military forces worldwide, and in some cases insurgents and terrorists, make extended aerial searches for isolated personnel in enemy held territory highly prohibitive. In many cases a traditional aerial search cannot be conducted. Electronic searches or monitoring for radio and beacon transmissions by standoff airborne platforms, unmanned aerial vehicles, tactical aircraft engaged in ongoing

air operations, and/or satellites should be considered and planned as appropriate.

Deployed Service forces may have little organic CSAR capability but may be tasked to provide certain CSAR-capable resources in support of another Service force or as part of a SARTF formed for a specific CSAR mission. Such assignments must not interfere with a unit or component primary mission and must be tasked by appropriate authority, normally a superior commander.⁷

A joint doctrine should not allow Service parochialism. However this does not appear to be the case. If the CSAR mission should not interfere with a Services primary mission, then what prerequisite would be necessary for a Service to provide assets to a CSAR mission for another Service? This mentality seems to defeat the spirit of jointness. Additionally, the doctrine for Joint CSAR conflicts with the JCS Pub 0-2 Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF) which states: "Sound command organization should provide for unity of effort, centralized direction, decentralized execution, common doctrine and interoperability."⁸ With the JCS Pub 0-2 as the foundation from which all follow on Joint doctrine is governed, why is the CSAR doctrine so individually service oriented? To answer these questions and try understand why the current system is flawed, we must take a critical look at each of the individual Services CSAR resources and capabilities.

Army

Though the Army has no dedicated CSAR units or aircraft, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) units have the mission of CSAR for the Army. The units are being equipped with PLSs and will conduct CSAR in addition to other MEDEVAC operations. Routine MEDEVAC operations should not be considered CSAR and would not be of concern to the Army component RCC. MEDEVAC units are equipped and trained in air crash rescue support (less fire suppression), extraction of personnel from crash aircraft, emergency aid at the crash site, and en route treatment during MEDEVAC. When MEDEVAC aircraft are used for recovery of isolated personnel, adequate

protection must be provided. Because of the insufficient quantities of rescue equipment, CSAR missions are secondary missions for helicopter units, SOF, and other units tasked by the JFC.⁹

How can a doctrine require a Service to provide CSAR missions in support of its own operations when it doesn't own the proper assets to successfully accomplish the mission? Because the Army has no dedicated CSAR assets, the MEDEVAC aircraft will be used as long as it does not interfere with its primary mission. The use of MEDEVAC aircraft in anything but the most benign environment would be extremely difficult if not impossible. Twenty years ago in Vietnam, the United States learned the hard way that "ad hoc" CSAR missions cost more lives than they saved. Bottom line, in a battlefield environment the US Army would be requesting assets and assistance from the other Services to conduct a CSAR recovery of its personnel if they could not be recovered by personnel on the ground.

Navy

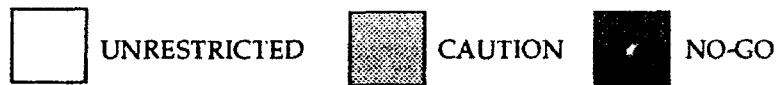
The Navy is currently trying to address the CSAR deficiencies within the organic Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) by defining the type of rescue and the threat confronting the rescue platforms. In doing so, "The Navy redesignated its rescue effort as Strike Rescue".¹⁰ This is the first time that a service has differentiated between a rescue conducted in a benign and a hostile environment. At first this appears to only be a change in wording, but in reality it is an attempt to match aircraft to missions based on a specific threat. Additionally, it makes Strike Rescue a primary mission area that requires meticulous planning and execution if the mission is to have the greatest chance of success. Today, Navy Strike Rescue planning teams are manned, organized, and conduct mission planning just like that done for combat missions.

The Navy will routinely use all available Battle Group assets (SH-3, SH-2, SH-60, Ships, Submarines etc.) in performing Search and Rescue (SAR). Realizing a major deficiency in the ability for these organic assets to survive during a hostile Strike Rescue mission a threat matrix was derived based on six (6) threat levels (figure 1). With organic Battle Group helicopters limited to threat levels 1, 2, or 3D (day) and HS-60 to 3N (night).

Navy helicopter go/no-go decision matrix¹¹

	UH1	SH2	SH3H	SH3G	CH46	H53D	H53E	RH53	SH60	HH60	HH3A	
1						NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO				
2												
3	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	CAUTION	
3	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	
4	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	
5	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	
6	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	NO-GO	CAUTION

SPECIAL WARFARE



MATRIX THREAT LEVELS

- Level 1: relates to Secure overwater CSAR
- Level 2: relates to Secure overland CSAR
- Level 3D: relates to Day operations overland CSAR with low density small arms
- Level 3N: relates to Night operations overland CSAR with IR missiles and small arms probable
- Level 4: relates to Overland CSAR with light density air defense systems
- Level 5: relates to Overland CSAR with medium density air defense systems
- Level 6: relates to Overland CSAR with heavy density air defense systems

Figure 1

This go/no go threat matrix was the Navy's first attempt to marry aircraft capabilities to a given threat. By doing so, it can be seen that the organic CVBG assets are very limited in their ability to conduct CSAR. The limiting factors are many times mechanical (no hoist capability), crew training (no night vision goggle NVG training) or a combination of the two.

Because of this lack of available assets, the Navy stood up two (2) reserve Helicopter Combat Support Squadrons, (HCS) 4 and 5, whose primary mission is Strike Rescue. One squadron for each coast has eight (8) HH-60H aircraft specially modified for the Strike Rescue mission. "These squadrons are trained to proficiency levels that *(are suppose to)* give them the ability to conduct strike rescue missions up to threat level 5, and threat level 6 in conjunction with Special Warfare units".¹² These aircraft, while modified in many areas, do to budget constraints, do not have all the required airframe / instrumentation upgrades necessary to successfully conduct independent strike rescue missions. Additionally, since these are two Naval Reserve squadrons it is very difficult to have the proper assets in theater for contingency operations or short notice strikes. An excellent example is "Eldorado Canyon." The air strike on Libya in 1986 was conducted with organic CVBG CSAR assets. Maintaining these assets in the reserves does meet the doctrinal requirements for a Navy CSAR capability, but operationally it does not meet the needs of the Navy or an operational commander.

The Navy is currently upgrading the CVBG helicopters from the old SH-3 to the new SH-60 aircraft. This improved capability could provide a CinC a forward deployed CSAR platform as long as the Navy equips, funds, and trains the aircrews and aircraft properly. HS is the primary SAR asset for the Battle Group, therefore availability of HS assets to be used outside the CVBG operation area is minimal.

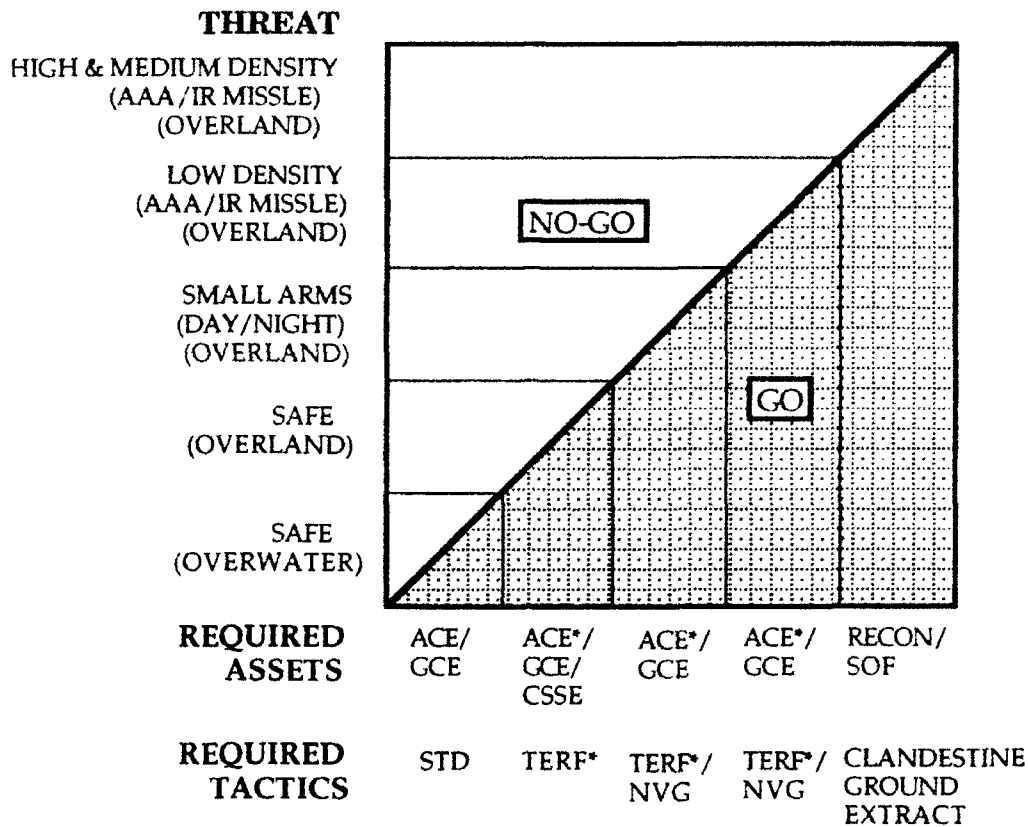
Marine Corps

The Marine Corps views CSAR as an implied tasking that should not detract from primary functions. Marine Corps forces perform self-supporting recovery operations and external CSAR support through a concept known as tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP). Marine Corp Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) does not routinely train to conduct the search portion of CSAR, particularly in a medium or high air threat environment. The TRAP mission differs from CSAR in that it usually does not involve extended air search procedures to locate possible survivors. The TRAP concept emphasizes detailed planning and the use of assigned and briefed aircrew for the specific purpose of the recovery of personnel and/or aircraft when the tactical situation precludes SAR assets from responding and when survivors and their location have been confirmed.¹³

The TRAP concept (*figure 2*) is a recently new addition to the Marine Corp CSAR mission planning. Based on the Navy's go/no go threat matrix, the TRAP matches required assets/tactics to threat levels to determine recovery criteria. The major drawback to the TRAP concept is the availability of CSAR capable resources. Like the Army, the Marine Corp does not maintain a designated CSAR platform, instead it uses heavy lift and transport assets as long as it doesn't interfere with their primary mission. Configuration problems and lack of defensive armor does not allow the Marine Corp to seriously support the requirement of maintaining a CSAR capability. History will support that lacking dedicated assets, training, or tactics are primary reasons behind the statistics that came out of previous conflicts on successful CSAR recoveries.

Both the Army and Marine Corps clearly state: conducting CSAR should not detract from their primary mission requirements of supporting the combat ground element. If assets do become available, a rescue will only be attempted in the most benign environment, because of the limitations of both the aircraft and the training of the aircrew. Which brings into question again, the validity for requiring each service to maintain its own CSAR capability.

TRAP Decision Matrix¹⁴



- NOTES: 1. ACE = Aviation combat element
 2. GCE = Ground combat element
 3. CSSE = Combat service support element

Figure 2

Air Force

Dedicated USAF rescue and recovery assets include HH-3E and MH-60G helicopters; HC-130P/N fixed wing aircraft; and RCC controllers, pararescue personnel, SAR duty officers, and SAR liaison officers. Dedicated forces mobilized for deployment are selected and tailored based upon the scope of the conflict. Rescue aircraft and aircrews are made available to the RCC for daily tasking as necessary. With the proper coordination and on a case-by-case basis, other USAF resources such as tactical air forces (TAF) fighters and C2 aircraft can augment and enhance the capability of primary USAF rescue assets.¹⁵

The Air Force has effectively taken the lessons learned from Vietnam and improved both equipment and training to make it the most capable of all the

Services in performing CSAR. Dedicated rescue and recovery resources include: specialized rotary-wing aircraft, fixed-wing aircraft, controllers, Pararescue teams, SAR duty and liaison officers, and Tactical Air Force (TAF) assets. Taking the lead in designing and implementing procedures for a systematic approach in recovery of downed aircrew, the Air Force has made major strides to achieve maximum success with minimal risk.

Equipment in the Air Force inventory for rotary-wing aircraft range from the older HH-3E Jolly Green Giant to the state of the art MH-60G Pavehawk aircraft. These primary recovery platforms are almost always escorted by fixed-wing HC-130 aircraft which provide survivor locating data and inflight refueling with the addition of Rescort aircraft for protection if necessary.

Coordination for a successful recovery requires a great deal of pre-mission planning no matter what threat level is expected. As noted earlier, the proliferation of hand held surface-to-air missiles has greatly changed the "pick-up team" mentality by CSAR crews that led to the numerous unsuccessful attempts in the past. Command and Control was a major weakness of Combat Search and Rescue in the past. Knowing this, the Air Force implemented a Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) and established a provisional group of the Air Rescue Service to plan and execute CSAR missions. This coordination, while sometimes lengthy, has the built in flexibility which allows updating of the mission throughout the planning process when new information is received.

Additionally, the Air Force maintains an independent Pararescue Force capable of worldwide rescue and recovery of isolated personnel and material.¹⁶ Pararescue Forces provide guidance, emergency medical assistance, and Survival, Escape, Resistance, and Evasion (SERE) expertise during the rescue operation. These elements employ a wide range of insertion and extraction

techniques, trained in overland as well as open-water operations, they can operate autonomously from a delivery aircraft.

The Air Force CSAR assets and capabilities are the best of all the Services, yet are many times over tasked. Aging aircraft like the HH-3E Jolly Green Giant and the limited number of other CSAR assets available diminish quickly when theater CinC's draw upon these assets, soon making the force hollow in its capability. The reduction of funding to the Services and the limited number of times that the CSAR mission has been required in the recent past has brought an overall reduction of capability to this once first class organization.

Special Operations

The commander of the theater SOC has some CSAR capabilities that are inherent in the forces' equipment and training. However, since CSAR is a collateral mission, the equipment is not specifically designed for the CSAR task and SOF receives little (if any) CSAR-specific training. SOF are normally responsible for the CSAR of their own forces when they are operating in environments that demand unique SOF capability. The use of non-SOF CSAR forces is appropriate when SOF require rescue in more benign environments.¹⁷

Prior to the Special Operations Command (SOC) becoming a Unified Command, the Special Operation Forces from the independent Services were not equipped, funded, or trained to perform CSAR. Although the nature of SOF could be classified as capable of successfully accomplishing a CSAR mission, these small and independent teams, which conduct autonomous operations, were ill suited for the mission.

Today, SOC is a Unified Command highly capable of conducting CSAR. However, due to the wide range of missions and tasking the SOC may get from the theater CinC's, they may not have the assets available to perform this additional mission. The equipment and training that the SOC receives to

perform their primary missions provides a solid foundation for roles and missions of CSAR that could be incorporated into SOC.

The major argument from SOC has been that without additional assets and funding, their primary warfighting mission areas would suffer if given this additional responsibility. Now that SOC is an independent command, it no longer has to rely on the individual Services for funding. By being a Unified Command the SOC can now be given serious consideration as the organization best equipped to perform CSAR. The fiscal realities of the future may require that the CSAR mission be assigned to SOC because of the many similarities associated between the two missions.

CHAPTER III

REORGANIZATION AND ALTERNATIVES

The capabilities that exist within each of the services today make it almost impossible for any service to independently complete a successful Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) mission. One of the primary reasons for this is that the CSAR mission is not often required or performed in peacetime. Prior to Desert Storm, it had been over 20 years since the United States conducted sustained combat operations. Fiscal realities require the individual Services to spend their limited funds on war fighting missions areas, equipment upgrades, and tactical training. Maintaining a highly sophisticated CSAR force that might never be used is viewed as inappropriate use of limited funds.

The United States military commanders will continue to find our CSAR capability underequipped, undertrained, and underfunded (as we did during Desert Storm) unless a concerted effort to fund, train, and support this necessary mission is taken. It is feasible that the Services will continue the "status quo" for CSAR in the future unless present doctrine and Service capabilities are re-evaluated. With the services down sizing and fewer and fewer funds available, it is ludicrous to allow the duplication of effort by requiring each Service to maintain this capability.

Future changes will not alleviate the requirement that each Service maintain the capability of conducting Search and Rescue (SAR) of its own forces in a benign environment. Basic SAR capabilities can be maintained within the funding constants in the future with little impact on training or readiness of the individual Service forces. The question is then, who should be given the charter to maintain, train, and perform the Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) mission in the future?

There appear to be three solutions to this dilemma for the CinCs. First, CSAR efforts could be consolidated into a single Service, which would oversee and conduct all CSAR operations. Second, the mission could be given to the Special Operations Command (SOC) as was done, "ad hoc," during Desert Storm. Third, a Joint Combat Search and Rescue (JCSAR) command could be established which would be solely responsible for conducting CSAR training, exercises, and rescues.

Each of these alternatives provides a viable solution to the CinC or Joint Task Force Commander if the military establishment would truly embrace jointness. No longer can the wastefulness of interservice rivalry hamper critical mission requirements and duplication of effort especially with the future force structure and fiscal constraints facing the operational commander. Each of these alternatives must be scrutinized for strengths, as well as weaknesses, to determine the viability of each to successfully meet the needs of the operational commanders.

Option One - US Air Force:

Of all the Services the Air Force is the best possible alternative for CSAR because it is the only service today which truly possesses the equipment capable of conducting CSAR in a multi-threat environment. In addition to the most sophisticated equipment, the Air Force has a standing support organization that includes: pararescue forces, rescue escort aircraft, rescue combat air patrol, airborne control, and rescue coordination center controllers.

The present number of Air Force assets dedicated to CSAR would be inadequate if tasked to be the sole provider for CSAR. Increases in Air Force funding would be necessary to purchase additional airframes and the infrastructure required to be continually on call to perform CSAR anywhere in the world. To accomplish this, a centralized CONUS location could be selected to

provide the CinC assets when tasked, or by strategically locating assets in theater so that they could deploy on short notice. The Air Force must totally commit to properly funding and supporting of the CSAR mission. (General Steiner commented on his visit to the US Navy War College that the Air Force is not prepared to maintain and operate the CSAR mission at the present time.)

A separate command would have to be established based on a new Joint doctrine that would in turn be taught and trained to all of the Services. The Navy would be required to decommission the reserve squadrons of HCS 4&5 and transfer those CSAR assets to the Air Force CSAR command. Army and Marine Corp assets would not be effected because they do not maintain a CSAR capability in their inventory. The transfer of assets from the Special Operations Command would not be necessary, although it can be envisioned that an augmentation could be required for a large operation such as Desert Storm. Individual Services would be required to provide SAR for their own forces and the Navy would maintain the limited CSAR capabilities that is inherent in the Carrier Battle Group with the SH-60 and HH-60 helicopters.

Option Two - Special Operations Command ;

The second option would be to incorporate CSAR into the Special Operations Command (SOC). Desert Storm identified many of the weaknesses in the current CSAR capabilities and also identified a very viable solution. During the build up in Desert Shield, CENTCOM tried to wrestle with how to organize and deploy the individual Services CSAR assets to provide the greatest capability. It was soon realized that no single service had the proper number of assets or the organization to fully conduct a Combat Rescue. As hostilities neared, the Special Operation Command (SOC) found itself as the primary organization tasked to conduct CSAR operations due to their sophisticated platforms and capabilities. Special Forces are trained in both day and night

covert operations and maintain the most advanced equipment available which is highly suited for the CSAR mission.

In Desert Storm, the JSOC with all the services concurrence, conducted all of the Combat Search and Rescues. A Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) was set up where all the planning and ultimate decision to attempt a rescue was made. Each Service provided personnel to man the JRCC and their specific expertise to assist in the planning and coordination of CSAR missions.

It is a very viable option to realign the individual service CSAR capability and combine them under the auspices of the Special Operations Command (SOC) or Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). We can no longer afford to continue the present day "business as usual" approach in the future. Realigning assets under SOC would have little impact on the mission, equipment, or training already assigned to the SOC. The SOC mission, with the most sophisticated platforms and capabilities available, has what is required to conduct a successful CSAR in a hostile environment. It only makes sense to give the CSAR mission to the SOC. Any additional training required to refine the CSAR mission should have little impact on the SOC as it is an extension of their existing mission. By pooling the resources of all of the services and putting them under the SOC, the strain is removed from the individual services that up until now have only given "lip service" to this critical mission. The SOC would then be required to have this capability forward deployed in theater and provide training and CSAR exercises to the Services during their normal training cycle.

Present doctrine clearly tries to separate SOC from the CSAR mission, even though it has superior platforms and training in this area. Joint Pub 3-50.2 states: SOF should not be routinely tasked to perform conventional CSAR. In some circumstances, SOF may be the only resource capable of recovering isolated

personnel from hostile, denied, or politically sensitive territory. Tasking SOF to conduct CSAR is appropriate when:

- (1) the operating environment requires the special capabilities of SOF.
- (2) The priority for recovery of isolated personnel is sufficiently high to warrant a special operation.¹⁸

Since its inception in WW II, CSAR has become a priority mission in wartime for the reasons identified in chapter one. Special Operation Forces presently train for and conduct many independent clandestine missions. The use of SOC forces and equipment would significantly increase CSAR's chances of success on future conflicts. The main reason behind selecting SOC as the primary Service component can be directly associated with how CSAR was conducted during Desert Storm. SOC was the lead agency in the planning and conducting Combat Search and Rescue in the Iraq theater of operations. This would seem to imply that either the "priority for recovery was warranted," or when the "rubber meets the road," that SOC is the Service of choice, although it directly conflicts with the most recent Joint doctrine dated 20 December 1991 published after Desert Shield/Storm.

Option Three - Joint CSAR Command:

The third alternative would be to establish a Joint Combat Search and Rescue (JCSAR) command. Each Service would transfer their CSAR assets to the JCSAR command which in turn would be solely responsible for providing CSAR assets to the operational commanders. The JCSAR would be independently funded from the moneys that had before been divided between the Services to maintain their present CSAR capability. In order to further reduce redundancy in staffs and administrative functions, the JCSAR could fall under OPCON of CinCSOC. CSAR would then be a truly joint operation with unity of effort, centralized direction, and interpretability built in. No more redundant

capabilities maintained by the Services which are poorly staffed, trained, and maintained.

The JCSAR would be the lead organization in codifying a usable joint doctrine. They would be the CSAR training and standardization unit responsible for command and control and joint procedures for the conduct of CSAR. Joint CSAR doctrine now states that "component commanders should establish an RCC to coordinate all component CSAR activities, including coordination with the JRCC and other component RCCs as appropriate."¹⁹ By consolidating the CSAR effort under one command, a whole layer of duplication could be deleted. Instead of establishing a JRCC and a RCC, which provide many of the same functions, the JCSAR would own and operate the JRCC. Additionally, the JRCC would now own the assets that it will be controlling, further standardizing and streamlining the chain of command. By designing a JCSAR command around this organizational structure, it would, by design, correct the deficiencies associated with the present organizational structure.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The present system of CSAR is far from optimum, from the basic deficiency of the present CSAR doctrine, to the wasteful duplication of effort associated with individual Services CSAR requirements. The mission of CSAR will remain of vital interest to the operational commanders in all future conflicts. While many multi-service mission areas are moving toward a truly joint capability, Combat Search and Rescue not only fails to respond but current doctrine as written is contrary to the principles governing unified direction of forces. JCS Pub 0-2 states:

Sound command organization should provide for unity of effort, centralized direction, decentralized execution, common doctrine, and interoperability. Unity of effort is necessary for effectiveness and efficiency. Centralized direction is essential for controlling and coordinating the efforts of the forces. Decentralized execution is essential because no one commander can control the detailed actions of a large number of units or individuals. Common doctrine are essential for mutual understanding and confidence between a commander and assigned subordinates, and among the subordinates themselves, so that timely and effective action will be taken by all concerned in the absence of specific instructions. Command emphasis on interoperability will result in enhanced joint warfighting capabilities through improved joint tactics, techniques, and procedures.²⁰

Based on this joint statement, CSAR doctrine, organizational structure, and asset allocation are deeply flawed. Maintaining the status quo of CSAR will almost guarantee that the cyclic trends of past history will continue. By reorganizing the CSAR mission under a single command, the operational commanders, as well as the individual Service, would finally have a true Combat Search and Rescue capability. Based on the sound principles of:

- Unity of effort: established through the consolidation of resources for training and improve overall capabilities.

- Centralized direction: reduce the competing mission and Services requirements that the present system must endure.
- Common doctrine: codifying the needs of both CSAR missions and meeting individual services requirements.
- Interoperability: achieved through the standardization of procedures and training conducted by a single command.
- Command and control: remove the layer of duplication that today is inherent by maintaining a JRCC at the operational level and the RCC at the individual Service level.

To finally have CSAR properly funded and staffed, with combat trained active duty crews, would give our operational commanders the warfighting capability that has eluded them since the inception of CSAR over fifty years ago. The present system only works because the JTF's and CinC's do whatever is required to make it work in a crisis situation. The obvious lesson learned during Desert Storm is that CSAR cannot be counted on as long as we continue to require the individual Services to maintain this capability. This is not to say that each service will not be required to maintain a Search and Rescue (SAR) capability, but the advancements in weapons proliferation throughout the world no longer make the present CSAR organization viable.

The requirement for each service to maintain redundant capabilities cannot continue. The US military must draw from the strengths of each service, so that in the future we do not find a critical mission without any substance. The operational commanders have seen that the capability exists and the requirements necessary to be successful have been determined. The solution requires change, significantly different from the way business was done in the past, so that operational commanders will have the proper tools to carry out national policy in the future. The alternatives have been identified, now is the time to fix CSAR!

NOTES

- ¹ HQ Tactical Air Command - TRADOC Air Land Forces Application (ALFA) Agency, Multi-Service Procedure for Combat Search and Rescue (Fort Monroe, VA and Langley AFB, VA: MAY 1991), p. xi.
- ² LCDR Dave Popwich, COMHELWINGRES brief on Navy Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) capabilities. Slide # 31.
- ³ Department of the Navy. Strike Rescue Manual, Navy Supplement to NWP 19-2 (Rev. A), (Washington, DC: Sept 1992), p. 1-1.
- ⁴ HQ Tactical Air Command - TRADOC Air Land Forces Application (ALFA) Agency, Multi-Service Procedure for Combat Search and Rescue (Fort Monroe, VA and Langley AFB, VA: MAY 1991), p.
- ⁵ Armed Forces Staff College. AFSC Pub 1 The Joint Staff Officer's Guide 1991. (Norfolk VA: 1991), p. 4-4.
- ⁶ The Joint Chiefs of Staff. Test Pub Joint Publication 3-50.2, Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue (Washington, DC: 20 December 1991), p. I-1.
- ⁷ Ibid. pp. IV-4&5
- ⁸ The Joint Chiefs of Staff. JCS Publication 0-2. UNIFIED ACTION ARMED FORCES (UNAAF) (WASHINGTON, DC: 01 DECEMBER 1986), P. 3-1.
- ⁹ Ibid. p. A-1
- ¹⁰ HQ Tactical Air Command - TRADOC Air Land Forces Application (ALFA) Agency, Multi-Service Procedure for Combat Search and Rescue (Fort Monroe, VA and Langley AFB, VA: MAY 1991), p.
- ¹¹ Ibid. pp. 7-1
- ¹² Ibid. pp. 7-4
- ¹³ Ibid. p. C-1
- ¹⁴ Ibid. p. C-4
- ¹⁵ The Joint Chiefs of Staff. Test Pub Joint Publication 3-50.2, Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue (Washington, DC: 20 December 1991), p. D-1.
- ¹⁶ Ibid. p. 8-1
- ¹⁷ The Joint Chiefs of Staff. Test Pub Joint Publication 3-50.2, Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue (Washington, DC: 20 December 1991), p. F-1.
- ¹⁸ Ibid. p. F-3.
- ¹⁹ Ibid. p. I-3.
- ²⁰ The Joint Chiefs of Staff. JCS Publication 0-2. UNIFIED ACTION ARMED FORCES (UNAAF) (WASHINGTON, DC: 01 DECEMBER 1986), P. 3-1.

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