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Evolving A Hamstrung and Broken System

Ryan R. McCallum

Arthur D. Simons Center
for Interagency Cooperation

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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by Ryan R. McCallum

Ryan R. McCallum currently serves as an interagency coordination officer at the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). Mr. McCallum supports counterterrorism planning by identifying impediments to the implementation of plans and providing useful recommendations for overcoming these obstacles. To facilitate whole-of-government approaches to identified problems, he coordinates and integrates competing requirements and priorities of multiple stakeholders, which are uniquely designed to reduce gaps in plans. As a May 2013 graduate of the School of Advanced Military Studies at the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College, he was able to research history, examine theories, and receive a doctrinal foundation in planning.

Before joining NCTC, Mr. McCallum was a student on academic scholarship at Augustana College in Rock Island, IL. In the same year, he enlisted as an infantryman in the Illinois Army National Guard. And after nearly three years of military service, he volunteered to serve in Iraq. Less than 9 months later, his vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb and he was medically evacuated back to the United States. After recovering from his injuries, Mr. McCallum made his way to Walter Reed Army Medical Center. With the support of the Department of Defense Operation Warfighter Program, Mr. McCallum was subsequently hired as NCTC's first wounded warrior.

Mr. McCallum holds a Master in Military Art and Science from the School of Advanced Military Studies, and a Bachelor's from Thomas Edison State College. Mr. McCallum's experience, training, and education enables him to create deliberate approaches to sophisticated problems.

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Questions about this paper and the Interagency Paper series should be directed to the Arthur D. Simons Center, 655 Biddle Blvd., PO Box 3429, Fort Leavenworth KS 66027; email: office@TheSimonsCenter.org, or by phone at 913-682-7244.

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Introduction

The military services are but a part of the national machinery of peace or war. An effective national security policy calls for active, intimate and continuous relationships not alone between the military services themselves but also between the military services and many other departments and agencies of government.¹

Ferdinand Eberstadt to James Forrestal, 1947

The idea of interagency collaboration is not new. In fact, traces of interagency collaboration can be found as far back as 1846 when General Winfield Scott and Nicholas Trist set aside their differences to achieve the U.S. government’s political objectives in Mexico.² In recent years, the idea has resurfaced, and interagency collaboration between “operational” military units, such as special operations forces (SOF), and “civilian” organizations, such as the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), have become topics for discussion among academics and government officials. In 2012, Congressmen Geoffrey C. Davis and John F. Tierney published an article in the *InterAgency Journal* that suggested that the interagency process is a “hamstrung and broken” system.³ Given the implications of such a proposition, this paper argues there is a need for an evolution in interagency training and education to efficiently and effectively enable collaborative teams in complex humanitarian assistance/disaster response (HA/DR) operations overseas.

This paper examines the need for an evolution in interagency training and education to efficiently and effectively achieve strategic objectives. The first section examines recent literature published by academic and governmental scholars. The second section analyzes interagency collaboration in Somalia from 1992–1993, Haiti from 1994–1995, and Somalia from 2006–2007 to determine the need for interagency process evolution. The third section makes three recommendations for an evolution (or revolution) in the interagency process.

At the strategic level, this paper identifies considerations military and civilian leaders must address before deciding to engage in HA/DR operations overseas. No operation rests solely in the purview

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of any one department or agency, so current and future military operations in Somalia and Haiti will require the military to work within the interagency process. Often the number of organizations sharing primary responsibilities in providing relief and security assistance adds to the complexity of HA/DR operations. This interdependency led to the development of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), where civilian leadership is integrated throughout all levels of the decision-making process. Planning for such integration at AFRICOM, however, did not account for the varied organizational cultures that exist or seek to exist within the command.⁴

At the operational level, this paper examines prior issues with the execution of HA/DR operations in Somalia and Haiti. While no operation is the same, history often highlights factors that lead to both success and failure. Branches and sequels to joint, interagency, and multinational plans will be required to prepare for future HA/DR operations.

At the tactical level, this paper identifies considerations military and civilian operators must address to ensure tactical-level planning is effective and efficiently integrated with larger unit and organizational operations. It is important for civilian and military operators to understand the informal power structure and the actual political power structure, as well as the dynamics between the two.⁵

What is the Interagency?

...interagency is a collaborative forum where complex organizations, each having different cultures, roles, and responsibilities, discuss the conceptual and/or actual implementation of a variety of specific goals and objectives.

Davis and Tierney suggest that while the idea of interagency organizations is plausible, the policymaking process is a “hamstrung and broken” system.⁶ Strategic leaders and policymakers within the U.S. government provide broad guidance and funding to civilian and military organizations. Interpreting this guidance frequently requires discourse with more than one organization. Davis defined interagency operations as, “operations conducted by two or more federal departments or agencies in support of a national security mission.”⁷ While this definition is appropriate, interagency is much broader than this definition suggests. For the purposes of this paper, interagency is a collaborative forum where complex organizations, each having different cultures, roles, and responsibilities, discuss the conceptual and/or actual implementation of a variety of specific goals and objectives. Given that U.S. government strategy statements to Congress and briefings to the media identify the goals and objectives of strategic leaders, the interagency process interprets, integrates (or synchronizes), and tasks the strategic goals to departments and agencies for implementation. As federal budget deficits continue to constrain department and agency equities, this process often

becomes a highly confrontational and intensely political discourse in regards to funding, roles, and organizational responsibilities.

The framework for the interagency process began nearly sixty years ago following World War II when President Truman sent a message to Congress recommending reform. This process was initially enacted through the 1947 National Security Act (NSA-1947), which created a cabinet-level civilian Department of Defense (DoD) Secretary to direct the execution of the separate departments—Army, Navy, and Air Force.⁸ As action arms for national interests, these service departments received a secretary to better integrate planning for military services. Additionally, NSA-1947 established the wartime Joint Chiefs of Staff, which included a Chairman to serve dually as the senior military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense. Since 1947, the U.S. has been challenged by global interdependence, weakened Cold War alliances, sub-state and non-state actors, and increased international resistance to diplomatic pressures. More importantly, chemical, biological, and cyber threats have evolved to a level that significantly threaten the infrastructure of the U.S.⁹ According to *Forging a New Shield*, “the U.S. national security system is still organized to win the last challenge, not the ones that come increasingly before us.”¹⁰ Given these challenges, as well as an austere federal budget environment, the state of the world necessitates a process to meet and deter these global threats.

NSA-1947, however, did not solely modify the DoD; this act also put forth modifications to government business more broadly. For instance, the expanded role of the President necessitated a staff to assist him. This staff, more commonly known as the National Security Staff (NSS), received the mandate but not the authority to better coordinate policy on behalf of the President.¹¹ Before 1947, the coordination for foreign policies and a national security agenda rested solely on the shoulders of the President.¹²

Today, the President shares responsibility for the interagency process with Congressional leaders. Davis and Tierney’s article describes the modern challenges of interagency collaboration and further identifies that Congress shares part-ownership of the impediments to the interagency process.¹³ Although not directly integrated into the interagency process, these Congressmen believe that organizations such as the Departments of Agriculture, Justice, and Treasury are crucial components to national security. They also state that, “there are regulatory, budgetary, legislative, bureaucratic, and cultural impediments to effective interagency operations.”¹⁴ These leaders believe that the variety of the threats we face as a nation requires organizations to be better resourced and staffed for interagency operations.¹⁵ While this broad guidance is essential for the future of interagency cooperation, research and analysis

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find that interagency misunderstandings and competition among organizations have hindered interagency collaboration.

Why is the Interagency a Hamstrung and Broken System?

While there are numerous variables influencing the effectiveness of national security organizations, *Forging a New Shield* states that “the system,” not one individual organization, is “imbalanced” and requires an evolution.¹⁶ The function of the National Security Council (NSC) is to “advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to national security so as to enable the military services and the other [organizations] of the [U.S. government] to cooperate more effectively in matters involving national security.”¹⁷ The NSC further seeks to protect and defend the U.S. from foreign and domestic security challenges by integrating all elements of national power (diplomatic, informational, military, economic, law enforcement, and intelligence), but the NSC has historically been “vulnerable to breakdown during periods of transition between administrations.”¹⁸ Although it was subjected to subsequent Congressional ratifications, NSA-1947 did not give the NSC the mandate to directly synchronize with appropriate authority the elements of national power in pursuit of the President’s strategic goals in whole or in part through the arrangement of actions in time, space, and purpose.¹⁹ Former Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford and the late U.S. Diplomat Richard Holbrooke called the NSC a “government within a government, which could evade oversight of its activities by drawing a cloak of secrecy about itself.”²⁰ As the Project on National Security Reform suggests, “a burdened [NSC] cannot manage the national security system as a whole to be agile and collaborative at any time.”²¹

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In his Army War College research project, “Transforming the National Security Council: Interagency Authority, Organization, Doctrine,” Lieutenant Colonel Clay O. Runzi, United States Marine Corps, states: “Bureaucratic leveraging, vacillating presidential prerogative, and unique signature threats of the 21st Century clearly demonstrate that the NSC not only falls short of the initial Congressional intent in 1947, but [it] also [falls short] on the reality of [today’s] requirements.”²² In his essay, “About Interagency Cooperation,” Bob Ulin emphasizes that, “a major problem in the operation of the U.S. government is the difficulty, if not the inability, to delegate authority below the President level across department

and agency borders.”²³ This bottleneck may prevent the NSC from linking the skills and expertise necessary to solve complex and ambiguous problems.

The departure of Representative Davis from Congress is likely to delay congressional discourse and proposals on interagency reform. The U.S. deserves a cohesive and effective body that produces coordinated, continuous planning and timely actions that drive whole-of-government approaches to complex and ambiguous issues. This approach assumes that relevant entities from within government will want to contribute in assigned roles and functions to achieve strategic interests. This necessity for a strategy-centric planning process also implies a requirement for continuous assessments to ensure planning and actions remain aligned to the strategic intent. This planning process would likely achieve success if also implemented at more junior levels given that, “informal relationships are at least as important as the formal machinery, and are critical to each agency understanding the business and equalities of the other agencies.”²⁴ Within the DoD for instance, the business of SOF is often mysteriously and frequently over mystified. Not understanding SOF roles and responsibilities hampers not only interagency operations, but also intra-organizational professional development.

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Who are Special Operations Forces?

Andrew Feickert, a retired Army Special Forces officer, says, SOF are “elite military units with special training and equipment that *can* (added emphasis) infiltrate hostile territory through land, sea, or air to conduct a variety of operations, many of them classified.”²⁵ It is no secret that “physical and political risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets” set SOF apart from conventional military forces.²⁶ James Kiras, a professor at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, contends that, “because SOF are super-elite soldiers, and therefore very few in number, they can only be employed with surprise in brief bursts of action.”²⁷ It is also no secret that SOF often operate clandestinely in denied and/or politically sensitive environments.²⁸ Many authors describe elements of “the dark” or “the black” side of military SOF; however, they pay little attention to the softer, more “vanilla,” or “the white” side of SOF responsibility.²⁹

Title 10, Section 167, of U.S. Code provides and explains SOF core activities. These activities authorize SOF to conduct a variety

of missions that include “direct action, strategic reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil affairs, military information support operations, counterterrorism, psychological operations, humanitarian assistance, theater search and rescue, and other activities specified by the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense.”³⁰ With these activities come specific tools, such as education and training, to assist in the implementation of the larger political goals and objectives of partnered nations.

According to Kiras, “the primary utility of special operations [forces] is to improve performance by increasing the military effectiveness of friendly forces, accomplishing political and military objectives in a timely, economic manner, but also upsetting the adversary’s strategic and operational calculus.”³¹ While Kiras takes a different approach than most authors, he captures the more “vanilla,” or the capacity-building side of SOF. Given the nature of their training, SOF are effective contributors to bringing security and stability to HA/DR operations.³²

What is so Special about Special Operations Forces?

The nature of SOF activities requires that they be highly proficient and experienced warfighters with advanced training and education. As of January 2012, the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) consisted of approximately 63,000 active duty, National Guard, and reserve component operators. According to Admiral William McRaven’s 2012 Posture Statement, this number is likely to increase to 71,100 by 2015.³³ These operators are employed in the Navy as SEALs (Sea, Air, Land); in the Air Force as combat aircraft controllers, pararescuemen, special operations weathermen, and combat aviation advisors; in the Marine Corps as critical skills operators; and in the Army as civil affairs officers, special operations aviators, sustainers, military information support operations, Rangers, and Special Forces.³⁴ In addition to the stealthy tactical training SOF receive, they also receive interagency training and education from USSOCOM. Joint Special Operations University’s (JSOU) Interagency Education Program contributes to professional development by providing an understanding of SOF and the interagency communities. Among other things, this education includes a strategic dialogue on the authorities of civilian and military communities.³⁵

Conventional military forces tend to be apprehensive when it comes to irregular warfare (IW); however, SOF are more comfortable

In addition to the stealthy tactical training SOF receive, they also receive interagency training and education from USSOCOM.

with this particular type of war.³⁶ In IW, the enemy tends to fight within crowds of civilians and populations of noncombatants. After failed attempts to defeat an elusive enemy, conventional military forces are likely to cause cascading damage to the overall efforts of the intervention. As Colin S. Gray points out, in their frustration, conventional forces are likely to “do what energetic, career-minded soldiers are suppose to do: take the offensive, try to seize the initiative, and display much activity.”³⁷ Gray believes that this mindset in IW is not very helpful.³⁸ Regardless, simulating these environments may increase the comfort of military leaders and the proficiency of SOF before they operate in crowded environments such as Somalia or Haiti.³⁹

As SOF continue to increase in capacity and presumable in capability, military and civilian organizations should understand their utility. Given their various modes of employment, SOF will continue to be an integral part of HA/DR operations.⁴⁰ Given an understanding of the interagency process and SOF core activities, a historical examination of interagency collaboration in Somalia and Haiti will help determine whether interagency collaboration requires an evolution in training and education to efficiently and effectively achieve strategic objectives.

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Case Studies: Interagency Collaboration in HA/DR Operations

In each of these interventions, starvation was epidemic. In 1992 and again in 2006, for instance, the dire humanitarian and security conditions in Somalia affected hundreds of thousands of people. These desperate individuals were on the verge of death as they left Somalia for the neighboring countries of Ethiopia and Kenya. The United Nations (UN) identified that Somalia lacked the capability to ensure security and stability, prompting the international community to seek external assistance. In 1992, the U.S. government answered the UN call, contributing immensely to the overarching food and medical assistance mission.⁴¹ In 1994, over 60,000 Haitians attempted to flee their country for the U.S. using various unsafe waterborne crafts. In 2006, the U.S. government “took advantage of the conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia” and placed military teams “to work alongside Ethiopian special operations teams.”⁴² Accordingly, these volatile security situations in Somalia and Haiti coupled with struggles for humanitarian and/or disaster relief eventually paved the way for the three U.S. interventions.

Somalia 1992–1993: Understanding the Operational Environment

U.S. strategic leaders did not define planning assessment criteria before the U.S. military intervention.

Since 1991, violence and corruption coupled with drought and famine led to a U.S. government decision to provide security and humanitarian assistance in Somalia. Interagency collaboration in Somalia was hamstrung by the dislocation of key U.S. Embassy personnel. According to General Colin Powell, “[the military] had a hard time getting clear guidance from the interagency.”⁴³ Interagency and SOF coordination and collaboration would have increased the effectiveness of military planning. Additionally, U.S. strategic leaders did not define planning assessment criteria before the U.S. military intervention. Although many organizations are uniquely capable of conducting assessments, few understand how other agencies plan. President Bill Clinton’s decision to pull out of Somalia sent a message that the U.S. military could be deterred through asymmetrical means.⁴⁴ In Port-au-Prince, Haiti, only 18 days after 18 SOF were killed in Somalia, armed factions repeated, “Remember Somalia!” in an attempt to deter U.S. government assistance in the Caribbean.⁴⁵

The dictatorship of Siad Barre contributed to the rampant political instability and social oppression that characterized Somalia for decades. In the early 1990s, three principal groups vied for power.⁴⁶ Violent social factions were held together by weak political alliances, none of which was strong enough to fully unite and lead the Somali people. Additionally, drought led to famine and collectively served as a spark to ignite ethnic tensions, which further increased this instability.⁴⁷

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 751, enacted April 24, 1992, made a politically volatile situation worse with the introduction of UN forces. This resolution opened the door to United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM), which had the mission to provide humanitarian aid and end hostilities in Somalia.⁴⁸ The deployed UN forces were not equipped to handle the massive security issues and widespread starvation facing the nation. Pursuant to UNSCR 751, UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali received a minimal commitment of 50 unarmed observers, all of whom came from Pakistan. This influx of unarmed observers had little effect.⁴⁹ By the summer of 1992, nearly 300,000 people had starved to death in Somalia. As looting, gangs, and other lawlessness prevailed, aid did not reach those Somalis who needed it most.⁵⁰

By mid-summer, the UN was accomplishing “next to nothing.”⁵¹ Given these security conditions, aid organizations could not distribute aid or provide much-needed relief services to the population.⁵² In the countryside, gangs seized and amassed food stockpiles and used

them as bargaining chips to project power over the local population. In the cities, the belligerent political factions, supported by their private armies, terrorized international organizations, stealing food and killing those who would not pay them protection money.⁵³ One account describes the violence in Mogadishu: “One day in late July, two UN relief flights to Mogadishu were halted on the runway and looted from nose to tail by clan gunmen, backed by their ever-present technical.”⁵⁴ The technicals were pickup trucks with mounted machine guns used as a mobile weapon platform.⁵⁵ These weapons systems were often equipped with a 50-caliber machine gun that could be mounted into the bed of imported vehicles. By mid-November, clans armed with these improvised fighting vehicles effectively closed the Port of Mogadishu, further exacerbating an already challenging situation.⁵⁶

Clans, warlords, gangs, and armed militias stole whatever supplies the UN organizations were paying them to guard.⁵⁷ Dominant clan warlord Mohamed Farrah Aideed and his fellow chieftains dominated the streets during the hours of aid delivery by ambushing UN aid vehicles transiting through their districts bound for rival-clan districts.⁵⁸ Only an estimated 20 percent of food entering the country was reaching the people who needed it.⁵⁹ Hijacking convoys, looting warehouses, and harassing relief workers remained the plan of the day for warring factions, and they were effective at developing their personal stockpiles.⁶⁰

INTERAGENCY AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES COLLABORATION

In Somalia, the U.S. needed a cohesive and effective body that could produce coordinated and continuous planning to drive timely actions. The dislocation of key U.S. Embassy personnel hamstrung interagency collaboration. Forced to evacuate from Mogadishu, the U.S. Embassy moved its operations to Nairobi, Kenya.⁶¹ Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said in her memoirs: “There was no U.S. Embassy staff in Mogadishu...lacking diplomatic front men, [military advisors] had to make [their] own arrangements.”⁶² From the beginning, there were two basic problems for U.S. and UN operational planners. The first problem was how to move enough essential supplies (food, water, medicine) into Somalia. The second problem was how to “provide security to protect the relief supplies from theft by bandits or confiscat[ion] by the clans and warring factions.”⁶³

General Powell later stated that, “[the military] had a hard time getting clear guidance from the interagency process.”⁶⁴ He said that while he received backchannel information, the military received “nothing from State,”⁶⁵ and “there were many meetings, but no

In Somalia... The dislocation of key U.S. Embassy personnel hamstrung interagency collaboration.

results. It took too long to get a policy review accomplished.”⁶⁶ A Congressional review found that diplomatic activity and military efforts were not well coordinated within the Clinton Administration or between the U.S. and the UN during this period.⁶⁷ In essence, a lapse in collaboration contributed to the disaster that came to be known as “Blackhawk Down” on October 3, 1993.

OUTCOMES

It was estimated that 25 percent of Somalia’s six million people died from starvation or disease.⁶⁸ To be successful, HA/DR operations require a significant level of planning at both the strategic and operational levels. “Blackhawk Down” provided useful lessons learned about the evolution of warfare and the necessity for integrated planning and collaboration.

At the strategic level in Somalia, “what President H.W. Bush originally decided and what the Clinton Administration later did represents fundamental divergent approaches.”⁶⁹ The U.S. and UN policies were uncoordinated and unclear, and military operations were difficult to plan and conduct in combat.⁷⁰ The U.S. military “failed to assess and recognize critical [vulnerabilities] of their helicopters in an urban environment and the potential impact on their operations.”⁷¹ Furthermore, SOF miscalculated the Somalis’ capacity to shoot down U.S. military helicopters, despite previous attempts by Somalis to use rocket-propelled grenades in earlier raids.⁷²

Without clearly understanding or accepting what true success in Somalia required, the aftermath of “Blackhawk Down” forced the Clinton Administration to develop an exit strategy. The political objectives of the UN and U.S. did not match; the two were simply “coming to agreements.” The UN was seeking a clear peacekeeping (noncombat military operations) mission, but instead the U.S. established and handed over a peace enforcement (coercive use of military force) mission.⁷³ Peace operations, as opposed to more conventional military operations, frequently lack a traditional enemy. They also tend to be highly ambiguous and are often subject to frequently changing political guidance.

In the expanded scope of U.S. involvement in Mogadishu, strategic and operational planners lost sight of the initial objectives. Without a clearly defined end state to conclude hostilities, missions in Somalia continued. What later became known as “mission creep” entered into the planning and development of U.S. government operations. Assessments were not continuously informing military leaders on the progress of ongoing operations. To minimize the complexity of coordination, assessments would have taken into account any increases in organizations within the operating environment. Some

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question whether the military or other interagency officials should be responsible for conducting whole-of-government assessments. Regardless of the answer, few organizations within the U.S. have emerged to do so.

Having an understanding of differing organizational cultures and their approaches to planning (whether detailed or conceptual) can lead to a better fundamental understanding of the capabilities and capacities of each contributing organization. As many military officers have stressed, the State Department and USAID do not conduct “detailed” planning, and diplomacy and development do not have “end states.” Regardless of the type and level of planning, coordination and collaboration among the organizations increases during the planning process. Not including the appropriate civilian organizations in detailed military planning ensures operators will not achieve unity of effort.

Haiti 1994–1995: Understanding the Operational Environment

Between 1991 and 1994, political instability for a population of nearly seven million people reigned in Haiti. Eleven percent of Haitian children were malnourished and dying. Nearly 9 percent of the Haiti’s population was HIV positive. Haiti employed only 810 doctors (nearly 8,540 patients per physician).⁷⁴ By comparison, in 1990, the United States had 615,400 licensed physicians for a population of 248.71 million (nearly 385 patients per physician).⁷⁵ Also during this period, 30,000 Haitians found refuge in the Dominican Republic, upwards of 300,000 were displaced within Haiti, and some 68,500 Haitians were assessed to have fled Haiti in small boats.⁷⁶ Many surfaced on Florida beaches, while many others were not as fortunate. These “boat people” were apparently the problem for the U.S. Given these conditions, the people of Haiti were in serious need of humanitarian assistance.

The mass migration of the Haitian people toward the U.S. led to internal U.S. government discourse on how to deal with the socially and politically unstable Haiti. In February 1991, after winning two-thirds of the Haitian vote in an internationally-monitored election, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide took office. One of his first steps was to make Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras the commander-in-chief of the Haitian armed forces.⁷⁷ With Aristide’s presidency came reforms that fostered opposition from the political and military elite. On September 29, 1991, this opposition became an armed rebellion led by Lieutenant General Cedras and successfully removed Aristide from power. Between Aristide’s departure and his reemergence in Haiti in October 1994, thousands of Haitians were killed, and the

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deteriorating situation forced the U.S. to take action.⁷⁸

During President George H.W. Bush’s Administration, whole-of-government approaches to complex problems were viewed as essential for national security. However, the use of U.S. military force to restore democracy in Haiti was considered the last resort.⁷⁹ Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney asked Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell what he thought about using military force in Haiti. General Powell replied, “We can take the country over in an afternoon with a company or two of Marines.”⁸⁰ Getting out of Haiti would be the problem. General Powell did not intend to support an invasion just to restore a questionable democracy devoid of democratic institutions or conventions.⁸¹ While many of the President’s advisors favored the use of military force, DoD remained against it. United States government policy was to use diplomatic means to return President Aristide to power. Interagency planning was further complicated when President Clinton stated that his Administration would consider the use of force in Haiti.⁸²

American Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, author, and historian David Halberstam viewed Haiti as an “open sore, a nation that produced a constant flood of refugees who sailed to the United States in a sad little armada of homemade boats under the most desperate circumstances.”⁸³ Under the Bush Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard interdicted the fleeing Haitians and sent them back to Haiti. However, Clinton saw President Bush’s policy as criminal and inhumane and spoke publicly about his opposition to these interdictions. As Halberstam points out, Clinton quickly changed his rhetoric after receiving intelligence reports and pictures from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) that showed thousands of Haitians tearing off the roofs to their houses and turning them into boats to sail to America.⁸⁴ The CIA assessed the U.S. could expect as many as 200,000 refugees.⁸⁵ While there was no significant national security threat that necessitated U.S. military force, the humanitarian situation and looming immigration crisis was enough to cause President Clinton to react, but not before four Haitian corpses, including two children, were found on two South Florida beaches.⁸⁶

Less than one month after General Cedras took power, the UN voted to suspend international aid to Haiti and freeze Haitian government assets internationally.⁸⁷ United States citizens and business firms were prohibited from sending financial transactions to Haiti in support of the ongoing turmoil. Politically, the international community employed economic sanctions against the Haitian government and threatened the use of military force to remove General Cedras from power.⁸⁸ From October 1991 to September 1994, the U.S. tried mediation and negotiation.⁸⁹ Indeed, diplomatic

efforts were underway despite the deployments of military forces and the conduct of maritime interception operations, sanction enforcement, refugee recovery, and other various types of displays of force.⁹⁰

By the summer of 1994, the refugee problem was getting worse. Between July 3 and 4, the U.S. Coast Guard intercepted over 6,000 refugees attempting to flee Haiti for what might have been a better life in the U.S.⁹¹ This increased threat to the homeland led to UNSCR 940. This resolution authorized 6,000 military personnel to use “all necessary means” to facilitate the departure of General Cedras’s military regime and restore the democratically elected President Aristide.⁹² This resolution provided the authority that the U.S. government needed to gain international community support of U.S. efforts in Haiti.⁹³

INTERAGENCY AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES COLLABORATION

Two issues presented problems for U.S. government operations in Haiti in the mid-1990s, and both had to do with organizational understanding. The first problem was a lapse in close interagency cooperation or even accepted channels for coordination that often left military planners working in a vacuum. In Haiti, achieving unity-of-effort toward U.S. strategic objectives was not hamstrung on a grand scale. At the operational level, however, planners lacked an understanding of the divergent interagency and intra-agency organizations and their inherent roles, responsibilities, and unique cultures. One assessment was that every U.S. organization involved in Haiti was planning its own participation in the Haiti operation with little operational-level coordination between agencies.⁹⁴ There was little interaction between Washington-based agencies and ongoing planning by the military outside of Washington, so interagency coordination at the tactical level did not take place until troops were on the ground in Haiti.⁹⁵

According to 1993 doctrine, the goal of interagency coordination was to develop and promote the unity of effort needed to accomplish specific missions.⁹⁶ These missions required coordination and integration from interagency organizations whose goals, policies, procedures, and decision-making processes differed. This difference in organizational culture led to disjointed planning and did not achieve the desired synchronized approach to operational planning.⁹⁷ Like Somalia, many planners in Haiti did not receive training or education on the roles and responsibilities of contributing joint, interagency, and multinational organizations.⁹⁸ Each organization had core values that it would not compromise.⁹⁹ With this lack in understanding, workable compromises were necessary to integrate

Like Somalia, many planners in Haiti did not receive training or education on the roles and responsibilities of contributing joint, interagency, and multinational organizations.

all of the elements of power.¹⁰⁰

The second problem, uniquely internal to the DoD, was that “the working relationship between [SOF] and conventional forces operating in Port-au-Prince was not always smooth.”¹⁰¹ Differences in training and culture divided the two from achieving a common perspective on the challenges in Haiti. At times, conventional units were unaware of what was happening in the countryside where SOF were operating. Occasionally conventional units were surprised to encounter SOF in the rural areas of Haiti. “Soldiers who have operated in both conventional and SOF domains attributed the intra-organizational differences in military cultures and the misperceptions between the two as the reasons for the divide.”¹⁰²

In the initial planning phases, a lack of information flow led to coordination and collaboration problems...

As with most operations, maintaining operational security was critically significant. There were information silos among the various headquarters that controlled military activity throughout the country, and at times, this compartmentalization was occurring within the same headquarters as well. Planners within one cell did not share information with anyone outside their own compartment and “compartmentalized planning frustrated many planners who needed information to de-conflict problems and work through the complexities of the operation.”¹⁰³ In the initial planning phases, a lack of information flow led to coordination and collaboration problems, although reporters were able to obtain top-secret information without much difficulty. Ironically, for many military planners, it would take up to six months to obtain approval for a top-secret clearance, which prohibited planners with the necessary skill sets from participating in the initial planning for Haiti.¹⁰⁴

OUTCOMES

A review of the Haiti intervention finds that interagency and special operations planners lacked an understanding of the divergent cultures and organizations in Haiti. The roles and responsibilities of the civilian organization operating in Haiti differed from SOF. While interagency collaboration on a grand scale achieved the desired effects, the goals, policies, procedures, and decision-making processes made planning disjointed. Planners did not receive training or education on the roles and responsibilities of contributing joint, interagency, and multinational organizations before arriving in Haiti. In addition to the interagency process, intra-organizational understanding presented similar difficulties. Differences in training, education, and organizational cultures stopped SOF and conventional military forces from achieving a common perspective on the problems and the solutions in Haiti. However, it is essential to note that despite the complications and shortfalls in coordination and planning, interagency collaboration on a grand scale achieved

the desired effects—reinstatement of the democratically elected president.

Somalia 2006–2007: Understanding the Operational Environment

The fall of Siad Barre in 1992 set conditions for the rise and fall of various political-military factions in Somalia. Lacking a national policing force to impose the law, Somali warlords turned to the al-Ittihad al-Islami (AIAI) in search of stability.¹⁰⁵ As Somalia's largest established Islamic militant organization, AIAI, frequently referred to as the Islamic Courts Union or the Islamic Courts, had a leadership core who proved effective at delegating operational tasks to lower-level operatives.¹⁰⁶ Because AIAI leaders put forward Islam as the way out of the country's long decline, Somalis used AIAI to help resolve disputes across clan lines.¹⁰⁷ These leaders could enforce their rulings with the assistance of armed militias.¹⁰⁸ AIAI was introduced to al-Qaida, and collectively they began coordinating, cooperating, and expanding their influence as well as their operational reach.

In 2006, President George W. Bush's Administration was focused on offensive operations in the global campaign against terrorism. In June and July, coalition forces saw some of the most vicious fighting in Afghanistan since the Taliban regime left the country in 2001. The U.S.-led Operation Mountain Thrust inflicted over 1,100 deaths to Taliban forces and contributed to nearly 400 captured Taliban forces.¹⁰⁹ In the same year, sectarian violence waged in Iraq as the U.S. government was on the verge of surging U.S. military forces in and around Baghdad.¹¹⁰ In Somalia, the second battle for Mogadishu was fought, according to one report, "as a proxy war, of sorts."¹¹¹ The Bush Administration did not want to see Somalia become a safe haven for terrorists.¹¹² An United States Military Academy assessment stated that Somalia was important to both the U.S. and terrorist organizations. In essence, it assessed that terrorists who were operating in Somalia were prone to similar, if not the same, security challenges that vexed U.S. entities.¹¹³ It concluded that future interventions would be challenged by local populations.

On December 8, 2006, the Ethiopian Defense Forces (EDF) invaded Somalia. The AIAI called for jihad against Ethiopia. Media reports made several references to an alleged U.S. involvement in the Ethiopian intervention in Somalia.¹¹⁴ One report suggested that the U.S. pressured Ethiopia diplomatically to do so, while some reporting refutes the issue completely.¹¹⁵ Regardless of motivations, the EDF forced Mogadishu to fall twenty days after intervention when the militaries of Somalia's transitional federal government

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and the EDF arrived in Mogadishu.¹¹⁶

December also saw additional effects against the operational environment in Somalia. A drought displaced over 300,000 people in search of help. In the process villages were destroyed and livestock were killed. CARE International reported that nearly a million people were effected by the humanitarian disaster. The UN believed that the struggles with aid delivery were directly attributed to the escalating violence in Somalia in late 2006.¹¹⁷

Andre Le Sage, a senior research fellow for Africa at the National Defense University, called the humanitarian situation in Somalia “serious and dire.”¹¹⁸ Le Sage acknowledged that, “we have a recurring humanitarian crisis [in Somalia] with a combination of internal displacement, as well as the ongoing conflict, which prevents international assistance from arriving.”¹¹⁹ This recurring crisis was further exaggerated by the need for security, stability, and development in the region.¹²⁰

INTERAGENCY AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES COLLABORATION

United States coordination on issues in Somalia were hamstrung by competing interests within U.S. government organizations.

United States coordination on issues in Somalia were hamstrung by competing interests within U.S. government organizations. In U.S. embassies overseas, the Ambassador serves as the President’s personal representative in the country. The Ambassador is responsible for the embassy, as well as the interconnected relationships within the embassy. In a recent Office of the Inspector General (OIG) report, despite having a dynamic relationship with strategic leaders, coordination and collaboration between overseas elements and Washington has occasionally been concerning.¹²¹ Reasons for this concern might have to do with intra-organization collaboration.¹²²

At most U.S. embassies, key players collaborate as an interagency or country team in support of U.S. interests.¹²³ Elements responsible for intelligence, law enforcement, and the safeguarding of the U.S. embassy itself are becoming important contributors to achieving unity of effort overseas. Given their geographical dislocation from their higher headquarters, the country teams sometimes do not share the same working understanding of the U.S. government’s strategic interests, generally within their higher headquarters.¹²⁴

Sean Naylor, a senior *Army Times* writer published a series of articles about U.S. efforts in Somalia. Naylor found efforts were complicated by the fact that there were “two proponent agencies” for the war against al-Qaida,¹²⁵ and this necessity to collaborate created friction between operational military units and civilian organizations.¹²⁶ In this environment, a civilian organization was considered the supported organization in the fight against terrorism in the region. Some key outcomes of the U.S. and Ethiopian

military efforts provide useful considerations for future military and interagency operations in Somalia.¹²⁷

OUTCOMES

It was evident in 2006 that the reoccurring nature of humanitarian crisis in Somalia extended the need for security, stability, and development in the region. Lacking a central government, Somalis turned to the international community to provide relief from the dire humanitarian and security conditions. Despite the novel efforts by non-government organizations to maintain life, the level of aid was not sufficient to keep families from starving to death. The lack of interagency collaboration left elements of the U.S. military scrambling to develop a plan. SOF were provided an opportunity to further their understanding of Somalia's complicated insurgent operational environment. While the military's counterinsurgency manual was relatively new, it recognized that, "culture influences how people make judgments about what is right and what is wrong, assessing what is important and unimportant."¹²⁸ Training and education would have helped to underscore such principles prior to operating in this environment.

This research highlights that at a very fundamental level, the work of collective government lacks understanding. As was the case in Somalia and Haiti, interagency organizations and SOF collectively lacked an understanding of the roles, responsibilities, authorities, and cultures of the other U.S. national security organizations. Further, collective government lacked specific country knowledge on the cultural sensitivities and societal constructs. Emphasizing the problem at hand instead of the competing organizational interests could go a long way to overcoming the existing stovepipes between and within military and civilian organizations. For organizations to be successful at achieving strategic interests, an evolution in training and education may prove useful in complex operational environments such as Somalia and Haiti.

As was the case in Somalia and Haiti, interagency organizations and SOF collectively lacked an understanding of the roles, responsibilities, authorities, and cultures of the other U.S. national security organizations.

Recommendations

A lack of interagency training and education, a unified strategic vision for interagency cooperation, and organizational-level commitment to whole-of-government approaches contribute to the limitations in achieving unity of effort.

The first weakness involves interagency training and education.¹²⁹ While interagency coordination is not perfect, this challenge can be fixed by strategic leaders.¹³⁰ Given that some organizations do not have the manpower to participate in interagency activities, a broad application of interagency training and education would require

CGSC has sought to attract interagency representation in not only the first year academic program, but also programs offered by the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS).

a congressional mandate to ensure implementation across the U.S. government. However, some organizations such as the State Department, DoD, and Homeland Security, do provide training and education opportunities for non-military employees within the U.S. government.¹³¹ For instance, USSOCOM provides training courses several times a year to prepare military and civilian leaders to collaborate successfully within interagency communities.¹³² Furthermore, senior military schools such as the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), the service war colleges, the National Defense University, and Joint Forces Staff College all seek more joint and interagency collaboration.¹³³ Through the State Department programs, these schools have additionally offered multinational participation within the U.S.¹³⁴

CGSC has sought to attract interagency representation in not only the first year academic program, but also programs offered by the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS).¹³⁵ Students from homeland security and government agencies join mid-level or senior-level military officers in a 9–12 month program. These training programs contribute to the overall professionalism of the U.S. government.

The second weakness involves a unified strategic vision for interagency cooperation. A unified strategic vision could create standards for collaboration and might serve as a way of holding organizations accountable for achieving unity of effort throughout government. Without this unified strategic vision, the government does not provide a coherent, cost-effective, and complementing solution to achieving strategic objectives.

Congressional progress, although stalled since October 2011, has taken the initial steps to resolve this challenge. If enacted into public law, the “Interagency Personnel Rotation Act of 2011” would establish a framework for training and education programs.¹³⁶ The first objective is to create a U.S. government employee rotational program within the national security community. The second objective is to require these employees to participate in training and education to further break down organizational cultural biases. The third objective is to provide incentives to competent national security personnel who participate in interagency training and education environments.¹³⁷ A favorable decision on such a bill and implementation across national security organizations would greatly impact organizational collaboration.

The third weakness involves organizational-level commitment (from senior leadership) to whole-of-government approaches. Rewarding supervisors for enabling training might improve interagency collaboration. Organizations might consider incentivizing opportunities for interagency coordination. Stewart

Patrick and Kaysie Brown of the Center for Global Development advocate that senior officials “create professional incentives to reward greater interagency collaboration.”¹³⁸ They suggest that the possibility of linking professional advancement to “joint” or “interagency service” might also be a possible way of rewarding employees.

Federal government organizations should advocate for joint-duty or exchange programs, where two employees from different organizations switch to the others’ organization to learn about the unique capabilities, roles, responsibilities, institutional cultures, and decision-making processes of other organizations.¹³⁹ These programs are valuable not only to the individual participants, but also for the organizations involved in the program.

Conclusion

United States involvement in overseas operations will endure into the future. This predicted future coupled with the compassion of the American people will continue to place policymakers in difficult situations. This research addresses the relationship between interagency and SOF by analyzing U.S. intervention in HA/DR, specifically in Somalia from 1992 -1994, Haiti from 1994 -1995, and Somalia from 2006-2007. At a very fundamental level, the work of collective government lacked understanding during the selected case studies. An understanding of the problem in depth can lead planners to develop a whole-of-government approach that ensures that the U.S. government is solving the right problem, and that it is doing so effectively by utilizing all the capabilities resident within interagency organizations. As the evolution of warfare continues to shape and structure the style of fighting, it will be up to government leaders to determine the shape, size, and kinds of tools that support political aims. These tools will sharpen given the implementation of these recommendations; however, a lapse in progress or continued congressional delay will impede progress in protecting our national security. **IAP**

As the evolution of warfare continues to shape and structure the style of fighting, it will be up to government leaders to determine the shape, size, and kinds of tools that support political aims.

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