

Baseball Caps and Beards: The Perception of US Special Forces by Conventional Forces and Its Impact on Interdependence

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

Baseball Caps And Beards: The Perception Of US Special Forces By Conventional Forces And -

The path to Interdependence between Conventional Forces (CF) and Special Forces (SF) grew out of the success and failure in combat and peacetime operations over the last three decades. Beginning with the catastrophic collision during Operation Eagle Claw to combined operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, interdependence has been a difficult process. However, initially a difficult concept to champion, interdependence between CF and USSF allowed for a more effective use of military power against our adversaries in the Global War on Terror.

Given the combination of fiscal constraints, a downsizing military, and a non-stop demand signal for military assistance in overseas contingency operations, interdependence between USSF and CF will be crucial to future mission success.

This monograph researches what the perception of United States Special Forces is by Conventional Forces and how it will affect future interdependence. In order to answer this research question this monograph will conduct a case study analysis of previous conflicts in which United States Special Forces and Conventional Forces worked together. The researcher will then conduct non-generalizable oral history interviews to understand how interactions of the past thirteen years has set the conditions for future interdependence. Synthesizing the information gathered during the research will reflect on past experience and to suggest considerations for future study.

Contents

Acronyms	iv
Figures	vii
Introduction	1
Historical Context.....	4
Interdependence	5
Operation Eagle Claw	6
Operation Urgent Fury	7
Creation of Special Operations Command (SOCOM).....	9
Operation Just Cause	10
Operation Desert Storm	13
Operation Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard.....	16
Global War on Terror	20
Lived Experiences during the GWOT	22
Analysis.....	25
Experience (CONUS)	25
<i>On-Post Training Created a Positive Perception Between CF and USSF.</i>	25
Experience (OCONUS)	26
Professionalism and Communication	26
Roles	30
Conventional Force Perception of Interdependence	33
Regionally Aligned Forces	34
Summary	39
Suggestions for Future Research.....	40
Bibliography	47
Appendix A: Consent And Use Agreement For Oral History	50
Appendix B: Oral History Interview Questions	52

Acronyms

ABCT	Armored Brigade Combat Team
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
ARSOF	Army Special Operations Force
BBA	Bipartisan Budget Act
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
BSO	Battle Space Owner
C2	Command and Control
CAC	Combined Arms Center
CCDR	Combatant Commander
CCMD	Combatant Command
CENTCOM	Central Command
CF	Conventional Forces
CFSOC	Combined Force Special Operations Component Command
CGSOC	Command and General Staff Officers College
CINCSOUTH	Commander in Chief Allied Forces Southern Europe
CJSOTF	Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force
CONUS	Continental United States
CSA	Chief of Staff of the Army
CSAR	Combat Search and Rescue
CTC	Combat Training Center
DA	Direct Action
DOD	Department of Defense
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
GPF	General Purpose Forces
GWOT	Global War on Terror
HMMWV	High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles

IFOR	Implementation Force
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
JCO	Joint Commission Observers
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JP	Joint Publication
JTF	Joint Task Force
JTFPM	Joint Task Force Panama
METL	Mission Essential Task List
MiTT	Military Transition Team
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MND	Multi-National Division
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NTC	National Training Center
OC	Observer Controller
OCONUS	Outside the Continental United States
ODA	Operational Detachment – Alpha
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
PDF	Panamanian Defense Forces
PME	Professional Military Education
RAB	Regionally Aligned Brigade
RAF	Regionally Aligned Force
SAS	Special Air Service
SFG (A)	Special Forces Group (Airborne)
SFLE	Special Forces Liaison Element
SFOR	Security Forces
SOCCE	Special Operations Command and Control Element

SOCCENT	Special Operations Command – Central
SOC SOUTH	Special Operations Command – South
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOUTHCOM	Southern Command
TACON	Tactical Administrative Control
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
TTPs	Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USSF	United States Special Forces
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VSO	Village Stability Operations

Figures

1	Gradual Integration between USSF and CF	5
2	Mission Essential Task List for Armored Brigade Combat Team	44
3	Buy-in and Credibility: A recommended approach	51

Introduction

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 forever changed the landscape of the United States, both its citizens and its military. Embroiled in a Global War on Terror (GWOT), the United States military found itself fighting two separate large-scale wars for the last thirteen years. During the GWOT, Conventional Forces (CF) interacted closer with United States Special Forces (USSF) than at any time ever before, enhancing the capabilities of both organizations. With the cessation of hostilities and the redeployment of forces from Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in 2010, and the transition of responsibilities to the Afghan government in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), it appeared that the Army would find itself in an interwar period.

Traditionally during interwar periods, the US Army studies the previous war and incorporates changes into the force in preparation for future conflicts. With the redeployment of forces, the Army found itself directly impacted by the 2013 Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) in which the Department of Defense lost \$32 billion in funding. In concert with the sequestration from the BBA, the Army lost its funding for its wartime structure of 520,000 soldiers and was ordered to reduce to an end strength of 490,000. As briefed by General Raymond T. Odierno, the 38th Chief of Staff of the US Army, on 25 March 2014 to the members of the House Armed Services Committee, “in order to attain the proper balance between end strength, readiness and modernization by the end of sequestration we will have to dramatically slash end strength again beginning in fiscal year '16. This is in no way by choice. We will be required to further reduce the active Army end strength, to 420,000.”¹

¹ “House Armed Services Committee Holds Hearing On Department of the Army Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal 2015,” *Congressional Quarterly*, March, 2014, accessed September 30, 2014, <http://www.ngaus.org/sites/default/files/TRANSCRIPT-%20HASC%20Army%20Posture%20Hearing%2025MAR14.pdf>.

Exacerbating the difficult situation the Chief of Staff of the Army found himself in was the ever changing global landscape. Russian forces invaded and annexed Crimea from Ukraine, North Korea resumed its long-range missile testing, and the rapidly-growing Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) required a response from the United States government, which looked to the Army to assist in its overseas strategy. It would appear that the Army would not find itself in an interwar period after all, but instead it would need to transform its formations to meet these emerging global threats, while simultaneously managing the difficulties associated with reduced manpower and budget. On September 10, 2014, five months after General Odierno's grim report to the House Armed Services Committee, President Barak Obama addressed the citizens of the United States in response to the growing threat of ISIL:

[W]e will increase our support to forces fighting these terrorists on the ground. In June, I deployed several hundred American service members to Iraq to assess how we can best support Iraqi security forces. Now that those teams have completed their work – and Iraq has formed a government we will send an additional 475 service members to Iraq.... they are needed to support Iraqi and Kurdish forces with training, intelligence and equipment. We'll also support Iraq's efforts to stand up National Guard Units to help Sunni communities secure their own freedom from ISIL's control.²

On 25 September, 2014 the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters received orders to deploy to Iraq in order to oversee the operations currently ongoing in support of Iraqi and Kurdish forces against the ISIL threat. Almost four years after the last American troops left Iraq, both CF and USSF would once again work in the same battle space against a common threat.

Given the combination of fiscal constraints, a downsizing military, and a non-stop demand signal for military assistance in overseas contingency operations, interdependence between USSF and CF will be crucial to future mission success. In commenting on the necessity

² Office of the Press Secretary, Statement by the President On ISIL, The White House, September 10, 2014, accessed September 30, 2014, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/10/statement-president-isil-1>.

to maximize current available manpower, General Odierno told *Foreign Affairs* magazine that “the army will need to preserve and enhance its relationship with joint special operations forces. The evolution of this partnership over the past decade has been extraordinary, and the ties can become even stronger as we continue to develop new operational concepts, enhance our training, and invest in new capabilities.”³ For there to be successful interdependence there must be mutual respect and the recognition both CF and Special Operations Forces (SOF) that each brings unique skills to the fight. This raises the question of how in recent years past conventional forces come to viewed their SOF brothers, as well as how SOF view CF. These are the sine qua non of successful CF-SOF interdependence.

Approaching an answer to how perceptions developed is the objective of this monograph. In particular, it investigates the perception of CF combat arms soldiers acquired toward USSF. In order to answer this question, we first understand how the relationship evolved over time. The first section of this monograph will utilize case studies for two purposes. The first purpose is to inform the reader on the difficulty that was inherent in maximizing the potential of both CF and USSF during overseas contingency operations. The second purpose of the case studies is to allow the researcher to identify causes that led to the successful interdependence of SOF and CF, as well as the many ways in which this interdependence might have failed. This forms the basis for the second section of this monograph, which centers on a series of oral history interviews with a select group of Army officers from the conventional force who worked closely with SOF in their recent career. By delving down to the individual level of analysis and accessing the lived

³ General Raymond Odierno, “The U.S. Army in a Time of Transition: Building a Flexible Force,” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2012, accessed January 29, 2015, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137423/ramond-t-odierno/the-us-army-in-a-time-of-transition>.

experience of actual soldiers, the causes of success and/or failure in the case study section can be viewed through first-hand accounts. Although the experiences are not generalizable beyond the actual individuals interviewed, they do provide a glimpse into the perceptions of CF officers who have worked closely with USSF and can therefore be useful in helping us understand the history of the CF-SOF relationship.

Historical Context

You cannot take a few people from one unit, throw them in with some from another, give them someone else's equipment, and hope to come up with a top-notch fighting outfit.

- Colonel Charles Beckwith⁴

The path to Interdependence between CF and USSF grew out of the success and failure in combat and peacetime operations over the last three decades. Beginning with the catastrophic collision during Operation Eagle Claw to combined operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, interdependence has been a difficult process. This section of the monograph defines the concept of interdependence and its recent historical applications in doctrine. The researcher then examines the historical relationship between USSF and CF using examples of the past three decades. This will hopefully provide the reader with an understanding of the cultural and doctrinal changes enacted in the past decades and how they affected the concept of interdependence. Figure 1 depicts the author's view of how the forcing function of contingency operations gradually forced SOF/USSF and CF together. While the case studies discuss SOF in a broad sense, only focusing on USSF specifically during certain operations, they present the reader with an overall narrative of the evolution of relations between CF and SOF over time.

⁴ Peter Huchthausen, *America's Splendid Little Wars: A Short History of U.S. Military Engagements, 1975-2000* (New York: Viking Adult, 2003), 28.

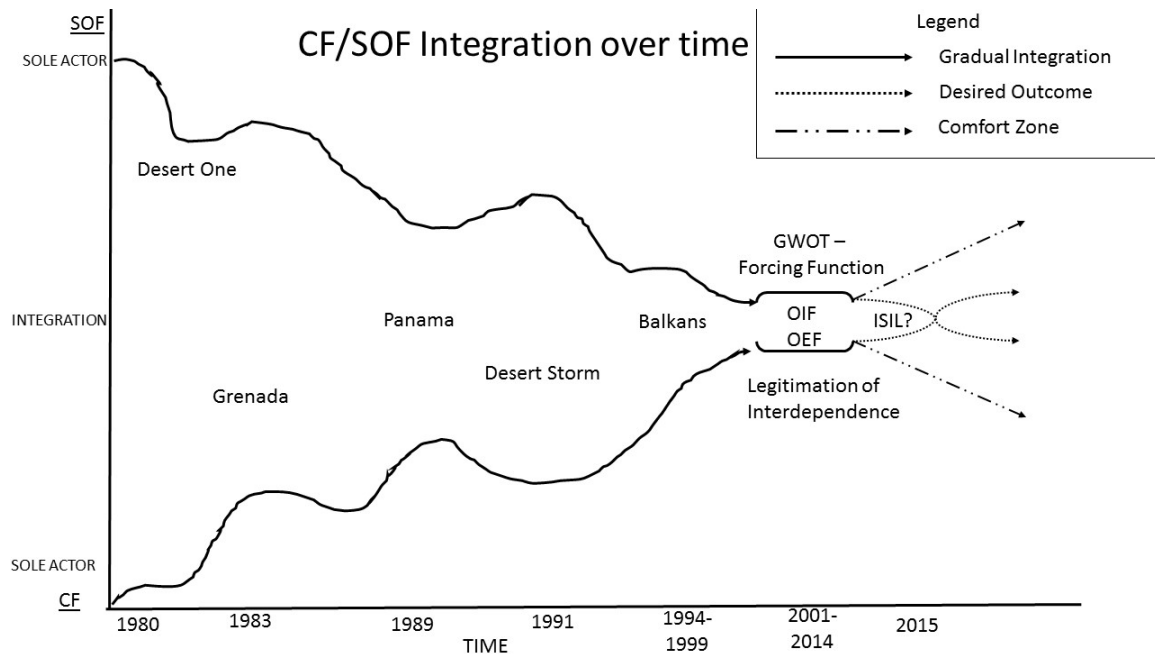


Figure 1. Gradual Integration between USSF and CF

Source: Created by Author

Interdependence

Definition

Joint Publication 3-0, as published in 2008 defined Interdependence as “the purposeful reliance by one Service on another Service’s capabilities to maximize the complementary and reinforcing effects of both.”⁵ Joint doctrine focused on the services working together to achieve a common objective. Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-0 *The US Army Capstone Concept*, states the purpose of Interdependence is to describe the vision of the future operational

⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office 13 February, 2008), II-1.

environments to the joint force as well as the Army. The *Army Capstone Concept* further specified Interdependence of special operations and conventional forces as “the deliberate and mutual reliance by one force on another’s inherent capabilities designed to provide complementary and reinforcing effects,” further specifying that integration and interoperability are “subsets of interdependence.”⁶

Operation Eagle Claw

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the seizure of American hostages within the US Embassy would be the background for a dramatic change of the United States Department of Defense. On November 4, 1979, students and protestors in support of the radical cleric Ayatollah Khomeini scaled the walls of the US Embassy and seized its occupants. The hostage crisis that ensued exposed a large capability gap within the Department of Defense (DoD). There was no special operations unit trained, manned and equipped to conduct such a high-risk rescue operation. Operation Eagle Claw was the combination of US Special Operations Forces with conventional force assets, tasked with the rescue of the American hostages. Marred by a myriad of problems such as disjointed command and control structures, lack of experience working together, poorly maintained equipment, and secrecy that prevented proper support from other conventional forces within the theater of operations, the operation failed to meet its objectives and resulted in the deaths of eight service members at Desert One.⁷ Following the failure of Operation Eagle Claw a review panel, known as the Holloway Commission, released an after action review of the

⁶ Training and Doctrine Command, Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-0, *The U.S. Army Capstone Concept* (Fort Eustis, VA: Headquarters, United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, December 19, 2012), 38.

⁷ Huchthausen, 37.

operation. A significant finding in the report was “forces were so *interdependent* that complete force *integration was essential*”⁸ (emphasis added). The Holloway Commission’s findings led to the Special Operations Advisory Panel, which paved the way for the forming of a separate Joint Special Operations Command.⁹

Operation Urgent Fury

Four years after the failure at Desert One, and in the same month as the bombing of the Marine Barracks in Lebanon, the United States launched its first large-scale military operation since the Vietnam War. In 1983, Prime Minister of the People’s Revolutionary Government of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, was overthrown and executed by members of his own party. “Bishop’s overthrow in October by militantly anti-US Marxists appeared to pose an immediate threat to the nearly six hundred American students and four hundred other foreigners living in Grenada.”¹⁰ The anticipated level of resistance by Grenadian and Cuban forces caused a continual change in the military strategy, up until the execution of the operation. Initially planned as a hostage rescue operation utilizing US Marines from sea-based vessels, the size of the military force continued to grow until it reached over 8,000 personnel. Two days before the initiation of operations, “Atlantic Command charged the commander of the US Second Fleet, Vice Admiral. Joseph Metcalf III, with command of Joint Task Force 120 and with overall command of the Grenada

⁸ United States. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Special Operations Review Group. Rescue Mission Report. Washington, Dc: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1980.,” Naval History and Heritage Command, accessed December 9, 2014, http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/holloway_rpt.htm#conclusions.

⁹ Huchthausen, 39.

¹⁰ Ronald H. Cole, *Operation Urgent Fury: Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Grenada; 12 October - 2 November 1983* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 1997), 1.

operation. General Sholtes was to command all the special operations forces as part of Task Force 123.”¹¹ Shortly after aligning the Command and Control (C2) structure to manage conventional and special operations forces, the task organization changed. The day prior to the initiation of the operation, at “the urging of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Admiral McDonald rearranged the joint task force, placing the Rangers and the 82nd Airborne Division directly under Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf.”¹² The continual shift in C2 structure, hasty planning, and lack of knowledge of the capabilities of special operations forces led to friction and confusion during the operation.

On 25 October, 1983, the United States launched Operation Urgent Fury, aimed at freeing American and foreign hostages and re-establishing stability to the region. The initial plan for Task Force 123 in the south of the island was to have a thirty-seven man element from Delta Force clear the runway at Point Salinas, in preparation for the airborne insertion of Rangers from 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. Elements of the Navy Sea-Air-Land (SEALs) were to clear objective Pearl for the Marine landings. Both elements of the SEALs and Delta operators found themselves outmatched numerically on their objectives and suffered multiple casualties. Coupled with the delay in employment of the Rangers on their objectives, the special operations forces found themselves in a precarious position. At the same time as the runway clearances, other elements of Delta Force attempted assaults on Fort Rupert, Fort Frederick, and the Richmond Hill Prison. Due to stiff resistance and rising casualties, the assault commander aborted the operations. Summarized by the Delta Task Force Commander, retired Brigadier General David

¹¹ Richard W. Stewart, *Operation Urgent Fury: The Invasion of Grenada, October 1983*, CMH PUB 70-114 (Histories Division of the Center of Military History, 2008), 1

¹² Cole, 3.

Grange, stated “I had seventeen wounded in my force of forty four. The mission was not very clear, nor were the rules of engagement. We were not sure who we were supposed to rescue from the prison.”¹³ The lightly armed Delta operators suffered multiple casualties from the numerous island defenders while clearing the runway.

Despite initial confusion and delay, and the significant casualties sustained by US forces, Operation Urgent Fury successfully achieved all of its objectives. Following the operation, the United States Army conducted an after action review of the operation, conducted by Colonel. Louis D. F. Frasché. The report stated “Army participants were either unaware of, or, misunderstood existing joint doctrine, while its implementation revealed deep flaws in the areas of communications, planning, and deployment.”¹⁴ The separation between the special operations forces, Army, and Marine elements added to additional confusion on both the planning staffs and the units on the ground.

Creation of Special Operations Command (SOCOM)

Policymakers used Operation Eagle Claw and Operation Urgent Fury as a catalyst to push for a change in the structure of the DoD. In 1986, the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act was written into law. The new law forced the “creation of a unified combatant command for special operations missions which would combine the special operations mission’s responsibilities, and forces of the armed forces.”¹⁵ The Nunn-Cohen Amendment

¹³ Huchthausen, 82.

¹⁴ Stewart, 31.

¹⁵ DOD Reorganization Act of 1986, Public Law 99-433, *U.S. Statutes at Large* 100 (1986): 1, codified at *U.S. Code* 10 (1986), § 111.

“established SOCOM, with a four-star General in charge, bringing SOF from all the services under one command.”¹⁶ Thus, US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) was created and became responsible for training and equipping all special operations forces within the DoD.

Each service component within the DoD was tasked with forming its own Special Operations Command that reports to both its service chief as well as the commander of USSOCOM. The headquarters for Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) is the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), which was stood up immediately. Within USASOC are the Army Rangers, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, Special Operations Aviation Regiment, and Special Forces (commonly referred to as Green Berets). With the creation of SOCOM, Special Forces became a branch within the United States Army. Prior to becoming that, Special Forces operators would rotate regularly within the ranks of the regular Army, maintaining their original Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), while also maintaining a skill identifier of Special Forces. The importance of the creation of the branch is a topic for another study, but the lack of communication between SF and CF has been evident since this divide, and is addressed in some detail in the second half of this study. While the Goldwater-Nichols Act aimed at increasing the unity of command within the Department of Defense, once the framework was set, there would still be many growing pains to make this unity of command a reality.

Operation Just Cause

In contrast to the rushed planning and execution of Urgent Fury, Operation Just Cause would benefit from a large amount of time of planning, rehearsals and synchronization. As Cole describes “In 1988, as relations with Panama deteriorated, the commander of US Southern

¹⁶ David Tucker and Christopher J. Lamb, *United States Special Operations Forces* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 97.

Command (SOUTHCOM), General Frederick F. Woerner, Jr., US Army, had developed a strategy which gradually increased the strength of US forces in Panama to deter the dictator, General Manuel Noriega.”¹⁷ The joint planning between special operations forces and their conventional counterparts, on Operation Blue Spoon (which would be changed to Operation Just Cause days before the operation), began in earnest in April of 1988. “During 14-17 April, the special operations planners from Fort Bragg visited Panama to de-conflict facilities and terrain with all Joint Task Force Panama (JTFPM) customers.”¹⁸

In May 1989 President Bush authorized the deployment of 1,900 troops when “the dictator’s personally chosen candidate was overwhelmingly defeated at the polls, Noriega declared the elections invalid. Two days later the winning opposition candidates were assaulted at a post-election rally, and one of their personal bodyguards was murdered.”¹⁹ As troop levels increased, so too did the level of concurrent planning between special operations forces and the staff of JTFPM. SOF’s tasks would be in line with the units’ capability and training. As described in Cole’s monograph “SOUTHCOM special operations forces would attempt to support the opposition, rescue hostages, and capture Noriega. Within twenty hours, Rangers from the US would conduct additional offensive operations to seize the Tocumen Military Airfield outside Panama City.”²⁰

¹⁷ Ronald Cole, *Operation Just Cause: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Panama February 1988-January 1990* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 1997), 3.

¹⁸ Lawrence A Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama: Origins, Planning, and Crisis Management, June 1987-December 1989* (Washington D.C.: Military Bookshop, 2011), 95.

¹⁹ R. Cody Phillips, *Operation Just Cause: The Incursion in to Panama*. CMH PUB 70 85 CMH PUB 70-83-1 (Histories Division of the Center of Military History, 2004), 8.

²⁰ Cole, 18.

On 15 December 1989, “the National Assembly passed a resolution stating that “owing to US aggression,” a state of war existed with the United States. That same day Noriega named himself the Maximum Leader and publicly speculated that someday the “bodies of our enemies” would float down the Panama Canal and the people of Panama would win complete control over the waterway.”²¹ Five days later, after an American Navy Lieutenant and his wife were arrested and beaten by Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF), General Maxwell Thurman, the new SOCSOUTH Commander, received a phone call from General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. “The President said I should be sure to tell you that enough is enough. Execute.”²²

Executed on Wednesday December 20, 1989 Operation Just Cause was the first large-scale military operation since the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Special operations forces conducted a myriad of tasks in support of the conventional force operations. Delta Force operators rescued prisoners from Caryl Chessman Prison at the Comandancia. Army Rangers jumped into and secured both Torrijos-Tocumen and Rio Hato Airports, eventually fighting alongside elements of the 82d Airborne Division. Navy SEALs secured Punta Paitilla Airport. Special Forces Teams secured the Pecora River Bridge to prevent reinforcements from reaching the garrison at Torrijos-Tocumen Airport.²³ General Manuel Noriega and several of his close allies were captured and the PDF surrendered after five days of combat.

On January 5, 1990, General Lindsay commented on the interoperability between CF and SOF during Operation Just Cause. “In a message to Secretary Cheney, General Lindsay noted

²¹ Ibid, 27.

²² Malcolm McConnell, *Just Cause: The Real Story of America's High-Tech Invasion of Panama* (New York: St Martins Press, 1991), 19.

²³ Cole, 38.

that Operation Just Cause demonstrated that both special operations forces and conventional forces had made significant progress toward joint interoperability since the 1983 intervention in Grenada. In Panama, Rangers and the crews of Air Force gunships worked together effectively while exercising great restraint in the use of firepower. The special operations task forces of Army, Navy, and Air Force also coordinated their efforts.”²⁴ While there was an increase in joint planning and operations between CF and SOF forces, the relationship continued to have friction points. As described by Yates, friction “developed early on between JTFPM and Special Operations Command – South, over the question of who had operational control of special operations forces and how those elite forces would interact with conventional forces when engaged in crisis-related activities.”²⁵ While the understanding and application of SOF’s specific kinetic capabilities were getting better, the fight over control of these capabilities had only just begun.

Operation Desert Storm

On August 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein launched a surprise invasion of Kuwait, its oil-rich neighbor to the south. Using three of his elite Republican Guard Divisions to spearhead the attack, the Iraqi victory was swift and decisive. The United States and its international allies sent forces to Saudi Arabia to defend against any further Iraqi aggression and to prepare for a follow on counter-offensive to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait. United States and allied forces faced a formidable opponent; not only could Iraq mobilize an army of almost a million men, perhaps

²⁴ Ibid, 71.

²⁵ Yates, 283.

“more important, it was well equipped by the virtue of huge purchases, the sheer numbers of tanks, armored fighting vehicles, artillery pieces, and small arms of all types.”²⁶

Identifying and planning tasks for the application of special operations forces against a heavy mechanized Iraqi force caused difficulty among the Central Command (CENTCOM) staff planners. General Norman H. Schwarzkopf, commander of CENTCOM, was skeptical of special operations forces and their capabilities. As Gordon and Trainor point out in their book on the Gulf War, “Schwarzkopf assumed his post at CENTCOM with a palpable skepticism of commando operations. American special operations had not been particularly successful in Vietnam, nor did commando teams acquit themselves well in the invasion of Grenada,” where Schwarzkopf had been deputy commander of the US forces. Gordon and Trainor explained, as far as Schwarzkopf was concerned, the “snake eaters” tended to “exaggerate and get themselves in trouble.”²⁷ General Schwarzkopf, therefore, chose to utilize SOF more in align with contemporary doctrine, specifically FM 100-5 *Airland Battle*, than in the newer role the counter-terrorist units had adopted over the past decade. This role focused on deploying SOF units into the enemy's rear area to assist in the attack on enemy forces by locating, identifying, and destroying targets of operational value, as well as missions such as deep reconnaissance and personnel recovery.²⁸

²⁶ Richard W. Stewart, *War in the Persian Gulf: Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm August 1990 – March 1991*, CMH PUB 70-117-1 (Histories Division of the Center of Military History, 2004), 2.

²⁷ Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *The Generals' War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1995), 241.

²⁸ Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office 1986), 57.

Prior to the Allied counterattack, General Schwarzkopf and General Powell hesitated to use commando operations to disrupt the enemy rear, or target high value targets. Schwarzkopf stated “I did not want a bunch of guys running ‘Rambo-type’ operations and have to divert forces from the rear war to bail them out. I did not want a hostage situation.”²⁹ One could assume Schwarzkopf was referring to the SEAL platoon pinned down by fierce Grenadian resistance and eventually rescued by an element of the Marine Task Force that had to be diverted from the northern part of Grenada.

General Schwarzkopf decided to utilize SOF in the roles described in the 1986 published version of FM 100-5. Deep reconnaissance in conjunction with terminal guidance were used to destroy SCUD missile sites aimed at Israel, as well as manning reconnaissance posts along the border. Special Forces detachments conducted Combat Search and Rescue Missions (CSAR) as well as “worked with Kuwaiti resistance in Saudi Arabia.”³⁰ Russell Ames summarizes exquisitely the successes and failures of SOF and CF integration during Desert Storm. He concludes, “[t]he mission sets for Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT), although important to the combined/joint force, did not require Army leaders to manage SOF capabilities and effects. They also did not increase contact between CF and SOF, or require mutual reliance on Army capabilities. SOF effects were arguably transparent to leaders below the division level.”³¹ The success of SOF/SF operations in Desert Storm was attributed to its application in accordance with joint doctrine that was understood by all participants within the operation. This was an improvement from operations in Grenada. Joint planning among the SOF and CF staffs

²⁹ Gordon, 243.

³⁰ Ibid, 241.

³¹ Russell J. Ames, *Interdependence between Army Conventional Forces and Special Operations Forces: Changing Institutional Mental Models* (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2013), 17.

continued to improve, based off the Panama model. The setback from Desert Storm was the resistance to utilize SOF assets based off negative perception and experiences. This negative perception held by senior leaders of the task force and lack of contact between tactical level units and SOF would be evident in future operations.

Operation Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard

On 14 December 1995, the Bosnian Peace Agreement, known as the Dayton Peace Accord, was signed in Paris. Based on UN Security Council Resolution 1031, the mandate to implement aspects of the Peace Agreement was given to NATO.³² Operation Joint Endeavor would be the military plan to secure the peace in the Balkans. With the implementation of Operation Joint Endeavor, CF and SF would begin a new era of interdependence, that of joint stability operations. The designation for the UN forces was the Implementation Force (IFOR), commanded by Leighton W. Smith, JR, Commander in Chief Allied Forces Southern Europe (CINCSOUTH). Admiral Smith would replace British Lieutenant General Michael Rose, who was commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), which held the peace until the Dayton Peace Accords. A strategy that Admiral Smith would inherit from Lieutenant General Rose would be the utilization of special operations units to provide ground level intelligence to the Joint Task Force Commander. Lieutenant General Smith, having served in the Special Air Service (SAS) “called his SAS teams Joint Commission Observers (JCOs). Having commanded the SAS, he understood their capabilities and used them to cut through the slow and unreliable UNPROFOR command structure to provide frank situation assessments. He directed

³² Michael L. Findlay, *Special Forces Integration with Multinational Division – North in Bosnia – Herzegovina* (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1998), 13.

these JCOs to do more than just provide assessments; he also used them as forward air controllers for airstrikes against Gorazde and Srebrenica, and in other operations.”³³ The JCOs were not merely assessment teams, the JCOs “provided liaison, information exchange, and expedient communications with the former warring factions.”³⁴ Lieutenant General Smith benefited from a deep and well-versed understanding of the warring parties prior to the change of command.

The understanding and integration of SOF and CF capabilities experienced significant difficulties when Multi National Division-North (MND-N) Commander, Major General William Nash assumed command of Task Force Eagle. Some of this friction was due to chain of command and reporting procedures between the SOF elements in MND-N and the commander. Since the JCOs were initially a British unit, of the six original teams “two were in the MND-N sector. These two JCO teams remained under the control of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF), but established liaison with MND-N. JCOs in the French and British sectors, depending on their national orientation, were included in those MND command structures.”³⁵

Another source of friction came from a lack of trust between the two entities. With Task Force Eagle falling in on well-developed human infrastructure provided by the JCOs, there was skepticism of the actions of each organization. The lack of communication was due to a need to maintain access to factional leaders, since “the JCO leaders felt that any close association with intelligence collection agencies could threaten their special access relationship. Subsequently, they declined to attend the weekly MND-N G2 (Intelligence Section) human intelligence

³³ Findlay, 21.

³⁴ Findlay, 22.

³⁵ Ibid, 24.

planning meetings and didn't know MND intelligence requirements. Partly as a result of this lack of understanding, their operations occasionally conflicted with collection assets working with the same sources.”³⁶ The communication between SOF and CF during IFOR operations needed improvement in order to enhance mission effectiveness. Nonetheless operations under IFOR were extremely successful and “because the first 12 months of IFOR saw no combat deaths of peacekeepers and no major civil upheaval the North Atlantic Council reduced troop levels from 60,000 to 32,600.”³⁷

The reduction in troop levels indicated a change in operation as well as a needed change in strategy. With troop levels scheduled to drastically decrease, the need to maximize the capabilities of SOF and CF together gained in importance. In December 1996, Operation Joint Endeavor transitioned to Joint Guard and IFOR was replaced with Security Forces (SFOR). Upon transition to SFOR both “the LCEs and JCOs were under the NATO Tactical Administrative Control (TACON) of the MND-N commander.”³⁸ Prior to the change of mission, COL Les Fuller, Commander of 10th SFG (A), directed Lieutenant Colonel Charles Cleveland to work with Major General Montgomery Miegs and his staff “in developing future plans for SF support. Lieutenant Colonel Cleveland’s task was to perform a troop to task analysis for the specified needs of the MND commanders, and develop a concept of support.”³⁹ Under Operation Joint Guard SOF and SF conducted three primary tasks. As described by Findlay: “develop a liaison/advisory assistance capability for the non-NATO forces deploying with IFOR (the LCE

³⁶ Ibid, 25.

³⁷ Robert F Baumann, George W Gawrych, and Walter E Kretchik, *Armed Peacekeepers in Bosnia* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 203.

³⁸ Findlay, 26.

³⁹ Ibid, 27.

concept), continue some form of the JCO concept, and continue to maintain a rapid reaction special operations capability to support the IFOR commander.”⁴⁰ The joint planning and mutual support planned by Major General Miegs’ staff and members of the 10th SFG (A) staff increased the effectiveness of the ODAs on the ground in support of the conventional land owner. At the operational level mutual trust was increasing, the same however cannot be said at the tactical level. Some of the friction at the tactical level was due “to the lack of CF experience working with SOF, local CF commanders neither knew about, recognized, nor sought assistance and information from readily available teams.”⁴¹ A different approach between CF and SF elements bred distrust among the units. SF believed the CF were rigid in their approach with the locals, and as armor officers trained and prepared to fight a mechanized war against the Soviets, they were “inexperienced in low intensity, peacekeeping environment and they didn’t know USSF capabilities and limitations and could put SF soldiers at undue risk because of this lack of knowledge.”⁴² Dr. Baumann’s report paints this picture quite clearly:

Requiring full battle rattle in camp struck many as odd, especially since initially the soldiers slept without their gear in tents that offered no protection from mortar or sniper fire. Meanwhile, American Special Forces working in local communities kept a low force protection posture so as not to create unnecessary barriers between themselves and the people. Rather comically, they had to put on the full body armor to enter American bases, which were obviously more secure than their own neighborhoods in town.⁴³

As SF did not understand the reason for the posture of CF in the area, so too did the CF not understand what exactly they were supposed to get from the SF teams on the ground. Findlay

⁴⁰ Ibid, 22.

⁴¹ Ames, 18.

⁴² Findlay, 51.

⁴³ Baumann et.al, 134.

describes a conversation between Major General Meigs, the MND-N commander and his Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE) Captain Jon White: “Major General Meigs stated, I’m expending a lot of my resources on supporting your concept of operations, which is supposed to be in support of my MND. But I don’t see a lot of ‘return’ on my investment. Upon completion of the briefings, Major General Meigs’ comment to Jon was that ‘it was pretty thin gruel,’ i.e. he didn’t get anything from the JCOs that he didn’t get from other sources.”⁴⁴ The lack of understanding of each unit’s mission and capabilities slowed the initial momentum gained during joint planning. As the units continued to operate together and establish more rapport, the effectiveness of the organizations increased. An emphasis by commanders and their staffs was important in developing the relationship. Findlay concludes “mutual trust and the resulting integration of SF with conventional forces improved as the conventional and Special Forces commanders, staff, and soldiers started to talk more and learned more about each other’s missions, capabilities, limitations, and requirements. This maturing of the SF-MND relationship took place over a period of a few months in early 1997 – but only through intense commander and staff interaction.”⁴⁵

Global War on Terror

America’s military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan during the Global War on Terror brought CF and SF closer together than ever before. Operations in Afghanistan in 2002 failed to meet their operational objectives due to distrust and lack of communication between CF and SF/SOF. As argued by Siebold, the “circumstances leading up to Anaconda led to accidental and fractured cooperation, and it fell short of its intended decisive effects. Consequently, Anaconda

⁴⁴ Ibid, 51.

⁴⁵ Findlay, 53.

demonstrates the limits of interdependence when the Army and its leaders do not deliberately invest in it.”⁴⁶ Aaron Brown articulately described one cause for the initial failure in Afghanistan in a Fort Leavenworth White paper stating, “[i]n 2002 our Nation went to war with two forces: CF prepared to win against traditional adversaries in direct combat and Special Operational Forces prepared to prevail in an irregular environment. For the next few years, the best we could hope for was a de-confliction of activities between the forces.”⁴⁷

Five years after the failures of Operation Anaconda the Army culture shifted away from the two force Army as described by Brown and began to embrace interdependence. Siebold points to the 2007 Iraq Surge as the turning point towards independence. In the conclusion of his monograph on interdependence Siebold states, “[t]he 2007 Iraq surge demonstrates refined, deliberate, and practically institutionalized interdependence and the synergistic effects it achieves. Interdependence contributed to the defeat of the insurgency in and around Baghdad and the expulsion of Al Qaeda from its self-proclaimed capital in Al Anbar.”⁴⁸ It was not merely Siebold’s summation that interdependence led to operational success. General David Petraeus, then the commander of US Forces in Iraq, stated “[c]ounter-terrorist forces alone cannot defeat Al Qaeda and other extremists; success requires all forces and means at our disposal.... Employ Coalition and Iraqi conventional and special operations forces, Sons of Iraq, and all other

⁴⁶ Ben F. Siebold *Interdependence and Conventional and Special Operations Forces: A Decade of Tactical, Operational, and Strategic Effects* (thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2014), 42.

⁴⁷ Aaron Brown, “*Information Paper: SOF-GPF Interdependence*” (Fort Leavenworth, KS)

⁴⁸ Siebold, 42.

available multipliers.”⁴⁹ The change in mindset between both CF and SF units has been apparent since the Iraq Surge and is the catalyst for its incorporation in current doctrine.

Lived Experiences during the GWOT

The previous section described the evolution of SOF/USSF interaction with CF throughout multiple combat and peacekeeping operations. Mistakes occurred during each operation and the lessons learned were incorporated into doctrine to ensure that both CF and SOF were working towards the same objective effectively. There have been multiple monographs and lesson learned publications articulating the benefit of interdependence between CF and USSF. There remains a gap in research, however, on the current perception of SF by CF and how this may affect interdependence. The remainder of this monograph focuses on the lived experiences of a select group of Army officers from the conventional force, their experiences with SOF-CF independence during past operational deployments in the Army, and their perceptions at the time of the value, utility, and even attitudes of USSF.

In order to answer the research question a series of oral history interviews of field grade Army officers were conducted. Perception in the context of historical events was the focus of the interviews. The approach taken was that of oral history, addressing the lived experiences of a small group of conventional force officers and their perception of the Special Forces they worked with throughout their careers.⁵⁰ Additionally, by conducting face-to-face interviews with these officers added an element of the ethnographic approach as well.⁵¹ Rather than surveying a

⁴⁹ Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008* (New York: Penguin Press HC, The, 2009), 369.

⁵⁰ Donald Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17.

⁵¹ Margaret Diane LeCompte and Jean J. Schensul, *Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 1999), 39.

sample of CF officers using a survey instrument, this combined oral history-ethnographic approach allows the researcher to get at the actual perceptions of a small select group of CF officers who had various experiences in both training and combat environments with SF. Using this methodological approach, however, means that it is not possible to generalize from these experiences. Lacking random sampling and with no control variables, the results are only applicable to those few individuals interviewed and not generalizable to anyone else, even if they have similar experiences. In short, this is not a social scientific approach but rather an oral history approach that looks at a discrete event in time through the perception of actual participants. Although the results are not generalizable to a larger population, they do provide a detailed picture of how a select group of officers, with similar backgrounds, perceived their SF counterparts.

The target audience for these oral history interviews were field grade officers between the rank of Major (O-4) through Colonel (O-6). The interviewer used a semi-structured interview method, employing a range of open-ended questions to guide the oral history interview. The officers interviewed were required to be of the Maneuver, Fires and Effects branch, commonly referred to as combat arms. These selection criteria were established for multiple reasons. The first reason was it was deemed to have the highest probability to interview officers that had both combat and battle space owner experience within the same areas that are commonly operated in by USSF. The second reason was to identify any potential differences between the senior ranking officers who had pre-GWOT experience in the military and the younger field grade officers who have only experienced the Army during a wartime setting. The intent was to interview between fifteen and twenty officers. In total, seventeen interviews were successfully conducted. Upon completion of the interviews, there were follow-up interviews with multiple interviewees in order to ensure all participants had a chance to reply to any issues or discussions that were raised through subsequent interviews.

In order to receive candid and honest feedback, interviewees' names are not used in the research. Upon completion of all interviews the recordings were uploaded on to a compact disc and secured with the researcher to ensure the original data would not be compromised or lost. Due to budget constraints, in-person interviews were conducted with interviewees that were stationed at Fort Leavenworth, KS the same time as the author, while all other interviews took place via telephone. The interviewer made initial contact either face-to-face or via email, described the nature of the interview and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. If the interviewee suggested interest in the interview, the researcher provided a copy of both the oral history consent form as well as a list of the open-ended questions (see appendix A for the informed consent form and Appendix B for the questionnaire). All interviewees were given ample time to review the consent form and topics to be discussed. Prior to initiation of the interview, consent was received for all interviews. All interviews were audio recorded.

Interviews were semi-structured in order to maximize open and candid dialogue. Upon initiation of the interview the interviewer utilized Figure 1 (as depicted in Chapter 2 of this monograph) to frame the researchers concept of gradual integration between CF and USSF. The interviewer ensured all interviewees understood the topic and context of the monograph prior to beginning the dialogue, and received consent for the interview. The researcher utilized the open-ended questionnaire to ensure all topics were discussed, but the order in which they were discussed was of no impact to the quality of the interview (again, because the interviews were not systematic). Some questions were added to the questionnaire after initial interviews. In order to ensure all interviewees were asked the same questions, follow-up interviews were conducted with those interviewees that did not have the opportunity to answer the added questions.

At the conclusion of each interview, the interviewer summarized the notes taken and themes identified during the interview. This was done to ensure there was no misunderstanding

during the interview, as well as to ask for clarification on any topics discussed that the researcher had not originally included.

Analysis

Analysis of the interviews identified eight reoccurring historical narratives. The next section of this monograph will describe in detail each of these reoccurring narratives.

Perception of USSF

Experience (CONUS)

On-Post Training Created a Positive Perception Between CF and USSF.

Several of the accounts regarding training were provided by officers who at one point in their career had been assigned to a unit that was co-located with USSF on the same installation. These installations were Fort Bragg, NC where the 82nd Airborne Division was co-located with 3rd and 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) respectively; Fort Lewis, WA had elements of the 25th Infantry Division and 2nd Infantry Division co-located with the 1st SFG (A); and Fort Campbell, KY had the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) co-located with the 5th SFG (A). Some officers had conducted on-post training with an Operational Detachment-Alpha. The training conducted between the units consisted of small arms, sniper weapon systems, advanced optics, room clearing, urban combat, and mortar training.

Three of the four training events were initiated and coordinated by the interviewees' unit. One of the four training events was conducted before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, two events between 2001-2002, and the fourth in 2005. The benefit of the training was not merely one sided. One training event that was not preplanned was conducted on Fort Bragg, NC. The interviewee belonged to an Anti-Tank platoon which operates mounted on High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV) with Mk-17 automatic grenade launchers and M2

.50 caliber heavy machine guns as their primary weapon systems. While on the range, the 18 Bravo (Special Forces weapons sergeant) gave classes to the members of the platoon on a new weapon system, the Mk-47 automatic grenade launcher as well as assisting in repairing a damaged .50 cal. Upon completion of the training on the Mk-47 and .50 cal, the platoon was able to return the favor and provided instruction to the ODA on the Mk-17. The ODA did not have Mk-17s and were unfamiliar with the system. This shared, and mutually beneficial training, greatly increased the rapport between the two units, which facilitated a positive interaction in the future while the unit was deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). It also increased their unit's lethal capability, while displaying the professionalism and competence of the ODAs. "5th Group identified that they were starting to work with conventional forces more often down range and reached out to our unit. One of the capabilities our unit was lacking was our snipers, they were ground level. We began to work with the SF snipers on ballistic charts, computer systems and sniper support to shoot house events. We started to see them as an asset and they started to see us an asset."⁵²

Experience (OCONUS)

Professionalism and Communication

Reported experiences appear to have shown an inverse relationship between the lack of professionalism of the ODAs and the lack of communication between the ODAs and CF. Some of the officers interviewed served in Iraq and Afghanistan from 2003-2005. Their duty positions held during that time frame ranged from rifle platoon leader, ranger company commander, to battalion task force commander. Narrative accounts asserted the level of competence and professionalism of the ODAs during that specific time frame was extremely high. Although the

⁵² Interview 7, phone conversation with author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, December 12, 2014.

level of competence was high, the communication between the ODAs and CF was minimal. With the lack of communication between the two entities, the perception became extremely negative and counter productive. One example of this negative perception was described by an officer who had been a Battalion Task Force commander in Iraq between 2004-2005. The battalion was to be utilized as a mobile strike force within Baghdad and had interactions between multiple SOF units, including USSF. During this rotation the battalion lost multiple soldiers by small arms attacks and improvised explosive devices. The ODA that was co-located with the Battalion Task Force knew the identities of the individuals responsible for the attacks, but did not share this information. “I call this Special Agent Orange Syndrome – I have secret information and I am going share with you, but just a little bit, real quick. That was very much the attitude of this team, at this place during this time.”⁵³ The battalion eventually became aware of that fact, and the trust between the two elements was completely eroded. The trust between CF and USSF seemed to be at an all-time low as described during the interviews. Conversely, the perception of the ODAs reportedly shift to a very positive one from 2005 to 2012, but the perceived level of competence decreased.

Participant accounts identified two possible causes for the perceived degradation of competence. One was the perception that ODAs abandoned their traditional mission of Foreign Internal Defense in order to conduct Direct Action (DA) strikes. The second was youth and immaturity of the ODAs, translating into poor mission accomplishment and discipline problems.

⁵³ Interview 1, interviewed by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, October 27, 2014.

Immaturity of the force

Participants often asserted the immaturity of the force gradually contributed to tensions and misunderstandings. Ranging from lack of technical and tactical proficiency, to poor military bearing and lack of respect for the conventional forces. Statements like “looking cool just to look cool”⁵⁴ and “I do not want my young impressionable soldiers around your team”⁵⁵ described the negative perception some officers had of SF during one or more of their rotations downrange. The 18Xs (X-Rays) were seen as some of the most immature members of the ODA. The 18X program was designed to allow those not already in the Army to enter under a Special Forces contract and enter directly into the Special Forces training pipeline. As a result, 18Xs are generally much younger than their peers within the ODA, sometimes by as many as ten years. Lack of professionalism of military bearing was not blamed on the actions of 18Xs alone. As one officer recalled, in Iraq in 2005 “the ODA Commander approached my battalion commander and during the discussion brought up that they were ‘peers.’ My Battalion commander looked at him in disbelief and simply stated ‘we’re not peers.’ This ended the relationship between my unit and the ODA.”⁵⁶

The capability of the ODAs appeared to degrade over time. Although the communication between ODAs and their conventional counterparts increased on each subsequent combat rotation, the reputation of the ODAs continued to diminish. One officer, whose unit trained with USSF at Fort Campbell and had such high regard for the capability and professionalism of USSF,

⁵⁴ Interview 8, interviewed by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, December 13, 2014.

⁵⁵ Interview 14, phone conversation with author, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, February 13, 2015.

⁵⁶ Interview 7.

stated “during my last few rotations I would trust an infantry rifle squad to conduct more complete operations than an ODA that had a preponderance of 18X personnel.”⁵⁷ Perhaps the most telling experience on the negative perception came from an officer’s main account of a cordon and search operation where SF and CF were operating together:

A young SF sergeant who was pulling guard from a truck, fired a burst of .50 cal warning shot at a guy on a bicycle because he had a strange package on the back of his bicycle. He thought it was a bicycle suicide bomber. Sitting on the box in the back of his bike was the guy’s daughter. When you do things like that it makes you look scared, makes you look vulnerable, and untrained. Growing up as a cadet you were told, this organization (SF) is the most trained, most mature, most competent organization. When young soldiers see this kind of activity, it reduces conventional force confidence in SOF in general. While it may be isolated incidents, it happens too often. It only takes a couple conventional force interactions with these type of incidents to write SF off as cowboys who aren’t as good as they think they are.⁵⁸

An SF team leader supported their account of events. That team leader, who worked with the interviewee on the tail end of the same rotation where the aforementioned incidence occurred, also was critical of the ODAs. The team leader, who had been a prior service SF Non-commissioned officer (NCO) blamed the median age of the ODAs on the immaturity of the organization. Whereas previously the median age was around 32 years old for members of the ODA, “it drastically reduced to around 23. It is very easy to destroy the culture of an organization that is built around its maturity and competence. No matter how smart the 18X is, you cannot give him those extra ten years of life experience.”⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Interview 2, phone conversation with author, Fort Leavenworth, KS November 15, 2014.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Roles

Direct Action

During operations in Iraq and Afghanistan confusion over unit responsibility for specific tasks occurred on multiple occasions. In the fall of 2003, a company commander in a task force that was specifically manned, trained and equipped to conduct unilateral, direct action strikes against medium- to high-level targets noted his own experience. While at a planning session, he began a discussion with a team leader from one of the co-located ODAs. He asked the team leader which host nation forces they were working with. The response he received was “Oh, we don’t do that, we do DA.”⁶⁰ This conversation, and many more similar to it, left a negative impression on him, and his organization. There were two differently manned and equipped organizations competing for the same targets. “I think this created a divide between our unitsif I was a conventional guy and I was looking to create a bridge with local forces, and the adjacent ODA tells me, no I do DA, I’m going to write them off. I’ll talk to them [the local security forces] myself.”⁶¹

Post-strike damage mitigation

The misinterpretation of SF’s mission in Iraq and Afghanistan perpetuated the negative perception that conventional forces had of SOF nighttime direct action raids. “Once you all (SOF) had the same mission (DA) of find, fix, and finish, it was hard to differentiate.”⁶² After the initial invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, conventional force battalions and brigades were assigned pieces of terrain that were to be under their overall control. According to the doctrine of the time,

⁶⁰ Interview 12, interviewed by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, February 5, 2015

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Interview 5, interviewed by author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, November 21, 2014

the concept of “battlespace owner” was common during OIF and OEF.⁶³ The battlespace owner had overall responsibility for the actions within their area of operations. The difficulty in coordinating conventional and SOF missions within the same battlespace became a contentious issue within the conventional community. The lack of ability for SOF units to communicate their intent and purpose for nighttime precision strikes caused much angst and frustration amongst the BSOs. As one participant remembered “If you pull fifty guys off the objective and only needed two, and drop the other forty-eight guys off at my doorstep, that doesn’t help me out.”⁶⁴ The lack of integration between SOF and conventional forces, as claimed by multiple participants, was most prevalent in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2003 and the early 2007. This common perception was also captured in the Joint and Coalition Operation Analysis:

In post-2003 Iraq, SOF operations were not always well coordinated with GPF. This led to situations where GPF, as the battle space owners (BSO), were left managing the second-order effects of SOF targeting operations. GPF complained about not receiving notice of impending operations, not receiving intelligence that came from SOF operations, and significant disruption of their battle space in the aftermath of those operations. Similar complaints were made by GPF in Afghanistan through 2008.⁶⁵

SF’s Abandonment of FID

The perception of SF “abandoning” its mission of Foreign Internal Defense in pursuit of Direct Action missions was further exacerbated by the creation of the Military Transition Teams

⁶³Combined Arms Doctrine Director, “Army Doctrine Update 2012,” US Army Combined Arms Center, 3 April 2012, (accessed 9 December 2014) <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/adp/Repository/Army%20Doctrine%20Update%202-12.pdf>.

⁶⁴ Interview 15, phone conversation with author, Fort Leavenworth, KS, February 16, 2015.

⁶⁵ Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis, *Decade of War, Volume I: Enduring Lessons from the Past Decade of Operations* (Suffolk, VA: Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis, 2012), 22.

(MiTT). One officer described his experiences in OIF when his unit was told to give up critical manpower to backfill the departing SF units:

I can remember in '04 in Iraq we saw a downslide in the relationship. When I was a LT the relationship was positive, we wanted to work with SF guys and learn from them. Late in my tour in '04 is when you started to see the abandonment of the FID mission in Iraq. We were told "Every platoon, give up your best NCO, we are forming training teams and imbed teams that are going to backfill the SF teams that are leaving to do direct action missions." That didn't work out well. We didn't have that expertise at building partner capacity. What I just said, that statement may have reversed over the last ten years, as you see SF not doing that type of mission, and conventional forces doing more, the level of expertise may have shifted.⁶⁶

Even officers who had no experience as transition team advisors spoke of the transition team mission and its impact on the conventional force psyche. "We were doing the FID mission while SF was doing DA,"⁶⁷ and "the frame of reference my peers will approach SF in, is the door kicking, kinetic action missions, not the other tasks you guys are also tasked to do."⁶⁸ From Major to Colonel the reactions were widespread: the perception of USSF from the GWOT was that SF became more of a direct action entity instead of a unit that was able to train, advise, assist local national forces, and being force multipliers. The disappointment in the perceived abandonment of the FID mission was due in part to the frustration of those individuals who knew what mission the ODAs should have been aligned with, and saw missed opportunities for mission success. One participant relayed a story from the First Battle of Fallujah in April, 2004: "The only Iraqi organization that held its ground, in April of '04, were the ones that worked with SF, not the ones that were trained by Lance Corporals....the capability SF can provide is not easily reproduced."⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Interview 2.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Interview 5.

⁶⁹ Interview 5.

Conventional Force Perception of Interdependence

Accounts by participants did not confirm the hopes that over a decade of joint training would improve perception between USSF and CF. Reported experience from Afghanistan and Iraq reflected a view that as long as both units were working towards a common objective, whether it be CONUS or OCONUS, the small idiosyncrasies between the units would not affect the overall mission. Rather than perception of SF being a factor to CF, it was CF's perception of interdependence that would affect the relationship between CF and USSF. At the time, views of Interdependence were shaped by two metal models. The first model consists of the Battle Space Owner (BSO) and ODA interactions utilized during the GWOT. As discussed above, the relationships continued to improve throughout the GWOT until CF and SF were working towards a shared objective. This mental model is very nested with combat experience and history. Although Interdependence, as experienced during the GWOT, had tremendous positive impact on the officers and their combat experience, the concern of Interdependence surviving the interwar period was readily apparent. This is not to say that all the officers articulated a negative perception of interdependence, but a preponderance of them expressed a hesitancy to believe it would survive the post-GWOT environment. "Without a forcing function and the budget, sequestration, and drawdown we will abandon the concept."⁷⁰ There are multiple reasons for this negative perception held by most of the CF officers interviewed. This brings us to the second mental model in which interdependence is associated; that of the Regionally Aligned Force (RAF).

⁷⁰ Interview 10, interviewed by author, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, January 30, 2015.

Regionally Aligned Forces

The concept of RAF was one outgrowth of prolonged encounters between 2001 and 2012. With the necessity for conventional forces to become proficient in a wide variety of tasks such as language, culture and foreign weapons training, one might have assumed that a shared focus between CF and USSF has already been identified. The definition of RAF was approved by the CSA on 25 October 2012:

Regionally Aligned Forces are those forces that provide the Combatant Commander (CCDR) with up to Joint-capable headquarters with scalable, tailorable capabilities to enable him to shape the environment. They are those Army units assigned to Combatant Commands (CCMD), allocated to a CCMD, and those capabilities distributed and prepared by the Army for CCMD regional missions.... Regional missions are driven by CCMD requirements. This requires an understanding of the cultures, geography, languages, and militaries of the countries where they are most likely to be employed, as well as expertise in how to impart military knowledge and skills to others.⁷¹

The difficulty establishing Interdependence during the early years of the GWOT was attributed by some participants to a lack of unity of effort and shared vision. Comments such as “RAF seems to be a space filler until the next thing comes up” and “RAF is a way for the Army to maintain its relevance during the interwar period”⁷² encompassed the feelings held by some.

Reflecting on the meaning of past experiences on the field, some officers were skeptical of the RAF approach to Interdependence. The pessimistic attitude towards the RAF concept had many roots on recent experience. The first root is the disconnect between the RAF concept as a building partner capacity mission and the train up and the unit’s Mission Essential Task List (METL) associated with the units preparing for the RAF.

⁷¹Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) Execute Order (EXORD), *Regionally Aligned Forces* (RAF) (U), 5.

⁷² Interview 14.

The way the Army communicates its intent and desired capabilities with its subordinate units has been through doctrine. In the past, doctrine described in detail how the individual components of the Army are expected to work together. As defined in the 2012 ADP, “[t]he unit’s mission-essential task list (METL) represents the doctrinal framework of fundamental tasks for which the unit was designed (its table of organization and equipment and table of distribution and allowances mission). METL proficiency enables the unit to adapt to unexpected situations during mission execution. Therefore, units strive to maintain mission-essential task readiness. The Department of the Army standardizes brigade and above METLs.”⁷³ Experience in the GWOT centered around a perceived need for better Interdependence that was still not addressed in 2012. With no METL associated with interdependence, it is up to the interpretation of the unit commanders on what and how to prepare for their RAF mission. As one officer reflected “What are we preparing for, our METL or Interdependence? METL will win out all the time as it is has tasks associated with training.”⁷⁴

The main source of reference while discussing the RAF was the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (2/1), the first Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) to deploy as a RAF. To prepare for their mission 2/1 ABCT interpreted two mission sets “Globally Available Force able to support Geographic Combatant Commanders and then the Regionally Aligned Force that supports a specific COCOM.”⁷⁵ The METL for 2/1 ABCT was validated in 2012 at the National Training Center (NTC) during a combined arms maneuver scenario. As described by one officer

⁷³ Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 7.0, *Training Units and Developing Leaders* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 23 August, 2012), 9.

⁷⁴ Interview 10

⁷⁵ Jeffrey Butler, “*Regionally Aligned Brigade*” (Power point presentation, 2/1 ABCT, Fort Riley February 8, 2014). Accessed on 30 October, 2014, 20.

“We say regionally aligned, but we train to fight the Soviets.”⁷⁶ There appear to have been conflicting messages being gleaned from 2/1’s train up and its implications for future RAF units. The concept was that a unit preparing to deploy in support of a Combatant Command would build partner capacity across numerous countries. The preparation the unit first had to complete was utilizing a METL (Figure 1) designed to ensure maximum lethality of an armored brigade. As described by Cantwell, Warren, and Orwat, “Their [2/1] baseline, foundational training was to achieve mission essential task list proficiency for decisive action culminating in a successful rotation to the National Training Center. Additionally, however, the brigade worked on developing their culture, regional expertise and language (CREL) capability.”⁷⁷ Upon completion of their NTC rotation, the unit was able to focus on the more specific nuances of building partner capacity in a foreign nation. As described in

⁷⁶ Interview 4: The Interviewee was emphasizing the institutional desire to train and fight a predictable, near peer adversary, similar to the Soviets during the Cold War.

⁷⁷ Gregory L. Cantwell, Tam D. Warren, and Mark E. Orwat, *Regionally Aligned Forces: Concept Viability and Implementation* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: United States Army War College Student Publications, 2015), 102.

HQDA Standardized METL

☐ Check all ☐ Uncheck all

Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT)

MET 1: Conduct Mission Command		ART 5.0
☐ T&EO Task Group 1: Execute the Operations Process (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-5100
☐ T&EO Develop the Information Collection Plan (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-2321
☐ T&EO Conduct the Military Decision Making Process (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-5111
☐ T&EO Prepare for Tactical Operations (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-5120
☐ T&EO Assess Tactical Situation and Operations (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-5130
☐ T&EO Execute Tactical Operations (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-5131
☐ T&EO Task Group 2: Integrate Inform and Influence Activities (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-5300
☐ T&EO Conduct Soldier and Leader Engagement (Brigade - Corps)		71-8-5311
☐ T&EO Provide Visual Information Support (Brigade - Corps)		71-8-5313
☐ T&EO Conduct Public Affairs Operations (Battalion - Corps)		71-8-5334
MET 2 : Conduct Offensive Operations		ART 7.1
☐ T&EO Task Group 1: Conduct a Movement to Contact (Battalion - Brigade)		07-6-1072
☐ T&EO Coordinate Air-Ground Integration when Providing Close Combat Attack (CCA) Support		01-6-0436
☐ T&EO Employ Lethal Fires in Support of the BCT		06-6-5066
☐ T&EO Conduct Mobility, Countermobility, and or Survivability (Battalion - Brigade)		07-6-6082
☐ T&EO Synchronize Close Air Support (Battalion - Brigade)		17-6-0308
☐ T&EO Conduct Reconnaissance and Surveillance (Battalion-Brigade)		17-6-1007
☐ T&EO Task Group 2: Conduct an Attack (Battalion - Brigade)		07-6-1092
☐ T&EO Coordinate Air-Ground Integration when Providing Close Combat Attack (CCA) Support		01-6-0436
☐ T&EO Employ Lethal Fires in Support of the BCT		06-6-5066
☐ T&EO Conduct Mobility, Countermobility, and or Survivability (Battalion - Brigade)		07-6-6082
☐ T&EO Synchronize Close Air Support (Battalion - Brigade)		17-6-0308
☐ T&EO Conduct Reconnaissance and Surveillance (Battalion-Brigade)		17-6-1007
MET 3: Conduct Defensive Operations		ART 7.2
☐ T&EO Task Group 1: Conduct a Defense (Battalion - Brigade)		07-6-1028
☐ T&EO Coordinate Air-Ground Integration when Providing Close Combat Attack (CCA) Support		01-6-0436
☐ T&EO Employ Lethal Fires in Support of the BCT		06-6-5066

Figure 2. ABCT METL⁷⁸

Source: Army Training Network: HQ DA Standardized METL

Some officers recalled the contempt regarding interdependence in general. One stated “I didn’t join the Army to do interdependence tasks. I’m an infantryman and I want to do infantry stuff.”⁷⁹ Although this was the first officer that I interviewed who stated in such plain language his opinion on interdependence, it was alluded to during all previous interviews. “Everyone sees

⁷⁸ “Army Training Network: Training Solutions to Stay Army Strong,” ATN, accessed November 3, 2014, <https://atn.army.mil/fso/default.aspx>.

⁷⁹ Interview 16, interviewed by author, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, February 20, 2015.

the DA side, because it's cool. No one sees how you turn a room full of sandals in to a village defense force....how cool is that?"⁸⁰ This is not to say CF looks down upon the mission of SF, rather they appreciate that SF does that specific mission because the CF personnel that were interviewed, for the most part, did not want to adopt that mission set.

Published on USASOC's website is the SOF truth "Most Special Operations require non-SOF assistance."⁸¹ Although it was openly acknowledged that SF requires assistance to complete their missions, the perception among the officers interviewed here was that the relationship was one sided. Described by one officer, "Interdependence means that I am going to have to give to SF, it's a one way street. What do I get from it?"⁸² This argument falls directly in line with the concerns regarding the unit's METL and its assigned mission. Officers on GWOT sense a lack of vision as to how CF and SF were to work interdependently with one another, other than providing SF with logistics and additional manpower for guard duty.

Identified during the course of the interviews was the value of personal relationships. It is fair to summarize the officers interviewed here expressed sanguinity on the ability for personal relationships to overcome much of the adversity faced during the GWOT. Conversely, the officers expressed a great deal of pessimism regarding the ability of the institution to continue to foster these relationships. "It is all about relationships, but how are we going to establish those relationships if we are not located on the same bases, do not have the funding to facilitate training and do not have specified tasks we have to train on?"⁸³

⁸⁰ Interview 6.

⁸¹ "United States Army Special Operations Command: One Force Without Equal", accessed November 3, 2014, <http://www.soc.mil/USASOCHQ/SOFTruths.html>.

⁸² Interview 15, phone conversation with author, Ft. Leavenworth, KS, February 16, 2015.

⁸³ Ibid.

Summary

Though initially having difficulty operating within a shared battlespace in the early years of OEF and OIF, the relationship between CF and SF continued to evolve into a positive relationship. The underpinning for these prospering relationships was open communication between the organizations, in combination with a shared understanding of each unit's roles and responsibilities. Coupled with personal relationships solidified through numerous combat deployments and a fear of mission failure, the institutional barriers established during the 1990s and early 2000s were demolished and a new era of interdependence existed. The military drawdown and budget uncertainty has increased the level of pessimism among those CF officers interviewed here. This pessimism has been rooted in the institutional language of interdependence being outweighed by the perceived expectations currently outlined in units' METL and the overall feeling of the dedication the generating force has towards interdependence. Both MG Sacolick and BG Grigsby share this perception in 2012:

In Iraq and Afghanistan, operational necessity drove battlefield synchronization and integration of the joint force founded on personal relationships. Integration that relies on personal relationships forged on the battlefield, however, is transient unless made operational, institutional, and instilled in our forces from the very beginning of professional military education and throughout all planning and training. The closure of the Iraq theater and the drawdown in Afghanistan will reduce the impetus behind current interdependence initiatives and limit opportunities for shared operational experience. Unless we start now to codify and expand interdependence in the force, we risk losing momentum and reverting to pre-9/11 mind-sets.... Our history, however, shows that these lessons quickly fade unless reinforced in doctrine, organizations, training, leadership and education.”⁸⁴

Despite the overwhelming amount of negative interactions between USSF and CF between 2003 and 2007, the relationship continued to evolve into a positive relationship. A

⁸⁴ Major General Bennet Sacolick and Brigadier General Wayne Grigsby, “Special Operations/Conventional Forces Interdependence: A Critical Role in ‘Prevent, Shape, Win,’” *Army Magazine*, June 2012: 40.

shared understanding between USSF and CF on the necessity of working together became the forcing function. Interviewee 10, who worked very closely with SF teams during his last rotation, stated “We had to do it [Interdependence], not doing it was mission failure in OIF and OEF.”⁸⁵ In OIF the ability for CF and USSF to focus towards a common objective, the Surge, facilitated a necessary change in the way the two units operated. Interviewee 5 described his experience in Iraq with the evolving positive relationship between SF and CF: “you [SF] grew beards in Afghanistan to influence those locals, you came in clean shaven and professional to influence us. You guys were in uniform every time you met with us, and that helped break down first impressions. Pre-surge of Anbar awakening it (SFs perceived mission) was DA, after the awakening there was much more intel sharing between SF and conventional and less emphasis on DA.”⁸⁶ The realization by both SF and CF that interdependence was needed in order for mission success sowed the seeds for victory in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Suggestions for Future Research

“It is immensely important that no soldier, whatever his rank, should wait for war to expose him to those aspects of active service that amaze and confuse him when he first comes across them. If he has met them even once before, they will begin to be familiar to him.”⁸⁷
- Clausewitz

As an expeditionary force, it is vital that our military formations are as prepared as possible to win the first battle. In order to successfully achieve operational objectives, our military must be able to embrace the various and diverse capabilities of both conventional (first grammar) and special operations (second grammar) elements. The historical examples explained

⁸⁵ Interview 10.

⁸⁶ Interview 5.

⁸⁷ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Indexed Edition, ed. Peter Paret and Michael Howard (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 122.

in this monograph have demonstrated the evolution of SF/SOF's ability to set conditions to allow the entry and proper application of large scale conventional formations. Linn describes our most recent success and failures with the two grammars as:

American operational art had become exquisite at winning battles; that is, at war's first grammar; but it had not prepared enough for the possibility that competence in a second grammar would be needed. That is not to say that processes and protocols were not in place for establishing peace or, more precisely, for transitioning from decisive military operations to security operations and political and economic reconstruction, referred to in a joint operational doctrine at the time as phase IV.⁸⁸

In Iraq and Afghanistan, it took between five and seven years for successful interdependence to develop. The approach outlined in this section aims to reduce the time it takes for CF and SF to work together and better prepare both forces to win the first battle. As observed in this monograph, the initial negative perceptions identified by the oral history interviews came from the lack of positive experience and poor understanding of Special Forces. In order for interdependence between SF and CF to work there needs to be buy-in at the tactical level, which means at the company to brigade level, and the credibility of SF needs to be established at the operational level. The approach recommended is offered as a way forward for the US Army Special Forces Command (USASFC).

As already identified in TRADOC Pam 525-8-5, "Future Army leaders must develop means to formalize and synchronize special operations and conventional forces capabilities throughout the institutional force. Although unit leaders can help document some of the lessons from recent experiences, it is through the institutional force that the Army must incorporate lessons learned into the doctrinal framework with the tasks and systems in the engagement

⁸⁸ Brian McAllister Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 158.

warfighting function.”⁸⁹ During the oral history interviews, each interviewee was asked where they felt the interdependence was best incorporated. Based on their past experiences, most of the officers stated the brigade was the appropriate command element to champion interdependence with the remainder stated the division headquarters was the appropriate level. The reasoning behind their decision was due to the level of command, staffing capability and the fact that the Brigade Combat Team is the deployable force within the current Army construct. Another question asked during the oral history interviews was, based off each individual’s experience, which element did they think had more success in establishing the relationships that lead to successful interdependence. Past experiences have shown that when SF came to the CF headquarters and established initial contact, the relationship between the two organizations experienced less friction, and more success.

Using the past experiences as a guide for future action, it might be a subject for future study to consider interaction at the brigade command team level in order to achieve maximum interdependence. In order to achieve this, a two-level, indirect approach should be used in order to fully incorporate interdependence between SF and CF. For example the graph below depicts two approaches, the first is to gain credibility among the operational level commands being the Division and Corps headquarters, using a top-down approach. The second approach is to work from the tactical level to gain buy-in to the capabilities provided by SF. The idea behind the approach is to fully empower the Brigade Commander to incorporate interdependence within his formation.

⁸⁹ Training and Doctrine Command, Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-8-5, *The U.S. Army Functional Concept for Engagement* (Fort Eustis, VA: Headquarters, United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, February 24, 2014), 10.

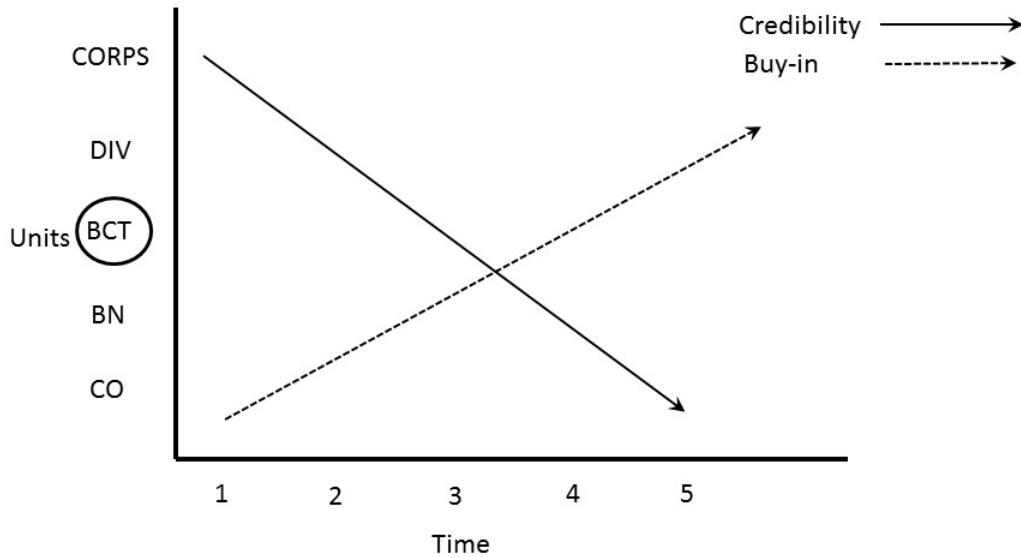


Figure 3 Buy-in and Credibility: A recommended approach

Source: Created by Author

This necessarily leads to the question, how did SF gain credibility from the operational level command in the conventional force structure during the period in question. The doctrine of 2012 outlined the element for this duty as the Special Forces Liaison Element or SFLE, which is a unit designed to conduct “liaison between SF, US conventional forces, and HN or multinational forces.” SFLEs are formed only as needed and they “conduct these functions when conventional forces or host or multinational forces have not practiced interoperability before the operation, when the forces do not share common operational procedures or communications equipment, or when a significant language or cultural barrier exists.”⁹⁰ If the purpose of a SFLE is to reduce culture and language barriers and increase interoperability between CF and SF, why must it wait until a JTF is established before we begin to interact with one another? SFLEs should be established at all Corps and Division level headquarters and manned with quality officers. By

⁹⁰ Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 3-7.

establishing credibility in the operational force, through positive representation, Corps and Division commanders would be less resistant in allowing their brigades to pursue interdependence-type tasks with SF units.

The second approach recommended here is to gain buy-in from the tactical force. As described during the oral history interviews, on-post training between SF and CF forces established a very positive relationship. The difficulty in this approach is the lack of defined training objectives that both CF and SF could train. By conducting joint training, SF can counteract the stereotype that interdependence is a one-way street, in which CF merely provides support to SF. Identifying these training tasks would be a recommendation for another study and would allow future operations officers from both CF and SF to incorporate these tasks into the METLs. An identified requirement, the existence of which the author is not aware, would be either a formal or informal letter of partnership between Special Forces Groups or their Division counterparts. During the oral history interviews, many officers stated that having a Group to collaborate with, along with Direct Liaison Authority (DIRLAUTH) with the Group, would allow planners to take the initiative and reduce the time it takes to coordinate planning. Through constant interaction with the tactical force, SF can build positive relationships that will increase buy-in regarding the level of professionalism of SF, its ability to enhance conventional force capabilities, and reduce the stigma of unprofessional and immature SF soldiers. This buy-in will reinforce interdependence from the bottom up reducing the resistance of company and battalion level commanders to working with SF, and hopefully resulting in requests to brigade commanders for more joint training with SF.

Another topic for research is the role of PME. PME has always been an effective avenue for change, although resistance to changing PME can be high. The Prussians looked to PME as a way to inculcate change. As described by Paret, PME was used to “raise the educational level of officers, help them understand the army beyond the narrow confines of their unit and branch of

service, and gradually introduce a common concept of operations.”⁹¹ The Combined Arms Center (CAC), along with the Special Operations Center of Excellence (SOCoE), could increase the level of information used in current planning scenarios. Increasing the level of detail on available SF/SOF assets in theater, and adjusting the timelines written into the scenario could be a good beginning of educating the conventional force on SF’s role in support to the JTF commander, as well as the land component commander during Phase II (seize the initiative) and Phase III (dominate) of the joint operating construct.

The US Army finds itself in a similar position to that of Clausewitz and Scharnhorst in 1806. Although we have not been defeated in battle, our institution realizes that it needs to fundamentally change the way it operates to face future threats, or it may set itself up for defeat. Doctrine states that we need to incorporate change, monographs state that we need to change, and speeches from general officers state that we need to change. But will we change? The Prussians changed after 1806, and the result was the eventual defeat of Napoleon. Nevertheless, after the victories, they reverted to old practices because the institution never fully embraced the change. As described by Paret, “[t]he victories over Napoleon between 1813 and 1815, which validated Scharnhorst’s reforms and restored the power of the Prussian state, also restored the power of Prussian conservatism, which had never ceased to resist some reforms and bend others to its own advantage.”⁹² Have we as an institution begun to revert to the old ways of large scale combined arms maneuver, leaving the lessons of Afghanistan and Iraq behind us, or will we embrace the fact that SF and CF must operate in the same battlespace against the same enemy as we face now with ISIS and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula?

⁹¹ Peter Paret, *The Cognitive Challenge of War: Prussia 1806* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 9.

⁹² Paret, 103.

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Appendix A: Consent And Use Agreement For Oral History

You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in this oral history interview, and once you begin you may cease participating at any time without penalty. The anticipated risk to you in participating is negligible and no direct personal benefit has been offered for your participation. If you have questions about this research study, please contact the student at: aaron.b.baty.mil@mail.mil; (910) 987-3368 or Dr. Robert F. Baumann, Director of Graduate Degree Programs, at (913) 684-2742.

To: Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Room 3517, Lewis & Clark Center
US Army Command and General Staff College

1. I, _____, participated in an oral history interview conducted by

Major Aaron Baty, a graduate student in the Master of Military Art and
Science

Degree Program, on the following date [s]: _____ concerning
the following topic: Conventional Force (CF) perception of United States Special Forces (USSF)
and its impact on Interdependence.

2. I understand that the recording [s] and any transcript resulting from this oral history will belong to the US Government to be used in any manner deemed in the best interests of the Command and General Staff College or the US Army, in accordance with guidelines posted by the Director, Graduate Degree Programs and the Center for Military History. I also understand that subject to security classification restrictions I will be provided with a copy of the recording for my professional records. In addition, prior to the publication of any complete edited transcript of this oral history, I will be afforded an opportunity to verify its accuracy.

3. I hereby expressly and voluntarily relinquish all rights and interests in the recording [s] with the following caveat:

_____ None _____ Other: _____

I understand that my participation in this oral history interview is voluntary and I may stop participating at any time without explanation or penalty. I understand that the tapes and transcripts resulting from this oral history may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act, and

therefore, may be releasable to the public contrary to my wishes. I further understand that, within the limits of the law, the US Army will attempt to honor the restrictions I have requested to be placed on these materials.

Name of Interviewee	Signature	Date
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Accepted on Behalf of the Army by	Date
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Appendix B: Oral History Interview Questions

THE CONVENTIONAL COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF USSF

Rank____ MOS____ Prior Service____

How many years do you have in the military?_____

Commissioning type: ROTC SVS Academy Green to Gold OCS

What types of units have you served?

ABCT IBCT SBCT DIV/CORPS USASOC GCCC OTHER_____

Levels of Command

CO__ BN__ BDE__

How many times have you deployed:

OEF__ OIF__ OEF (P)__ OTHER_____

Are you Ranger Qualified?

Garrison

1. Was your unit on the same post as an Army Special Forces (USSF) unit?
2. Has your unit trained with USSF in garrison?
3. Who initiated the training concept, SF or your unit? How many times?
4. What training did they receive?
5. How was the training received?
6. What was the perception of USSF within your unit? Why do you feel it was that way?
7. Have you ever served with or under anyone who has prior USSF/ARSOF experience?

8. Have you trained with a SOF unit at a CTC?

OCONUS

9. Where did you serve overseas?
10. What was/were your duty position(s)?
11. What was/were your units mission?
12. Was there USSF operating in your AO?
13. If so, how often and in what capacity (regularly, concurrently, not at all, night time raids)?
14. Did your unit have an SF LNO/SFLE?
15. What was the perception of USSF within your unit? Why do you feel it was that way?
16. How did the interactions with USSF units shape or mold you/your units perception of USSF?
17. What was your understanding USSFs Chain of Command, reporting procedures, ROE?
18. How did USSF compliment/improve your unit's mission?
19. How did USSF distract/deteriorate your mission?
20. What frustrates you most about SOF operators?
21. What pleases you most about SOF operators?

Personal Reflections/Opinions

22. Have you ever considered going to selection or joining any other USSF/SOF unit? Why?
23. Have you ever read any of the SF centric books like *Masters of Chaos*, *Roughneck 91*, *Not a good day to die*, *Lions of Kandahar*, *Gentleman Bastards*? How did that change/solidify your perception of SF?
24. How much of your professional military education has focused on SOF capabilities, mission and organization?

25. (For fieldgrades in CGSC) do you feel CGSC/ILE increased your understanding of SOF to an extent that you would feel comfortable operating near or with SOF units?

Interdependence

26. Based off your experience what are the challenges facing Interdependence between Conventional Forces and USSF? Why?