

Regionally Aligned Forces: The Critical Role of Military Engagement and Interdependence between Conventional and Special Operations Forces

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

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The Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) concept, introduced in 2012, requires Army leaders to train to higher levels of proficiency in traditional warfighting capabilities while also developing the knowledge and skillset needed to support security cooperation. This monograph argues that Army leaders must integrate engagement with other warfighting functions and improve interdependence between conventional forces (CF) and special operations forces (SOF) to conduct operations supporting the RAF concept effectively. Using the Army's first regionally aligned brigade, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, as the subject, a single structured focused case study tests three hypotheses to provide insights to Army leaders charged with planning and executing future RAF operations. The three hypotheses are: RAF operations require Army forces to conduct military engagement, specifically in tasks associated with Security Force Assistance; RAF operations require the Army's organizational culture to place the same value on engagement as other warfighting functions; and the relationship between CF and SOF conducting RAF operations is interdependent. This study finds Army proficiency in traditional warfighting skills and engagement-centric skills are essential to the RAF concept. Evidence developed throughout the study supports the assertion that Army leaders must integrate engagement with other warfighting functions and improve interdependence between CF and SOF to maximize effectiveness.

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Acronyms

ACOTA	Africa Contingency Operations Training & Assistance
ADP	Army Doctrine Population
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
AFISMA	African-led International Support mission to Mali
AFRICOM	US Africa Command
AQIM	al Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
CF	Conventional Forces
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DOTMLPF	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, and Facilities
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FM	Field Manual
FSF	Foreign Security Forces
FORSCOM	US Army Forces Command
JP	Joint Publication
METL	Mission Essential Task List
RAF	Regionally Aligned Forces
SADF	South African Defense Force
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SOF	Special Operations Forces
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USSOCOM	US Special Operations Command

Section I: Introduction

The US Army, along with the entire Department of Defense, is in a period of rebalancing the force to meet the complex challenges of the contemporary and future operational environments. This rebalancing period is also a period of fiscal austerity characterized by reductions in force structure and shrinking budgets. The 2014 Army Posture Statement describes the Army's strategy to prevent conflict, shape and set theaters for the geographic Combatant Commanders, deter aggression, and when called win decisively in combat.¹ Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) are a key Army concept to implement the Army's strategy by supporting Combatant Commanders with the means to pursue strategic objectives primarily through military engagement.² The combined effects of fiscal austerity and increasing requirements associated with the RAF concept require changes in the ways Army leaders plan, prepare, and execute operations. Future operations will require adaptable Army forces that operate more efficiently to provide a creditable deterrent to potential adversaries while simultaneously bolstering the capabilities of allies and partners through engagement.³ Emerging US Army doctrine identifies engagement as a warfighting function and codifies the interdependent relationship between conventional forces (CF) and special operations forces (SOF) in an attempt to change the Army's culture and to embrace concepts that best support operations in the near future.

During the past fourteen years of war, the emphasis on stability operations and building

¹ Raymond Odierno and John McHough, Statement on the Posture of the US Army before the House Armed Services Committee (March 25, 2014), 1-2, accessed February, 21 2015, <http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/336945.pdf>.

² Ibid. 8.

³ Raymond Odierno, forward to TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The US Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World*, (Fort Eustis, VA: Government Printing Office, 2014).

capacity in partnered security forces required CF to develop Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Counterinsurgency (COIN), and Security Force Assistance (SFA) capabilities at the expense of the skills and expertise required to execute combined arms maneuver.⁴ Under the RAF concept, CF must train to higher levels of combined arms proficiency “against complex state and non-state actors in austere environments and rugged terrain,” while also developing the knowledge and skills required for regionally specific security cooperation missions.⁵ Additionally, during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, interaction increased and interoperability improved between CF and SOF, but differences in organizational culture and command and control structures prevented the degree of purposeful reliance required for a true interdependent relationship to exist.⁶ The introduction of the RAF concept requires Army leaders to prepare units to execute a wider range of operations and support security cooperation missions. This, in turn, requires new approaches to training as well as an effective and efficient relationship between CF and SOF. Achieving this end, with decreasing means available due to fiscal austerity, requires adjustment to the ways Army leaders plan, prepare, and execute operations. This monograph argues that applying more focus on engagement and seeking interdependence between CF and SOF are possible solutions to meet the demands of the RAF concept using already available means.

Implementation of the RAF concept is just beginning, with the first regionally aligned

⁴ Michael Fenzel and Shane Morgan, “Harmony in Battle: Training the Brigade Combat Team for Combined Arms Maneuver,” *Military Review* (January-February 2014): 75, accessed February 21, 2015, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20140228_art013.pdf.

⁵ Raymond Odierno, “CSA Strategic Priorities: Waypoint 2,” *The United States Army*, February 18, 2014, accessed February 21, 2015, http://www.army.mil/article/118873/Waypoint__2__Follow_up_to_CSA_s_Marching_Orders/.

⁶ Russell Ames, “Interdependence Between Army Conventional Forces and Special Operations Forces: Changing Institutional Mental Models” (monograph School of Advanced military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2013), 2.

brigade completing its mission in June 2014. Due to the newness of the RAF concept, little research exists to address the impact of RAF on Army units or the near and long-term effects of RAF operations in specific regions around the world. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to better inform and prepare US Army leaders for operations associated with the RAF concept through 2025. Specifically, this study examines how updating Army doctrine to include engagement as a warfighting function is changing the organizational culture of the Army and enabling the implementation of the RAF concept. Additionally, analyzing the execution of operations by a regionally aligned brigade offers insight into the role of engagement and the relationship between CF and SOF conducting theater security cooperation missions.

This study is significant because it provides valuable insight into how the Army is adapting to change during a period of persistent conflict and transition. This study builds on existing research concerning interdependence and the relationship between CF and SOF. It also complements a large amount of research on partnership activities, such as advising, assisting, training, and other tasks related to SFA. Finally, the study provides new insights into how Army leaders prepare forces for regional alignment based on recent lessons learned from RAF operations in Africa.

Definition of Terms

Provided here are the definitions of five terms used throughout the monograph. These terms describe relatively new and continuously evolving concepts, which are often misunderstood and commonly misused when discussing military matters. First, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Raymond Odierno, introduced the RAF concept in 2012 as one way to better prevent conflict and shape the operational environment during a period of transition characterized by

fiscal austerity.⁷ The RAF concept is a method of assigning and allocating Army units that provides optimal capabilities to geographic Combatant Commands while efficiently balancing the traditional warfighting capabilities required to deter and win wars with the regional expertise and engagement skills required to support security cooperation campaigns that shape the operational environment.⁸ Specifically, RAF provide joint task force-capable headquarters, crisis or contingency response, operations support, support to theater security cooperation, and participation in bilateral or multilateral military exercises. The flexibility provided by the RAF concept offers a more effective approach to address contemporary threats, such as non-state actors, and offers efficient ways to support military engagement requirements. Additional benefits of the concept include strategic access to key regions around the globe, as well as a degree of assurance to partners and deterrence to adversaries that accompanies the presence of US forces.⁹

Second, in order to for Army forces to conduct operations, including RAF operations, they must generate combat power by organizing and employing warfighting functions. Army doctrine divides combat power into eight elements: leadership, information, mission command,

⁷ Raymond Odierno, “Regionally Aligned Forces: A New Model for Building Partnerships,” Army Live, March 22, 2012, accessed February 21, 2015, <http://armylive.dodlive.mil/index.php/2012/03/aligned-forces/>.

⁸ “Army units assigned and allocated to combatant commands, as well as those capabilities that are service retained (but aligned to a Combatant Command (CCMD)) and prepared by the Army for regional missions. It includes Total Army organizations and capacities that are forward stationed, operating in a CCMD area of responsibility, supporting from outside the area of responsibility, and those prepared to support from outside the area of responsibility. CCMD requirements will drive regional missions, requiring and understanding of the cultures, geography, languages, and militaries of the countries where they are likely to be employed, as well as expertise in how to impart military knowledge and skills to others.” Raymond Odierno and John McHugh, *2014 Army Strategic Planning Guidance* (April 2014), 14, accessed February 21, 2015, <http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/ASPG2014.pdf>; Field Manual (FM) 3-22, *Army Support to Security Cooperation* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013) 1-6.

⁹ Odierno and McHugh, *2014 Army Strategic Planning Guidance*, 14.

movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, and protection. The elements of leadership and information guide the other six elements; the latter six elements are warfighting functions.¹⁰ Warfighting functions are an intellectual construct used to organize people, organizations, information, and processes to generate combat power.¹¹ Combat power is defined as “the total means of destructive, constructive, and information capabilities that a military unit or formation can apply at a given time.”¹²

Third, the Army established an engagement warfighting function because Army operations in the contemporary operational environment require soldiers to interact with and influence people.¹³ In February 2014, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), the Army headquarters responsible developing doctrine, published TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, *The US Army Functional Concept for Engagement*, which established the engagement warfighting function to better address the increasing complexity and uncertainty inherent in the global environment. Engagement has various meanings in the English language and military doctrine, but this study is concerned with military engagement. Military engagement is defined in Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* as the “routine contact and interaction between individuals or elements of the Armed Forces of the United States and those of another nation’s armed forces or foreign and domestic civilian authorities or agencies to build trust and confidence, share

¹⁰ Ibid., 1-9.

¹¹ Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0 *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 10-13; Army Doctrine Reference publication (ADRP) 3-0 *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 3-1.

¹² ADRP 3-0, 3-1.

¹³ Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-8-5, *US Army Functional Concept for Engagement* (Fort Eustis, VA: Government Printing Office, 2014), 5.

information, coordinate mutual activities, and maintain influence.”¹⁴ In short, the goal of military engagement in general and the engagement warfighting function in particular is to influence the behaviors of people, foreign security forces, and governments.¹⁵ The literature review section examines military engagement in more detail, to include the evolution of the concept and effects on RAF operations.

Fourth, SFA is the primary way Army forces conduct military engagement. Field Manual (FM) 3-22, Army Support to Security Cooperation, describes SFA as the Army’s capability to “organize, train, equip, and advise foreign security forces (FSF) and relevant supporting institutions.”¹⁶ The capability to conduct SFA requires effective execution of specific SFA tasks, which include organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding-building, advising, and assisting FSF.¹⁷ The RAF concept requires Army units with SFA proficiency to “impart military knowledge and skills to others.”¹⁸

Fifth, in addition to creating the engagement warfighting function, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5 also defines interdependence as “the deliberate and mutual reliance of one unified action

¹⁴ Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), III-1.

¹⁵ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 5.

¹⁶ “Security force assistance is defined as—the Department of Defense activities that contribute to unified action by the United States Government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions (JP 3-22). Consistent with DOD policy for security force assistance (known as SFA), the Army develops, maintains, and institutionalizes the capabilities of its personnel to support DOD efforts to organize, train, equip, and advise foreign security forces (FSF) and relevant supporting institutions. *Security forces* are duly constituted military, paramilitary, police, and constabulary forces of a state (JP 3-22).” FM 3-22, 1-10.

¹⁷ FM 3-22, 4-3-4-4.

¹⁸ Odierno and McHugh, *2014 Army Strategic Planning Guidance*, 14.

partner on another's inherent capabilities to provide complementary and reinforcing effects.”¹⁹ In this context, interdependence also applies to describing the relationship between Army units working together interdependently. Interdependence is “a broad and multifaceted concept,” of which integration and interoperability are subsets.²⁰ The stated goal of interdependence between CF and SOF is increased operational effectiveness. Successful execution of Army operations requires CF and SOF to “present a seamless front to adversaries and a united face to friends and partners throughout the phases of operations.”²¹ This study uses interdependence, as defined above, when describing and assessing the relationship between CF and SOF conducting operations under the RAF concept. The literature review provides more information on interdependence.

Theoretical Framework

With key terms defined, a brief description of the theoretical framework introduces the theories used to inform this research. The overarching thesis of this monograph is that US Army leaders must integrate engagement with other warfighting functions and improve interdependence between CF and SOF to conduct RAF operations effectively through 2025. This study uses organizational theory as a lens to examine the relationship between Army doctrine, the behavior of Army leaders, and the effectiveness of operations under the RAF concept. Specifically, organizational culture theory and the theory of institutionalization explain how Army leaders

¹⁹ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 17; “Unified Action Partners are those military forces, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and elements of the private sector with whom Army forces plan, coordinate, synchronize, and integrate during the conduct of operations.” ADRP 3-0, 1-3.

²⁰ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 17-18.

²¹ Ibid.

integrate engagement into operations and manage the relationship between CF and SOF in support of the RAF concept.

The US Army's senior leadership recognizes the need to sustain a culture of excellence and professionalism to ensure that the force is ready for operations in an increasingly complex and dangerous environment.²² The Army must be adaptable to succeed in complex situations, which means the Army's organizational culture must facilitate change to address unfamiliar challenges.²³ The lens of organizational theory is necessary to understand and explain change in the Army's culture. Mary Jo Hatch, an American organization theorist, uses a cultural dynamics model to describe culture and culture change using as the interaction between assumptions, values, artifacts, and symbols.²⁴ Using doctrine as a cultural artifact, this study examines how changing doctrine affects other elements of the Army's culture and assesses the impact of such changes on Army leaders preparing for RAF operations.

In addition to organization theory related to organizational culture, institutionalization theory is also useful for understanding the creation of a warfighting function in the US Army. In many ways, warfighting functions behave like institutions within the Army. American sociologist Philip Selznick's work on institutionalization provides a useful tool for analysis in this regard. Selznick argues that organizations, influenced by internal and external values, tend to compete for power and influence, which can have both positive and negative effects.²⁵ This study applies

²² Odierno, "CSA Strategic Priorities: Waypoint 2."

²³ Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The US Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World* (Fort Eustis, VA: Government Printing Office, 2014), 21-43.

²⁴ Mary Jo Hatch, *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 210-11.

²⁵ Hatch, 85-86.

Selznick's theory to explain how a new organization, the engagement warfighting function, benefits RAF operations.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The main question guiding this research is: how should Army leaders most effectively execute training and operations under the RAF concept through 2025? This study addresses the question by exploring how changes to US Army doctrine and culture affect the way Army leaders prepare for and execute operations, and by analyzing the training and employment of a US Army Brigade Combat Team (BCT) under the RAF concept. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, published in February 2014, includes two specific doctrine changes; the creation of the engagement warfighting function to accompany the six warfighting functions currently defined in Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, and the decision to explicitly define the interdependent relationship between CF and special SOF. A case study of 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division's experience as a regionally aligned brigade provides the opportunity to analyze the training and employment of a BCT under the RAF concept. Three supporting questions provide greater focus on key issues. First, to what extent are operations under the RAF concept dependent on military engagement? Second, how does the US Army's organizational culture value engagement compared to the existing warfighting functions? Third, to what extent does the relationship between CF and SOF executing theater security cooperation activities under the RAF concept impact operations?

To best answer the aforementioned questions and provide useful insights to future US Army leaders conducting RAF missions, the following hypotheses were examined and tested. First, this monograph argues that RAF operations require Army forces to conduct military engagement, specifically the tasks associated with SFA; second, that RAF operations require the US Army's organizational culture to place the same value on engagement as other warfighting functions; and third, that the relationship between CF and SOF conducting RAF operations is

interdependent.

Limitations and Assumptions

At the time of writing, only one BCT in the Army had prepared for and executed operations under the RAF concept, which limits the research to a singular case study. Additionally, due to the fact that TRADOC Pamphlet 535-8-5, *US Army Functional Concept of Engagement*, which officially initiated the creation of the engagement warfighting function and provides the first explicit definition of interdependence between CF and SOF, was published in February 2014, insufficient time has passed to assess the long-term effects of the document. However, the concepts of engagement and interdependence are not new and a significant amount of literature discussing each topic informs this study.

The current and previous Chiefs of Staff of the Army, General Raymond Odierno and General George Casey, along with many other general officers such as Major General Bennet Sacolick, former commander of the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, and Brigadier General Wayne Grigsby Jr., the former director of the Mission Command Center of Excellence, have specifically addressed the importance of engagement and interdependence in various publications in recent years.²⁶ This emphasis indicates that Army leaders know about the concepts and that engagement and interdependence already affect how they think and act. Therefore, recent observations and assessments regarding military engagement

²⁶ Odierno and McHugh, Statement on the Posture of the US Army before the House Armed Services Committee (March 25, 2014), 7-8; Jan Kenneth Gleiman, "Operational Art and the Clash of Organizational Culture: Postmortem on Special Operations as a Seventh Warfighting Function" (monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2011), 3; Wayne Grigsby and Bennet Sacolick, "Special Operations/conventional Forces Interdependence: A Critical Role in 'prevent, Shape, Win'," *Army Magazine* (June 2012): 39-40, accessed February 22, 2015, http://www.ausa.org/publications/armymagazine/archive/2012/06/Documents/Sacolick_0612.pdf.

and the interdependence between CF and SOF are significant and inform the findings in this study.

Three primary assumptions facilitate this study. First, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, executing operations under the RAF concept in US Africa Command's (AFRICOM) area of responsibility in 2014, reflects a typical US Army BCT, and insights gained from studying this BCT are applicable to other BCTs conducting RAF operations. Second, future operations under the RAF concept will predominately involve partnership activities requiring conventional units to conduct SFA tasks, exercises requiring proficiency in warfighting tasks, and sustained readiness for possible contingency operations. Third, future operations under the RAF concept will require the deployment of mission-tailored teams, often smaller than a company and rarely involving an entire BCT. These assumptions provide a basis for guiding the research, interpreting information, and provide meaning to the conclusions drawn as well as recommendations offered.²⁷

Organization

This monograph is organized into five sections. This section introduced the topic by providing an overview of the study, including the organization, methodology, and thesis. Section II provides a review of literature on RAF operations and develops the study's three hypotheses. Section III tests the hypotheses using a structured focused case study of 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division's preparation and execution of operations under the RAF concept. Based on this case study, Section IV provides analysis and recommendations to improve the preparation for and execution of future operations under the RAF concept. Recommendations include changes to aspects the domains of US Army doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and

²⁷ Frederick C. Lunenburg and Beverly J. Irby, *Writing a Successful Thesis or Dissertation: Tips and Strategies for Students in the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2008), 135.

education, personnel and facilities (DOTMLPF). Finally, Section V concludes the monograph with a summary of the research findings and offers recommendations for future research.

Section II: Literature Review

This section provides a review of literature on RAF as well as related and supporting concepts. The literature review is organized into five main topics to provide relevant context and explore the linkages between the RAF concept, engagement, and interdependence between CF and SOF. This section starts with a review of the origins and objectives of the RAF concept to expand on the definitions provided in the introduction and provide a thorough understanding of the concept's background and intended results. Second, a description of the nature of operations associated with the RAF concept highlights the diverse and wide ranging capabilities US Army forces must possess to support the concept. Third, this monograph discusses the evolution of the concept of engagement in Army doctrine and the linkage to RAF. Fourth, a historical overview of the relationship between CF and SOF explains why interdependence is critical to RAF operations. Finally, organizational theory explains the role of organizational culture and institutionalization in RAF operations.

Origins and Objectives of Regionally Aligned Forces

The RAF concept is a key component to the US Army's Prevent, Shape, Win strategy that attempts to incorporate lessons learned from recent conflicts with the more traditional concepts found in Army doctrine prior to 2001 into a new operational approach.²⁸ The new approach addresses the challenges of an uncertain future and an increasingly complex and

²⁸ Raymond Odierno, "CSA Editorial: Prevent, Shape, Win," [www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil/article/71030/CSA_Editorial__Prevent__shape__win/), December 16, 2011, accessed February 22, 2015, http://www.army.mil/article/71030/CSA_Editorial__Prevent__shape__win/. Prevent, Shape, Win describes the Army's role in national defense. This includes preventing conflict by maintaining a force that potential opponents view as credible, shaping the international environment with military engagement, and being ready to win decisively if required.

adaptive operational environment. The development and implementation of the RAF concept occurred during a period of fiscal austerity, which required Army leaders to set new priorities and consider new ways of employing the force. Additionally, like most new concepts, RAF has evolved over time and will continue to evolve based on feedback from operations.

Origins of the RAF Concept

In general, the RAF concept is an attempt by the Army's senior leaders to balance capabilities based on lessons learned from the past with anticipated demands in the future. The Army has a history of drawing on lessons learned from the most recent conflict to form new ideas regarding the Army's way of war or how the Army will conduct war in the future.²⁹ Brian Linn, a military historian, chronicles this pattern in *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War*. He argues military and civilian leaders have consistently prepared the Army for an enemy unlike the one actually faced in subsequent conflict. Linn warns of the tendency for Army leaders to fixate on a "comfortable vision of war," that primarily focuses on conventional threats with capabilities similar to the US military.³⁰ This focus leads to an over-emphasis on large-scale combined arms maneuver against conventional threats and fails to address adequately more unfamiliar problems and irregular adversaries.³¹

Today, Army leaders are attempting avoid mistakes of the past by drawing on lessons learned from recent experiences conducting large-scale counterinsurgency operations in highly complex environments. However, the more traditional, and for many the more comfortable,

²⁹ Brian McAllister Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 9.

³⁰ Ibid., 235-37.

³¹ Ibid., 242-43.

vision of war articulated in previous Army operating concepts, such as AirLand Battle and Full Spectrum Operations, places emphasis on offensive operations and initiative.³² The ability to execute combined arms maneuver remains a key component of Army operations and often the top priority of senior Army commanders due in part to the successful offensives against Iraqi forces in 1991 and 2003.³³ In general, the RAF concept seeks to balance the tension between these two competing ways of thinking about future conflict.

The general strategic and political situation in 2012 also shaped the development of the RAF concept. After over ten years of fighting, the US military was entering a period of transition with all US troops out of Iraq and conditions were being set for the removal of combat troops from Afghanistan by 2014. The Budget Control Act of 2011 mandated reductions in government spending to include defense thus marking the beginning of a period of fiscal austerity.³⁴ During this period of national transition, the RAF concept served as one way for the Army to address the coming changes, new ideas, and hard choices needed to ensure continued military dominance.³⁵

In particular, the RAF concept was introduced by General Raymond Odierno in 2011, shortly after being appointed the Army Chief of Staff, as a key component to implementing the

³² Bill Benson, "Unified Land Operations: The Evolution of Army Doctrine for Success in the 21st Century," *Military Review* (March-April 2012): 2, accessed February 22, 2015, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20120430_art004.pdf.

³³ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

³⁴ Barak Obama, foreword to *2012 Defense Strategic Guidance: Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, 2012), accessed February 22, 2015 http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf; Damian Paletta and Matt Phillips, "S&P Strips US of Top Credit Rating," *Wall Street Journal*, August 6, 2011, accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424053111903366504576490841235575386>.

³⁵ US Department of Defense, *2012 Defense Strategic Guidance: Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, 1.

Prevent, Shape, Win strategy. The Prevent, Shape, Win Strategy echoed the increasing emphasis on shaping and deterring conflicts through engagement originally articulated in the 2010 National Security Strategy. Later, the US Army strategic guidance in 2013 and 2014 explicitly identified the RAF concept as a priority critical to implementing the Prevent, Shape, Win strategy.³⁶ By 2014, the publication of the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review and the updated US Army Operating Concept, titled *Win in a Complex World*, indicated that both civilian and military leaders appreciated the need for diverse capabilities and adaptable organizations to address the unknowable and continuously changing challenges presented by a complex operational environment.³⁷

Objectives of the RAF Concept

In his forward to the 2014 Army Operating Concept, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Raymond Odierno notes that the Army must contribute unique capabilities and provide multiple options to the President, Secretary of Defense, and Combatant Commanders.³⁸ The source of the Army's unique capabilities and flexibility are the tailorable and scalable combinations of SOF and CF, which are regionally aligned and globally responsive.³⁹ In order to support this objective, the RAF concept organizes and allocates CF.

The focus on providing flexible options to civilian leadership has become increasingly important following the contentious debates among military and civilian leaders in the administrations of both President Bush and President Obama. Former Secretary of Defense,

³⁶ Odierno and McHugh, *2014 Army Strategic Planning Guidance* (April 2014), 14.

³⁷ David Perkins, preface to TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, iii.

³⁸ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, i.

³⁹ Raymond Odierno, forward to TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, i.

Robert Gates, in his memoir, *Duty*, articulates several examples of the military failing to provide the desired range of options. One notable example is President Bush's frustration with the inability or, perhaps unwillingness, of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to generate options to address the declining security situation in Iraq after the 2006 bombing of a Shia mosque in Samarra.⁴⁰

Another example is the significant friction that developed between the Pentagon and the White House in 2009 when the military presented a limited number of options to President Obama for a new approach in Afghanistan.⁴¹ A more recent example occurred in 2014 with the circumstances surrounding the resignation of Secretary of Defense, Charles Hagel, which included the inability for the Department of Defense to provide the president with creative options.⁴² With events like these in mind, the Army's implementation of the RAF concept can be seen as an attempt to provide more flexibility to senior military commanders, and ultimately to support the generation of more options for the President of the United States.

An implicit aim of the RAF concept is to help rebalance the Army by transitioning from a focus on counterinsurgency operations and reinvigorating capabilities that have declined over the past 14 years, such as combined arms maneuver.⁴³ US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), the headquarters responsible for developing the training guidelines for RAF, reflects this shift in focus by prioritizing the majority of RAF training time and resources for "decisive action"

⁴⁰ Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 39-40.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 384-85.

⁴² Julian Barnes, Carol Lee, and Adam Entous, "Chuck Hagel Steps Down as Defense Secretary," *Wall Street Journal*, November 24, 2014, accessed February 23, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/chuck-hagel-stepping-down-as-defense-secretary-official-1416839185>.

⁴³ Raymond Odierno and John McHugh, forward to *2013 Army Strategic Planning Guidance* (February 2013), i, accessed February 21, 2015, http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/rv5_downloads/info/references/army_strategic_planning_guidance.pdf.

training, which primarily consists of combat related skills and tasks.⁴⁴ Regionally specific skills required for effective engagement receive only increasing focus in the last 90 days of the training period.⁴⁵ The guidance goes on to acknowledge limited time and resources are available to Army leaders, and charges commanders to apply their judgment when deciding what tasks to not train on.⁴⁶ The engagement skills required to effectively conduct some types of RAF operations risk being underdeveloped, because of the lack of time and resources available for training combined with the priority for combined arms maneuver training.⁴⁷

Operations Associated with the RAF Concept

Keeping in mind the circumstances surrounding the development of the RAF concept as well as the implicit and explicit purposes, this section examines the anticipated operations associated with the RAF concept and the capabilities required from Army forces. First, this section explains how RAF balance capabilities by maintaining core warfighting skills, as well as engagement-related tasks such as SFA. Then, a review of the Army's history with advising shows

⁴⁴ US Army Forces Command, *Forces Command (FORSCOM) Regulation 350-1: Training* (Fort Bragg, NC: Department of the Army, 2014), 17, accessed February 23, 2015, <http://www.irwin.army.mil/RotationalInfo/350-1/Documents/FORSCOM%20Reg%20350-1%2015%20JULY%202014.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 32.

⁴⁷ Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Chief Financial Officer, *US Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request: Overview* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, 2014), 3-3, accessed February 23, 2015, http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2015/fy2015_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf. Another implicit aim of the RAF concept is the justification for funding. According to Department of Defense budget requests for 2015, RAF is necessary to restore and increase support to Combatant Commanders, and aids in deterring aggression while providing flexible and responsive options. This is noteworthy because the debates over defense spending continue, and it is unclear when the current period of fiscal austerity will end.

a trend of poor performance by Army units conducting SFA without extensive preparation. The section concludes by discussing the primary challenges to preparing Army forces for operations under the RAF concept, which finds competing priorities and gaps in doctrine as noteworthy shortfalls.

Balancing Capabilities in RAF

The RAF concept aligns Army forces with geographic combatant commands and is not limited in scope to any specific type of operation. Refocusing on core warfighting skills such as combined arms maneuver is a priority because capable forces are a critical component to deterrence.⁴⁸ However, because the RAF concept explicitly emphasizes regional expertise and the ability for Army forces to impart military knowledge and skills to others, engagement-related skills are critical. Therefore, for the RAF concept to succeed, Army units must maintain a balanced set of capabilities to conduct effective security cooperation activities as well as combined arms maneuver.

US Army Field Manual (FM) 3-22, *Army Support to Security Cooperation*, provides a detailed description of the types of operations and activities associated with security cooperation. Published in 2013, FM 3-22 replaced the 2009 version of FM 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance*, and defined RAF in doctrine for the first time. FM 3-22 incorporates lessons learned from recent conflicts, specifically BCT efforts to advise and assist host nation forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, and articulates the requirements of Army forces involved in security cooperation from the Army Service Component Command down to the BCT level.

During security cooperation operations, Army forces focus on conducting military

⁴⁸ Raymond Odierno, "The Force of Tomorrow," *Foreign Policy*, February 4, 2013, 8, accessed February 23, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/02/04/the-force-of-tomorrow/>.

engagement by interacting with people, including FSF and government officials, to build trust and confidence, share information, and maintain influence.⁴⁹ The activity associated with security cooperation most relevant to RAF operations is SFA.⁵⁰ SFA develops the capabilities of FSF to provide their own security against both external and internal threats. The specific tasks associated with SFA include organizing, training, equipping, rebuilding-building, advising, and assisting FSF.⁵¹ Proficiency in SFA tasks is essential to the RAF concept because it is the primary means for Army units to “impart military knowledge and skills” to FSF.⁵²

In general, operations in Afghanistan and Iraq relied heavily on SFA as part of large-scale counterinsurgency operations. Retaining expertise gained by SFA in Iraq and Afghanistan is important to the RAF concept, but SFA is no longer the primary focus in training.⁵³ Additionally, RAF operations will likely be smaller in scale, frequently below the BCT level. Despite the stated shift in priority away from COIN operations and SFA, General Dempsey’s statement from 2009, that SFA is no longer an “additional duty”, but a core competency of the Army, remains relevant.⁵⁴ Inherent to RAF is the challenge of achieving the right balance in capabilities.

Historical Perspective of RAF Operations

A review of the Army’s long history of advising, and an analysis of reoccurring shortfalls

⁴⁹ JP 3-0, III-1.

⁵⁰ FM 3-22, 1-10.

⁵¹ FM 3-22, 4-3-4-4.

⁵² Ibid., 1-6.

⁵³ Odierno, “The Force of Tomorrow,” 8.

⁵⁴ Martin Dempsey, forward to Field Manual (FM) 3-07.1, Security Force Assistance (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), accessed February 24, 2015, http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/doctrine/CDG/cdg_resources/manuals/fm/fm3_07x1.pdf.

of unprepared Army forces, provides insight for how the RAF concept can avoid similar problems in the future. In the past 239 years, the US Army engaged in large-scale conventional war for only eleven years, with all other operations falling into a category we define today as stability operations.⁵⁵ In Vietnam, early advising efforts were limited, and generally trained the South Vietnamese to fight like American forces by relying on superior firepower. The shift toward a heavy advising strategy later in the war proved ineffective.⁵⁶ Similarly, in 2003, the Army lacked capacity to develop significant numbers of indigenous security forces in Iraq and spent the next nine years attempting to build the right capabilities.⁵⁷ One indicator of the ineffectiveness of the Army's SFA efforts in Iraq was the inability of Iraqi Security Forces to defend against an attack by the Syrian based extremist group, Islamic State, in June 2014. The primarily American trained and equipped Iraqi Army offered little resistance to the advancing irregular forces, resulting in a loss of territory, and ultimately led to the deployment of US forces to Iraq to provide additional assistance.⁵⁸

Prior research on advising identified a variety options to better prepare US Army forces

⁵⁵ David M. Wood, "Advising Host Nations and Host Nation Security Forces: The United States Military Advisory Efforts through 2020," monograph School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, 2014, iii.

⁵⁶ John Nagl, "In Era of Small Wars, Us Army Must Embrace Training Mission," in "Economy of Force: Training US Partner Militaries," Special issue, *World Politics Review* (February 5, 2013): 2.

⁵⁷ US Congress, House Committee on House Armed Services Committee, Stand Up and Be Counted: The Continuing Challenge of Building the Iraqi Security Forces, 110th Cong., 1st sess., 2007, H. Doc., 13-18, accessed February, 24 2015, http://democrats.armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=2bfb0934-1745-4c80-8e21-205915e97cfb.

⁵⁸ Martin Chulov, Fazel Hawramy, and Spencer Akerman, "Iraq Army Capitulates to Isis Militants in Four Cities," *Guardian*, June 11, 2014, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/11/mosul-isis-gunmen-middle-east-states>. Roughly, 800 fighters forced two Iraqi divisions to withdraw after three days of sporadic fighting. At the time of publication, ISIS retains significant territory to include Mosel, Iraq's second largest city.

for SFA missions. Retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel, John Nagl, a well-known counterinsurgency expert, has long argued for a permanent advising corps in the US Army to institutionalize the SFA capability. To date, the Army has rejected the idea of fielding specialized fighting units in favor of fielding the maximum number of BCTs, trained and equipped to execute a wide range of operations including offense, defense, and stability operations.⁵⁹ Other recommendations include changes to doctrine, training, and talent management to prepare Army units for advising missions.⁶⁰

Challenges Facing US Army Leaders Conducting RAF Operations

Despite previous recommendations and the explicitly stated requirements of the RAF concept to conduct SFA tasks, the RAF concept does not directly address how to retain SFA proficiency or address previously identified shortfalls in the Army's SFA capabilities. The particular issues that are most notable are competing priorities and gaps in doctrine. The doctrinal gaps include a Mission Essential Task List (METL) for Army BCTs that inadequately addresses SFA tasks, a lack of doctrine to address conventional units executing SFA task in smaller units below the BCT level, and a general lack of clarity regarding engagement and interdependence between CF and SOF. Finally, the increasing emphasis placed on traditional warfighting capabilities during training and decreasing emphasis on SFA capabilities challenges Army units to find the time, resources, and expertise required to become proficient in SFA tasks.

⁵⁹ Andrew Feickert, *Does the Army Need a Full-Spectrum Force or Specialized Units? Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), 16-17, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a476145.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Wood, 60-83. Recommendations include various changes to Army doctrine, a more deliberate approach to training for SFA in the operating and generating force, and multiple programs and initiatives to ensure the selection and training of the right personnel to carry out advisory duties.

First, the Department of the Army standardizes the list of tasks determined to be mission essential for a BCT, commonly referred to as the BCT METL. The Department of the Army approved METL is specific for each type of BCT, but all are similar and include the same six essential tasks: conduct mission command, conduct offensive operations, conduct defensive operations, conduct security operations, conduct stability operations, and provide fire support.⁶¹ In all BCT METLs the focus is on core warfighting tasks, while only one task, ‘conduct stability operations,’ vaguely references SFA as part of a sub-task. The task to ‘conduct stability operations’ is broken into two task groups which include multiple sub-tasks. Under the task group ‘coordinate essential services for host nation,’ two sub-tasks reference SFA. The two tasks are to ‘prepare in country for a SFA mission’ and ‘conduct mission command SFA operations.’⁶² These vague references to security cooperation tasks do not make explicit the priority for engagement-related skills at the collective and individual level. As a result, a BCT training plan focused exclusively on METL tasks could result in insufficient training on the SFA tasks required for effective RAF operations.

Second, FM 3-22 provides an inadequate guide for preparing Army forces for operations under the RAF concept. FM 3-22 assumes an entire BCT will execute security cooperation, and that the brigade operations officer is responsible for the bulk of planning while simultaneously filling the duties of a primary advisor.⁶³ This assumption is not in line with the deployment of smaller mission-tailored units to conduct SFA tasks independently from the BCT headquarters,

⁶¹ Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP), 3-90 Offense and Defense (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 2-15-2-16. The Army categorizes BCTs as either infantry, armored, or Stryker based on their assigned equipment and unique capabilities.

⁶² US Army, “HQDA Standardized METL,” Army Training Network, last modified January 15, 2015, accessed February 24, 2015, <https://atn.army.mil/fso/default.aspx>.

⁶³ FM 3-22, 5-5-5-9.

which is most likely under the RAF concept. Therefore, the decentralized execution of future RAF operations presents challenges not addressed in doctrine.

Additional gaps in doctrine exist in the lack of clarity on engagement, and the lack of an explicit description of interdependence between CF and SOF. FM 3-22 directs CF to integrate with Army SOF, but fails to provide a description of how to integrate effectively.⁶⁴ Based on joint doctrine, interdependence requires a mutual reliance on one another's capabilities, which improves effectiveness.⁶⁵ The following paragraphs describe in detail how a lack of doctrine contributes to shortfalls in understanding engagement and interdependence.

Engagement: Evolution of the Concept and the Linkage to RAF

Army forces must understand and prioritize engagement because it is an essential component of national level strategy and the central idea informing the RAF concept. The 2010 National Security Strategy explicitly states that engagement is a strategic priority, and describes engagement as the interaction between the United States and both friends and potential adversaries around the globe. The document stresses engagement through all elements of national power, to include military means. The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review continues to stress engagement through military means as essential to building global security.⁶⁶ Given this strategic context, further defining military engagement, and tracing the emergence of the engagement warfighting function in US Army doctrine is necessary to understand why engagement is an essential part of the RAF concept.

⁶⁴ FM 3-22, 1-7, 3-13-3-14.

⁶⁵ JP 3-0, IV-6.

⁶⁶ US Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review: 2014* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 12, accessed February 24, 2015, http://www.defense.gov/pubs/2014_Quadrennial_Defense_Review.pdf.

Further Defining Engagement

Strategic guidance and military doctrine clarify what engagement is and how the term applies in different contexts. The 2010 National Security Strategy describes a comprehensive engagement strategy, and defines engagement as the active participation by the United States in relationships with those outside America's borders; the opposite of isolationism.⁶⁷ Strategic objectives related to engagement include reassuring allies, pursuing common interests with other global and regional powers, pressuring adversaries to accept international norms, and strengthening international institutions.⁶⁸

Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations*, defines military engagement as the routine contact and interaction between individuals or elements of US military forces and armed forces from other nations or civilian authorities, both foreign and domestic.⁶⁹ In 2014, the Army introduced engagement as a warfighting function to institutionalize engagement and make Army forces more effective at understanding and influencing the behavior of people, security forces, and governments. Efforts to develop more clarity in US Army doctrine on engagement and to create the engagement warfighting function are a recognition of an increasingly complex operational environment and the need for more adaptable military forces. To increase adaptability, Army forces must better understand the "physical, cultural, social, and political elements that influence human behavior," and have the ability to effectively employ unique capabilities such as partnership and special warfare activities.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Barack Obama, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: The White House), May 2010, 11.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ TRADOC Pamphlet 535-8-5, 5.

Engagement as a Warfighting Function

Creating the engagement warfighting function reflects the increased value placed on partnership activities and special warfare activities resulting from the US Army's recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁷¹ Tracing the development of the engagement warfighting function, from an initial proposal for a seventh warfighting function in 2010, to the 2014 publication of the *US Army Functional Concept of Engagement* by TRADOC, provides insight into how the US Army responded to the increasing importance of engagement. There are three distinct periods of evolution. First, the 2010 proposal was an attempt to address poor integration between CF and SOF. Despite the fact that the proposal was unsuccessful, the process further defined the problem as the increasing importance of partnership activities, a limited understanding of special warfare activities among CF, and issues related to organizational culture and structure. Second, analysis of new and expanded arguments for a seventh warfighting function in 2012 reveal a greater appreciation for an increasingly complex operational environment and new ideas for how CF and SOF can work together to conduct effective military engagement. Finally, the 2014 publication of TRADOC Pamphlet 535-8-5 formally established the seventh warfighting function and initiated the development of doctrine to support it. The document also institutionalizes the capability for US Army forces to influence the behaviors of people, security forces, and governments through partnership activities and special warfare activities.

Beginning in 2010, US Army Special Operations Command led an effort to add special operations as the seventh warfighting function, in order to capture lessons learned from nine years

⁷¹ Ibid.

of war and to improve the poor integration between CF and SOF.⁷² The proposal detailed seven specific issues the new warfighting function would address. Two categories summarize these issues: the general lack of knowledge among CF regarding SOF capabilities, and gaps in Army doctrine that negatively affected integration.⁷³ A General Officer Review Board rejected the 2010 proposal to add Special Operations as the seventh warfighting function for multiple reasons, but the process clarified the problem and focused future efforts on the changing roles of CF and SOF, a cultural divide between CF and SOF, and a command structure that hampered integration.⁷⁴

The traditional roles of both CF and SOF changed during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as both adapted to changes in the operational environment. In both wars, the importance of developing host nation security forces to restore security was an essential objective. In his 2011 article, “Special Operations as a Warfighting Function,” the director of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center, Lieutenant Colonel Glenn Thomas, argued that CF were placing more emphasis on engagement and operating in smaller decentralized elements, making them more like SOF.⁷⁵ At the same time, major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan required SOF to place increasing emphasis on direct action missions at the expense of partnership activities.⁷⁶ In each case, the change resulted in new and often inaccurate perceptions for how to employ CF and SOF effectively, especially when engagement was

⁷² Gleiman, 25-26.

⁷³ Ibid., 27.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 3-4.

⁷⁵ Glenn Thomas, “Special Operations as a Warfighting Function,” *Special Warfare* 24, no. 1 (January-February 2011): 8, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/swmag/archive/SW2401/SW2401SpecialOperationsAsAWarfightingFunction.html>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

required.⁷⁷

In addition to changing roles, a general lack of knowledge about SOF and special warfare activities among conventional force leaders was a major issue contributing to poor integration. This is an enduring issue, as evident in the commander of US Central Command, General Norman Schwarzkoph's dismissive comments about SOF and decision not to integrate all SOF capabilities during Operation Desert Storm in 1991.⁷⁸ Likewise, in his 2011 monograph titled "Operational Art and the Clash of Organizational Cultures: Postmortem on Special Operations as a Seventh Warfighting Function," Lieutenant Colonel Jan Gleiman described a general consensus among senior leaders, both from conventional and special operations backgrounds, that a lack of knowledge and understanding of special operations force capabilities among conventional force leaders contributed to poor integration in both Iraq and Afghanistan.⁷⁹

The lack of knowledge about the capabilities of special operations and the role of special warfare activities among conventional force leaders links directly to shortfalls in doctrine. In 2010, both the US Army Capstone Concept and US Army Operating Concept lacked details on the capabilities of SOF and failed to provide an intellectual construct for planners at all echelons to integrate special warfare activities in operations.⁸⁰ Developing a seventh warfighting function offered one option for the US Army to bridge this gap in doctrine.

The organization of US military commands presents structural issues that complicate the relationship between CF and SOF and often has negative impacts on integration. US Special

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ames, 17.

⁷⁹ Gleiman, 4-5.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 27.

Operations Command (USSOCOM) is a functional combatant command separate from the geographic combatant commands that oversee all military operations in their assigned area of responsibility. USSOCOM is unique in that it controls all SOF almost like a separate service.⁸¹ This results in multiple units from different commands sometimes operating the same area. This situation requires a significant amount of coordination to prevent conflict and rarely results in operations unified in purpose.⁸² However, in January 2013, the US Army, Marine Corps and USSOCOM agreed to combine and synchronize their efforts in the Strategic Land Power initiative to address this issue and develop future capabilities more efficiently.⁸³ Also in 2013, the Secretary of Defense directed geographic combatant commands to assume operational control of theater special operations commands. This change in command structure was intended to facilitate interdependent relationships at the theater level.⁸⁴ Thus, it is evident that the services and USSOCOM are aware of, and attempting to overcome, structural challenges to cooperation.

After the General Officer Review Board tabled the 2010 proposal for the seventh warfighting function, USSOCOM took a new approach by expanding the scope of the seventh warfighting function and changing the name to ‘engagement’ instead of ‘special operations.’

⁸¹ Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-05, Special Operations (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 45.

⁸² Gleiman, 19.

⁸³ US Army, “Strategic Landpower Task Force,” Army Capabilities Integration Center, last modified February 22, 2015, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://www.arcic.army.mil/Initiatives/strategic-landpower.aspx>.

⁸⁴ Michael D. Tisdell, Ken D. Teske, and William C. Fleaser, “Theater Special Operations Commands Realignment,” presented at the 18th International Command & Control Research & Technology Symposium (MacDill AFB, FL: US Special Operations Command, 2014), 2, accessed March 9, 2015, <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ADA607289>.

Engagement more accurately reflected the warfighting function's purpose and scope.⁸⁵ In 2012, the Commander of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Major General Bennet Sacolick, and the director of the Mission Command Center of Excellence, Brigadier General Wayne Grigsby, co-authored an article recognizing the changing and more human-centric nature of conflict. They detailed the need for an engagement warfighting function as well as an interdependent relationship between CF and SOF in order to make the military more adaptable, and thus better prepared for future conflicts.⁸⁶

Also in 2012, USSOCOM published a campaign plan recognizing the need for both CF and SOF core competencies across the range of military operations, and emphasized the need for an interdependent relationship during COIN, FID, and SFA operations.⁸⁷ During COIN, FID, and SFA operations, engagement is critical and requires the synchronization of people, organizations, information, and processes to be successful. There are many instances where purposeful mutual reliance between both CF and SOF is required to address contemporary problems. For example, the use of CF to advise FSF at echelons from the brigade to ministerial level recognizes that CF are better suited for some types of advising than a typical special operations unit.⁸⁸ Additionally, the need for CF to provide additional security to SOF conducting village stability operations in Afghanistan is an example of conventional force capabilities enhancing the capacities of SOF.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Gleiman, 56.

⁸⁶ Grigsby and Sacolick, 39.

⁸⁷ US Army Special Operations Command, "ARSOF 2022," *Special Warfare* (April 2013): 11, accessed February 24, 2015, http://www.soc.mil/Assorted%20Pages/ARSOF2022_vFINAL.pdf.

⁸⁸ US Department of Defense, "Ministry of Defense Advisors Program," accessed February 27, 2015, http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2011/0211_moda/.

⁸⁹ Ty Connett and Bob Cassidy, "Village Stability Operations: More than Village Defense," *Special Warfare* 24, no. 3 (July-September 2011): 24-27, accessed February 24, 2015,

In both cases, the most effective approach to an engagement-centric mission required a mutual reliance and synchronization of capabilities between CF and SOF.

The ideas put forward in 2012, combined with previous efforts, ultimately resulted in the publication of TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, which officially established engagement as the seventh warfighting function and initiated its development in doctrine. The Army Capabilities Integration Center publishes functional concepts to drive capability development across the domains of DOTMLPF by establishing a common framework.⁹⁰ Under the framework provided by the functional concept of engagement, Army doctrine will address the roles of CF and SOF in both partnership and special warfare activities.⁹¹ The framework also emphasizes the need for interdependent relationships between CF and SOF to maximize effectiveness across the full range of military operations.⁹² Armed with these ideas, future Army leaders will be better prepared to execute operations under the RAF concept.

Interdependence

In addition to engagement, interdependence between CF and SOF is critical to the RAF concept. This section concentrates on the effectiveness and efficiency associated with interdependence, as well as the subsets of interdependence between CF and SOF. Both joint and

http://www.soc.mil/swcs/swmag/archive/SW2403/SW2403VillageStabilityOperations_MoreThanVillageDefense.html.

⁹⁰ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 1.

⁹¹ Ibid., 11-15. Partnership activities include civil military operations, Army support to security cooperation, security assistance, foreign internal defense, and security force assistance. Special warfare activities include unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency, civil affairs operations, and military information support operations.

⁹² Ibid., 17-18.

Army doctrine explain the utility and need for interdependent relationships.⁹³ Multiple studies suggest organizational culture, combined with a lack of institutional support in areas such as doctrine, education, and training, are the primary factors inhibiting interdependence.⁹⁴ To understand interdependence with regard to the RAF concept, the following summary of previous research provides background and historical examples to highlight the impact of interdependence on effectiveness and efficiency. Additionally, the subsets of interdependence addressed in Army doctrine include interoperability, integration, and synchronization; this section addresses each to varying degrees. Due to the “broad and multifaceted” nature of interdependence, only the information most relevant to RAF operations is included.⁹⁵

What is interdependence? Joint doctrine does not define interdependence, but uses the term to describe the relationship between the services as “the purposeful reliance by one service on another service’s capabilities to maximize the complementary and reinforcing effects of both.”⁹⁶ The definition of interdependence found in TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5 is similar to joint doctrine, but uses the term ‘unified action partners’ in lieu of ‘services’ to encompass all military forces, government and nongovernmental organizations, and elements of the private sector with which Army forces interact with during operations.

As stated previously, the focus on the interdependent relationship between CF and SOF is primarily to increase effectiveness. According to TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, interdependence is a supporting idea critical to the engagement concept, and there are three subsets within interdependence: interoperability, integration, and synchronization. Doctrine acknowledges the

⁹³ JP 3-0, IV-6; JP 3-05, I-6-I-7; ADP 3-05, 16.

⁹⁴ Ames, 40-41; Gleiman, 60-62.

⁹⁵ TRADOC Pamphlet 524-8-5, 17.

⁹⁶ JP 3-0, 98.

ability to use both conventional and special operations capabilities in isolation, but the effects of operations are generally greater when the capabilities are fully integrated and synchronized. Additionally, synchronization is specifically identified as a problem in TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, often occurring too late in military operations, resulting in suboptimal results. To address this challenge, synchronization between conventional and special operations must be continuously reinforced in doctrine, professional military education, and training.⁹⁷

Interdependence Theory

The origins and evolution of interdependence in organizational theory provides context to the analysis of the relationship between CF and SOF.⁹⁸ James Thompson, a well-known organizational theorist, categorizes interdependence based on the degree of complexity involved in the system. In his book, *Organizations in Action*, Thompson defines interdependence as either pooled, sequential, or reciprocal.⁹⁹ Pooled interdependence characterizes a situation where separate organizations, which can operate independently, cooperate to accomplish a common objective. In this instance, if one fails all will likely fail to achieve their objective. Similarly, sequential interdependence involves multiple organizations working toward a common goal, but they cooperate linearly (like a supply chain), and if one organization fails the link is broken and the result is failure. Reciprocal interdependence is more complex than pooled and linear independence, and describes the situation when the outputs from one organization become another organizations' input and vice versa. These organizations cooperate with each other to

⁹⁷ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 22.

⁹⁸ US Army Major Russell Ames's monograph "Interdependence between Army Conventional Forces and Special Operations Forces: Changing Institutional Mental Models," provides a detailed description of interdependence from the late nineteenth century to 2013.

⁹⁹ Christopher R. Paparone and James A. Crupi, "What is Joint Interdependence Anyway?," *Military Review* (July-August 2004): 39-41, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA519541>.

contribute toward a common goal. In this relationship, the organizations become less distinguishable from one another and more adaptable. The complex coordination required in reciprocal interdependence requires standardization.

In the context of the engagement-centric operations associated with RAF, such as SFA, reciprocal interdependence appears most applicable because of the emphasis of synchronization and integration in doctrine and in the examples of engagement-centric operations discussed earlier. Specifically, the complex forms of coordination required between CF and SOF during operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas's description of the changing roles of both CF and SOF in Iraq and Afghanistan, resulted in the organizations becoming less distinguishable.¹⁰⁰

History of Interdependence between Conventional and Special Operations Forces

Examining the history of the relationship between CF and SOF reveals an evolutionary trend where priorities and focus shifted based on reactions to failure or problems. Interoperability became a priority in 1980, following the failure of Operation Eagle Claw, the multi-service and SOF mission to rescue US citizens held hostage in Iran, due in part to interoperability failures. In response to this failure, the Goldwater-Nichols Act and Nunn-Cohen Amendment made huge improvements in interoperability between the services and made USSOCOM the single headquarters responsible for training, organizing, equipping, and employing joint SOF.¹⁰¹ In 1991, during Operation Desert Storm, interoperability was not an issue during the successful air, land, and sea campaign to liberate Kuwait. However, some criticized the integration of SOF by

¹⁰⁰ Thomas, "Special Operations as a Warfighting Function," 8-9.

¹⁰¹ Ames, 17.

General Schwarzkopf.¹⁰² In 1995, while executing stability operations in Bosnia, integration between CF and SOF remained the primary issue. Geographically separate headquarters with no command and support relationship, and a general lack of knowledge about one another's operations, significantly contributed to the problem.¹⁰³ From 2001 through 2011 in both Iraq and Afghanistan, CF and SOF increasingly interacted as they operated in the same areas of responsibility and integration gradually improved, but some issues with integration and synchronization remained. Despite the gradual improvements, integration continued to be a significant enough problem for the Chief of Staff of the Army to address it as a major concern in 2009.¹⁰⁴

Tracing the emergence of engagement as a warfighting function and reviewing the history of interdependence between CG and SOF highlights gaps in doctrine and issues with the changing roles of CF and SOF. Additionally, previous researchers determined that organizational culture also contributed to the challenge of integrating CF and SOF into operations.¹⁰⁵

Organization Theory

Organizational theory provides a useful lens to explain how organizational culture and institutionalization relate to the previously identified issues regarding the development of the engagement warfighting function and synchronization of engagement-centric operations. Army leaders must foster a culture that values engagement and interdependence in order to fulfil the purpose and types of operations associated with the RAF concept. To assess how engagement is

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 18-19.

¹⁰⁴ Aaron Brown, *Information Paper: SOF-GPF Interdependence* (Leavenworth, KS: US Army Combined Arms Center, 2009), accessed February 24, 2015, <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/AIWFC/Repository/SOF-GPF%20Integration%20Staff%20Study.pdf>.

¹⁰⁵ Ames, 19; Gleiman, 16-17.

currently valued in the Army's organizational culture, this section uses Mary Jo Hatch's organizational dynamics model. Next, Philip Selznick's institutionalization theory explains how establishing an engagement warfighting function benefits the RAF concept. These theories provide a lens for explaining how changing doctrine affects organizational culture and ultimately results in changing behaviors that can improve the effectiveness of operations under the RAF concept.

Institutionalizing engagement as a warfighting function and defining interdependence between CF and SOF in doctrine are attempts to change the Army's culture, as well as a recognition of the increasing value already placed on engagement and interdependence. To explain, it is essential to put organizational culture into context using Hatch's cultural dynamics model. This model describes organizational culture as a set of interacting assumptions, values, artifacts, and symbols that guide the behavior of an organization's members.

Built on American social psychologist Edgar Schein's theory of culture, the Hatch model claims that basic assumptions held by an organization's members form the essence of culture.¹⁰⁶ These assumptions are taken for granted, but shape each members' perception of reality and are manifested in the values and behavioral norms of the members.¹⁰⁷ The culturally guided choices and behaviors of the members take tangible form as artifacts, which reflect the basic assumptions held by the organization.¹⁰⁸ Hatch, taking a symbolic-interpretive view, adds symbols to her model to explain how artifacts stand for something or convey a multitude of meanings.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Hatch, 210.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 185.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 211.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 193.

Symbols can also be interpreted in different ways and challenge the basic assumptions within an organization. The addition of symbols and the process of interpretation is what makes changing organizational culture through artifacts and symbols possible.¹¹⁰

Using Hatch's model, Army doctrine is as an artifact reflecting the methods and ideas the US Army believes to be most effective. In this sense, the publication of TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5 reflects a change in the Army's culture, specifically new assumptions that place greater value on engagement. Undoubtedly, the challenges of developing effective security forces and establishing functional host nation governments in Iraq and Afghanistan influenced those beliefs. Simultaneously, because doctrine guides the behavior of Army leaders, it is authoritative in nature. In this respect, by putting a concept like engagement into doctrine, it becomes more credible and members will place increased value on it. This is especially important for new members or Army leaders who lack first-hand experience with engagement-centric missions.

In addition to culture theory, sociologist Philip Selznick's institutionalization theory explains how creating an engagement warfighting function benefits RAF operations. Institutionalization builds on the social construction idea that human interaction constructs individual identity and social reality. When people interact, they construct social reality and simultaneously externalize their perceptions of reality. As people objectify, or accept, the constructed realities, they also socialize new members who internalize the socially constructed reality by accepting its roles and meanings. New members then externalize and objectify with others.¹¹¹ The social construction process is the primary reasons why institutions generally continue to exist after creation and have a tendency to improve or perfect themselves over time.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 212.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 43-45.

¹¹² Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A*

Change occurs when members externalize something new, perhaps borrowed from another group.¹¹³ Selznick's idea of institutionalization builds on social construction to describe how competition for power and legitimacy based on internal and external values can have both positive and negative effects on an organization.¹¹⁴

Analyzing the creation of engagement as a warfighting function through this lens reveals the potential for significant and lasting change. In the Army, this structural change suggests people will organize into working groups or planning cells aligned with the engagement warfighting function. These organizations will create a new reality where engagement has increased value and members will seek to protect and perfect the new institution. According to Selznick's theory, the resulting competition for power and the increasing value on engagement will likely result in increasing resources and a higher priority being placed on engagement-centric skills and operations such as those associated with RAF.

Summary

To summarize, the origins, objectives, and types of operations associated with the RAF concept means that military engagement through SFA tasks is an essential element of RAF operations. Additionally, the evolution of engagement as a concept and warfighting function explains why Army leaders need to value engagement to the same degree as other warfighting functions. Organizational culture theory explains why changes in doctrine reflect an increased value placed on engagement by Army leaders, and why this change is essential to successful execution of RAF operations. Likewise, the RAF concept requires the synchronized integration of

Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge, Anchor Books ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 76.

¹¹³ Hatch, 44.

¹¹⁴ Hatch, 85-86.

CF and SOF capabilities. An interdependent relationship between CF and SOF is the ideal way to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of RAF operations. Finally, organizational theory, specifically the idea of institutionalization, explains how establishing the engagement warfighting function can benefit RAF operations by increasing the resources to support engagement-centric operations, and fostering interdependence between CF and SOF.

Section III: Case Study

In this section, operations conducted by 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division (2/1 ABCT) from March 2013 to June 2014 under the RAF concept are the subject of a qualitative case study to test the three hypotheses. Evidence in the case study supports the thesis that Army leaders must integrate engagement with other warfighting functions and improve interdependence between CF and SOF to conduct operations under the RAF concept effectively. As described in the previous section, evidence supports the existence of explicit connections between engagement, interdependence, and operations under the RAF concept. This section provides additional evidence that operations under the RAF concept require Army forces to conduct military engagement, that the US Army's organizational culture values engagement to the same degree as other warfighting functions, and that the relationship between CF and SOF conducting RAF operations requires interdependence. This section begins with general background information to provide the strategic to tactical level context, and then tests the three hypotheses using detailed event descriptions and analysis via six focused questions. The section concludes with a summary of the case study and analysis of the support, or lack of support, for each hypothesis.

Background

In 2012, the Chief of Staff of the Army identified 2/1 ABCT as the first BCT to train and execute operations under the RAF concept.¹¹⁵ As a pilot for the RAF concept, analysis of and lessons learned from 2/1 ABCT's operations while allocated to AFRICOM are to inform and improve future RAF operations.¹¹⁶ To fully understand the situation, this section begins with an overview of the situation facing AFRICOM and 2/1 ABCT in 2013. Next, a brief description of 2/1 ABCT's capabilities, training and readiness levels, mission, and commander's intent provides greater understanding of the situation at the tactical level. The background section concludes with an overview of operations executed by the BCT under the RAF concept.

AFRICOM's Strategic Situation

AFRICOM's area of responsibility is complex and includes fifty-four nations on the continent plus the surrounding island nations and seas. What happens in Africa is important to the United States for two primary reasons: the significant threat to the national security posed by non-state actors operating on the continent, and US economic interests in Africa's natural resources and growing markets.¹¹⁷ It is also important to note that AFRICOM, established in 2007, is the newest geographic combatant command and has the fewest assigned forces.¹¹⁸ With a fiscal year

¹¹⁵ US Army, "Regionally Aligned Forces," *Stand-To*, December 20, 2012, accessed February 24, 2015, http://www.army.mil/standto/archive/issue.php?issue=2012-12-20&s_cid=standto.

¹¹⁶ Raymond Odierno, "Regionally Aligned Forces: A New Model for Building Partnerships," *Army Live: The Official Blog of the US Army*, March 22, 2012, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://armylive.dodlive.mil/index.php/2012/03/aligned-forces/>.

¹¹⁷ David E. Brown, *AFRICOM at 5 Years: The Maturation of a New US Combatant Command*, The Letort Papers (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, 2013), 7-9, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubid=1164>.

¹¹⁸ US Africa Command, "About the Command," last modified February 22, 2015,

2012 budget of \$276 million, AFRICOM also operates with less funding than the other combatant commands.¹¹⁹ Given these factors, piloting the RAF concept in Africa offers insight into how the US Army can find new ways to influence the strategic situation while working with limited means.

In March 2013, General Carter Ham, the Commander of AFRICOM, testified before both the Senate and House Armed Services Committees to provide the command's annual posture statement, which includes an overview of the strategic situation. His assessment of the strategic situation included threats, strategic objectives, a strategic approach, and forces available. The strategic environment in Africa offered many challenges, including the possibility of deadly attacks on Americans by violent extremist organizations, such as the September 2012 attack that killed four Americans in Benghazi, Libya, and the January 2013 attack on a British Petroleum oil facility in Algeria, which killed three Americans.¹²⁰ The most significant extremist threats in the region were from al Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Mali, Boko Haram in Nigeria, and al-Shabaab in Somalia. Additionally, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, and conflicts in South Sudan, Central African Republic, and Democratic Republic of the Congo pose threats to security in the region.¹²¹ The strategic objectives outlined by the General Ham included "protecting the security of the global economic system, preventing catastrophic attacks on the

accessed February 24, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/about-the-command>.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Carter Ham, *2013 US Africa Command Posture Statement: to Senate Armed Services Committee* (Stuttgart, Germany: US Africa Command, 2013), 7-9, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/Doc/10432>.

¹²¹ Ibid., 7-15.

homeland, developing secure and reliable partners, protecting American citizens abroad, and protecting and advancing universal values.”¹²²

In response to the threats and in pursuit of the stated strategic objectives, General Ham developed an operational approach that depended on the synchronized use of limited military means with other elements of national power, such as diplomatic efforts and economic support.¹²³ However, since the command’s inception, the limited number of assigned forces (combined with the inability to receive additional forces, due to competing demands in other theaters) hindered AFRICOM’s ability to conduct sufficient military engagement to improve relationships and strengthen the capabilities of partner nations on the continent.¹²⁴

AFRICOM’s mission as of March 2013 was to “protect and defend the national security interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations and, when directed, conduct military operations, in order to deter and defeat transnational threats and to provide a security environment conducive to good governance and development.”¹²⁵ The command used five lines of effort to focus operations, including “countering violent extremist organizations, strengthening maritime security and countering illicit trafficking, strengthening defense capabilities, maintaining strategic posture, and preparing for

¹²² Ibid., 5.

¹²³ Ibid., 4.

¹²⁴ Brown, 76-77; Brown, 18-19. AFRICOM had around 2,300 personnel assigned to various headquarters in Europe and Tampa, Florida. Additionally, AFRICOM’s assigned service component forces numbered around 5,400 and are organized into the following commands: Army Forces Africa, Air Forces Africa, Naval Forces Africa, Marine Forces Africa, Special Operations Command Africa, and Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa.

¹²⁵ Ham, 2.

and responding to crisis.”¹²⁶ As part of AFRICOM’s concept of operations, RAF operations provided an expanded capability to conduct military engagement with partnered African land forces to directly supported strengthening partner defense capabilities.

By design, an overarching theater security campaign plan synchronizes the effects of RAF operations with the effects of other engagement programs and operations to support AFRICOM’s mission.¹²⁷ All AFRICOM military engagements, including RAF operations, are coordinated through the US Department of State via the Office of Security Cooperation and the respective Defense Attaché Offices located in various diplomatic missions across the continent.¹²⁸

Brigade Level Situation

As the first BCT to specifically train for regional alignment and then deploy forces under the RAF concept, 2/1 ABCT faced a unique challenge of preparing for both contingency operations as well as regionally specific engagement tasks. 2/1 ABCT has approximately 3,800 soldiers equipped with tanks and other armored vehicles. The BCT is organized into two combined arms battalions, a reconnaissance squadron, a fires battalion, a special troops battalion, and a brigade support battalion.¹²⁹ 2/1 ABCT, like all active Army BCTs, is on a three year readiness cycle called Army Force Generation, which includes a reset period, train and ready

¹²⁶ Ibid., 6-7.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 16-17. Other engagement efforts included the Air Force run African Partnership Flight program, the National Guard supported State Partnership Program, and partnership activities conducted by a Special Purpose Main Air Ground Task Force.

¹²⁸ US Africa Command, “About the Command,” last modified February 22, 2015, accessed February 24, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/about-the-command>.

¹²⁹ Kirk C. Dorr, “Dagger on Point: Assessing the Regionally-Aligned Brigade,” manuscript USAWC Civilian Research Project, US Army War College, 2013, 12, assessed February 24, 2015, www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA592824.

period, and an available period, when forces are deployable.¹³⁰ In December 2011, the unit returned from a deployment to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn and began their reset period. Over the next fifteen months, the BCT developed and executed a training plan including a culminating training event at the National Training Center in February 2013. With the Combat Training Center rotation complete, 2/1 ABCT was considered available for deployment and allocated to AFRICOM from March 15, 2013 to June 15, 2014. Once allocated to AFRICOM, the BCT deployed mission tailored forces to conduct partnership activities that required SFA tasks, exercise, and to execute security force missions.

2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division: Operational Approach

2/1 ABCT's initial mission was "to conduct security cooperation activities within the AFRICOM area of responsibility to develop and protect American interests."¹³¹ Once deployed, elements of 2/1 ABCT were under the operational control of US Army Africa, the theater army assigned to AFRICOM.¹³² In the brigade's operations order, Colonel Jeffery Broadwater, the BCT commander, said, "the purpose of our mission is to build long lasting relationships that promote specific regional stability to help establish a secure environment."¹³³ He identified the following as key tasks:

¹³⁰ Army Regulation (AR) 525–29, *Army Force Generation* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 2.

¹³¹ Jeffery Broadwater, "RAF Mission Back Brief" (slides presented to US Army Africa on the BCT training plan, Fort Riley, KS, October 3, 2012), 7.

¹³² JP 3-0, III-4. Operational Control (OPCON) is command authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission. OPCON includes authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations and joint training necessary to accomplish missions assigned to the command.

¹³³ Broadwater, "RAF Mission Back Brief," 7.

“engaged leadership that promotes professionalism and understands the partnered learning environment; build on previous country partnered engagements to develop lasting relationships; seize opportunities to nest METL tasks with regionally aligned missions and exercises to maintain global availability while enhancing partnered relationships; and capture lessons learned to make the Regionally Aligned Brigade (RAB) concept better for follow-on units.”¹³⁴

Colonel Broadwater’s end state goal was for Soldiers to have made a positive difference by strengthening long lasting relationships between the United States and partnered African land forces, improving the capabilities of partnered forces to assist in establishing a more secure environment, and maintaining readiness requirements for global availability, to include proficiency on Department of the Army approved METL tasks.¹³⁵

Colonel Broadwater’s concept of operations included a train and ready period culminating with a BCT level training exercise at the National Training Center, a continuous decentralized training program focused on regionally specific skills in preparation for RAF operations, and the establishment of a readiness cycle to remain prepared for contingency operations and RAF mission requirements. Each element of the BCT’s approach reveals insights into how the RAF concept affects planning, preparing and executing operations and training.

The BCT’s training, leading up to and including the culminating training event at the National Training Center, focused almost entirely on the Department of the Army-approved METL, and consumed the vast majority of the BCT’s time and resources. As noted by Army Colonel Alan Shumate, a former battalion commander in a unit similar to 2/1 ABCT, “I personally experienced how an Armored Brigade Combat Team struggled to meet the challenges associated with preparing for full spectrum operations while also preparing for an Advise and

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

Assist Brigade deployment.”¹³⁶ Additionally, 2/1 ABCT, like almost all other BCTs at the time, had not conducted a METL-focused training cycle, culminating with a maneuver-focused combat training center rotation, since 2003, due the Army’s mission-focused training in support of operations in Iraq. The combined effects of the resource intensive training requirements and the unit’s lack of METL task experience resulted in a complete lack of specific training on SFA tasks during the train and ready period.

The BCT’s rotation to the National Training Center in March 2013 certified the unit on all METL tasks and validated the unit’s readiness to deploy troops in support of RAF missions or in response to contingencies. At this point, the BCT implemented “Dagger University,” the unit-run region-specific training program, to provide Soldiers with the cultural, regional expertise, and language education required for effective engagement in support of RAF operations.¹³⁷ Dagger University integrated trainers from the 162nd Infantry Training Brigade, the Army’s only conventional unit specializing in SFA; the Asymmetric Warfare Group; volunteers from the African Studies Department at Kansas State University; and African-born Soldiers from the brigade to conduct the courses.¹³⁸ Training improved over time by integrating lessons learned

¹³⁶ Alan Shumate, “Employing US Army Special Forces to Defeat America’s Emerging Threats,” manuscript USAWC Civilian Research Project, US Army War College, 2013, 15, accessed February 24, 2015, www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA592980. The RAF focuses more on METL proficiency than the Advise and Assist Brigade concept. Additionally, unlike the Advise and Assist Brigade concept, the entire BCT does not typically deploy under the RAF concept. Despite these differences, COL Shumate’s observation captures the commonly accepted challenge of balancing combined arms (METL) proficiency with regional specific skills and SFA proficiency.

¹³⁷ Daniel Stoutamire, “‘Dagger University’ prepares Soldiers for missions to Africa,” US Army, May 22, 2013, accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.army.mil/article/103815/_Dagger_University__prepares_Soldiers_for_missions_to_Africa/.

¹³⁸ Ibid.; Sonise Lumbaca, “AWTC Opens to Enhance AWG’s Capabilities,” US Army, January 25, 2014, accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.army.mil/article/118803/AWTC_opens_to_enhance_AWG_s_capabilities/. US Army Asymmetric Warfare Group is a TRADOC organization responsible for providing Operational Advisory and Solution Development support

from Soldiers returning from each of the BCT's RAF deployments. Colonel Broadwater assessed the program as critical to mission success.¹³⁹ Others agreed, including Brigadier General Kimberly Field, the former Deputy Directory of Strategy, Plans and Policy Directorate of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, who said, "The Dagger University provided forces the knowledge they needed to accomplish complex mission sets," and that the program was a model for how future RAF headquarters would support mission specific training.¹⁴⁰

To maintain the highest level of readiness for upcoming RAF missions and contingency operations throughout the yearlong availability period, 2/1 ABCT implemented what Army doctrine refers to as a "mission-training-support" time management cycle.¹⁴¹ The mission-training-support cycle rotated battalions every three months into a RAF mission execution period, a METL training period, and a support period.¹⁴² Based on this model, the battalion conducting training received the resources to conduct individual and crew level weapons qualification, and other events required to sustain METL proficiency. Battalions in the support period supported training and fulfilled other requirements placed on the brigade. The brigade's readiness cycle achieved two desired outcomes. First, it efficiently allocated limited resources and time for

globally to the Army and Joint Force Commanders to enhance Soldier survivability and combat effectiveness, and enable the defeat of current and emerging asymmetric threats.

¹³⁹ Stoutamire, "'Dagger University' prepares Soldiers for missions to Africa."

¹⁴⁰ Kimberly Field, James Learmont, and Jason Charland, "Regionally Aligned Forces: Business Not as Usual," *Parameters* (Autumn 2013): 61, accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/Parameters/issues/Autumn_2013/5_Field.pdf.

¹⁴¹ Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 7-0, *Training Units and Developing Leaders* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 3-5.

¹⁴² Broadwater, "RAF Mission Back Brief," 8.

training, which also provided a degree of predictability for subordinate and adjacent units.

Second, the cycle sustained a high level of readiness across the BCT.¹⁴³

RAF in Action: March 2013 to June 2014

From March 2013 to June 2014, 2/1 ABCT conducted over 200 RAF missions, including three joint exercises, in twenty-three different countries resulting in approximately 12,500 foreign soldiers trained.¹⁴⁴ In addition to exercises and SFA missions, the BCT deployed units to conduct security force missions relying primarily on METL proficiency. For example, in December 2013, a platoon-sized unit of approximately forty-five Soldiers attached to Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa in Djibouti deployed as part of the US Army’s East Africa Response Force to secure the US Embassy in Juba, South Sudan after the violence in the city threatened the embassy.¹⁴⁵ Throughout the year, the brigade deployed 1,372 Soldiers to support both security force and engagement-centric operations.¹⁴⁶ The major exercises supported were Western Accord in June 2013, Shared Accord 13 in July 2013, and Eastern Accord 14 in March 2014. Each of these major exercises included units from other US military services and African security forces. For each exercise, the general aim was to improve capabilities of and interoperability between all

¹⁴³ Ibid., 8-17. Rotating battalions guaranteed one battalion, after completing the METL training period, was at the highest level of readiness for planned RAF mission or unexpected requirements, and none of the battalions would exceeded six months without a dedicated training opportunity.

¹⁴⁴ Jeffery Broadwater, *Dagger Brigade Regionally Aligned Brigade Mission Summary: March 2013 - June 2014* (Fort Riley, KS: 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, 2014).

¹⁴⁵ Paul McLeary, “US Army Sends Troops to South Sudan, Gear to African Union,” *DefenseNews*, December 20, 2013, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131220/DEFREG02/312200016/US-Army-Sends-Troops-South-Sudan-Gear-African-Union>.

¹⁴⁶ Broadwater, *Dagger Brigade Regionally Aligned Brigade Mission Summary: March 2013 - June 2014*.

participants.¹⁴⁷ Overall, the BCTs operations relied on small mission tailored units with adaptive leaders to execute a wide range of operations requiring both METL proficiency as well as proficiency in engagement centric tasks.¹⁴⁸

Summary

In the end, 2/1 ABCT's execution of RAF operations demonstrated an arrangement of tactical actions that effectively leveraged the resources and engagement-centric capabilities available to successfully pursue strategic objectives in AFRICOM's area of responsibility. AFRICOM's concept for employing RAF with other engagement-centric programs as part of an overall theater security cooperation campaign synchronized and maximized their effectiveness. At the BCT level, the commander nested his intent and concept of the operation with both AFRICOM and US Army Africa. Additionally, the BCT training plan resulted in both METL proficiency as well as a sufficient level of regionally specific knowledge and engagement skills. The effective planning and training management prepared Soldiers and leaders for success during the execution of decentralized operations while simultaneously maintaining high levels of readiness.¹⁴⁹

Focused Questions and Hypotheses Testing

With the background and summary of RAF operations in mind, this section analyzes the effects of engagement and interdependence between CF and SOF on mission effectiveness under

¹⁴⁷ US Africa Command, "What We Do - Exercises," US Africa Command, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/what-we-do/exercises>.

¹⁴⁸ Darryl Williams, "2014 Green Book: US Army Africa 2014," *US Army*, September 30, 2014, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.army.mil/article/134908/>.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

the RAF concept. This case study follows the structured, focused comparison method described by political scientists Alexander George and Andrew Bennet in their book *Case Studies and Theory Development in Social Sciences*. Because the case study uses six general questions that are applicable to future research on RAF operations, it is structured.¹⁵⁰ These questions focus on the key aspects of engagement and interdependence in order to test this study's three hypotheses.¹⁵¹

These three hypotheses are as follows. First, RAF operations require Army forces to conduct military engagement, specifically SFA tasks. Second, RAF operations require the Army's organizational culture to place the same value on engagement as other warfighting functions. Third, the relationship between CF and SOF conducting operations under the RAF concept requires interdependence. Six research questions test these hypotheses and describes the effect of military engagement and interdependence between CF and SOF on RAF operations.

The six focused questions used in this case study are as follows. First, to what extent was military engagement required during RAF operations? Second, how does the Army's organizational culture value engagement? Third, how does the addition of engagement as a warfighting function reflect change in the Army's organizational culture? Fourth, to what extent did integration occur between CF and SOF under the RAF concept? Fifth, to what extent did interoperability between CF and SOF affect mission effectiveness under the RAF concept? Sixth, how did SOF capabilities contribute to overall mission accomplishment?

¹⁵⁰ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, "The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), 67.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

I. To what extent was military engagement required during RAF operations?

Analysis of 2/1 ABCT's mission, the AFRICOM commander's intent and operational approach, and most significantly, the actions of deployed units from the BCT indicate military engagement was an essential part of RAF operations. Expanding on the link between RAF operations and military engagement in each instance provides evidence to support the first hypothesis. Analysis of the BCT's mission indicates engagement-centric tasks were essential throughout RAF operations. In addition, the AFRICOM commander's intent and operational approach explicitly tie military engagement by RAF to strategic objectives. Finally, the quantity and type of missions executed by RAF shows a reliance on military engagement.

In the initial mission assigned to 2/1 ABCT from US Army Africa, conducting security cooperation activities was the essential task and the purpose was to strengthen partnership.¹⁵² Later, the brigade's mission expanded beyond security cooperation by requiring approximately 350 Soldiers to serve as part of the security force attached to CJTF-HOA.¹⁵³ Despite a significant amount of combat power devoted to the security force mission, the brigade's primary focus, and the majority of its operations, centered on engagement-centric partnership activities across the continent.

Engagement to build partner nation capabilities was a priority for the AFRICOM commander, and an essential element of AFRICOM's theater security campaign. As discussed in the introduction to this section, AFRICOM does not have the means to address all security threats directly, and must rely on partnered nations to provide regional security. The AFRICOM mission

¹⁵² Broadwater, "RAF Mission Back Brief," 7.

¹⁵³ Chad Thompson, "Dragons' Receive Their Combat Patch in East Africa," Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System, August 2, 2013, accessed March 1, 2015, <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/111238/dragons-receive-their-combat-patch-east-africa>. About 350 soldiers received their combat patch during a ceremony on July 27, 2013.

statement refers to this reliance by emphasizing the importance of “strengthening the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations” as mission essential tasks.¹⁵⁴ Further evidence is provided by the AFRICOM commander’s testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March 2013, in which he specified his intent to use the additional capabilities provided by the RAF concept “to support State Department-led [Africa Contingency Operations Training & Assistance] ACOTA training for African forces deploying in support of United Nations and African Union peacekeeping operations.”¹⁵⁵ Based on AFRICOM’s mission statement and the commander’s intent, military engagement is an essential part of RAF operations at the theater level.

The number of missions to train, or train with, African forces, combined with the purpose of the various exercises and programs, highlights the mission-essential role of military engagement. 2/1 ABCT executed over two-hundred missions engaging with twenty-nine foreign countries to train around 12,500 foreign soldiers. Major General Darryl Williams, Commander of US Army Africa, argues that these missions assist in shaping the security situation in the region, and that “boots on the ground” is a historically-proven way to achieve enduring influence and change.¹⁵⁶ He goes on to note that, “Building trust, building relationships, and achieving a level

¹⁵⁴ Ham, 2.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 16; “The mission of Africa Contingency Operations Training & Assistance (ACOTA) is to enhance the capacities and capabilities of its African Partner Countries, regional institutions, and the continent’s peacekeeping resources as a whole so that they can plan for, train, deploy, and sustain sufficient quantities of professionally competent peacekeepers to meet conflict transformation requirements with minimal non-African assistance.” US Department of State, “Diplomacy in Action: Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA),” US Department of State, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.state.gov/p/af/rt/acota/index.htm>.

¹⁵⁶ Williams, “2014 Green Book: US Army Africa 2014.”

of understanding involves the human element.”¹⁵⁷ The number of partnership missions and the reliance on engagement by RAF forces for mission effectiveness indicates military engagement is not only required, but also essential to RAF operations.

The three major exercises supported by the 2/1 ABCT provide further examples of the role of military engagement in RAF operations. Analysis of each exercise describes the link between partnership activities at the tactical level and AFRICOM’s engagement-centric operational approach to achieving strategic objectives. Military engagement by RAF is most effective when the results contribute to the pursuit of strategic objectives.

In June 2013, 2/1 ABCT sent units to Ghana to participate in Western Accord 13.¹⁵⁸ The exercise included classroom instruction and a command post exercise to improve civil-military operations, stability operations, and operational planning. The scenario required a task force from the African-led International Support mission to Mali (AFISMA) to conduct security and stability operations in eastern Mali. 2/1 ABCT’s participation in this exercise contributed to AFRICOM’s goal of strengthening partners. Indirectly, the exercise also contributes to efforts to counter violent extremist organizations, specifically in western Africa where AFISMA combats AQIM and other extremist groups.¹⁵⁹

Shared Accord 13 was a joint exercise focused on increasing interoperability between and the military capabilities of both US forces and the South African Defense Force (SADF). The

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ US Army Public Affairs, “Western Accord 13 begins command post exercise,” US Army Africa, accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.usaraf.army.mil/NEWS/NEWS_130628_wa2.html.

¹⁵⁹ UN Security Council, *Monthly Forecast February 2013: Mali* (New York, NY: Security Council Report, 2013), 4-5, accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/2013_02_forecast.pdf.

exercise ran from July 22, 2013 to August 7, 2013 and included approximately 700 members of the US military, most of them from 2/1 ABCT, along with 3,000 members of the SADF.¹⁶⁰ Partnership with South Africa is important because the SADF provides critical support to peacekeeping operations and crisis-response capability on the continent. Strengthening the relationship with South Africa and improving their capabilities supports AFRICOM's objectives of improving regional stability and strengthening potential members of future coalitions to work with the US and other allies on the continent.

Conducted in March 2014, Eastern Accord 14 was another exercise to train over 4,000 troops from Chad, Guinea, and Malawi in preparation for their deployment to support upcoming United Nations peacekeeping missions.¹⁶¹ 2/1 ABCT, working in conjunction with British forces, supported the exercise by providing live-fire training. This operation was effective because it improved the capabilities of African Union troops to conduct stability operations on the continent, which reduces the need US military forces. The US Army Africa's Counter Terrorism Desk officer described the situation best when he said, "By helping Africans help themselves, it means that we don't have to get involved ourselves."¹⁶² Additionally, given AFRICOM's limited resources, using a small number of American forces to enhance the capabilities of African forces is critical. Eastern Accord 14 is another example of military engagement being essential to effective RAF operations.

¹⁶⁰ Tamika Dillard, "U.S., South Africa Kick-Off Exercise Shared Accord 13," US Africa Command, July 30, 2013, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/newsroom/article/11086/us-south-africa-kick-off-exercise-shared-accord-13>.

¹⁶¹ Mindy Anderson, "USARF Trains 4,000 Troops in Chad, Guinea, Malawi," US Army, June 6, 2014, accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.army.mil/article/127485/USARAF_trains_4_000_troops_in_Chad_Guinea_Malawi/.

¹⁶² Ibid.

In sum, analysis of 2/1 ABCT's mission and operations indicates military engagement by RAF was an essential part of their operations and directly contributed to their mission effectiveness. Despite the fact that a significant amount of combat power from the RAF was dedicated to security operations, the vast majority of operations were engagement-centric and focused on security force assistance tasks, such as training and advising foreign forces. The answer to the first focused question provides evidence supporting the hypothesis that RAF operations require Army forces to conduct military engagement, specifically SFA tasks.

II. How does the Army's organizational culture value engagement?

The next question explores how the leadership within 2/1 ABCT, worked to foster a culture that valued engagement. As discussed in section two, the cultural dynamics model explains how cultural values drive the choices and behaviors of organizational members, and take tangible form as artifacts that reflect the basic assumptions held by the organization.¹⁶³ Previous experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, where engagement-centric operations were a priority, shaped the assumptions and values held within the BCT and among its leadership.¹⁶⁴ The BCT's leadership also took actions intended to elevate the value placed on engagement within the organization. The activities of the BCT's leadership supports the hypothesis that RAF operations

¹⁶³ Hatch, 211.

¹⁶⁴ Daniel Stoutamire, "11th Iraqi Army Div. Training Academy Takes Off at Joint Security Station Old Mod, Iraq," Fort Riley, KS, September 18, 2011, accessed March 8, 2015, <http://www.riley.army.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/98/Article/469412/11th-iraqi-army-div-training-academy-takes-off-at-joint-security-station-old-mo.aspx>; National Training Center, "OPS Group Commander Bio," accessed February 8, 2015, <http://www.irwin.army.mil/CommandGroupUnits/Units/OPSGRP/Pages/OPSGroupCommander.aspx>. Experiences, such as on the BCT's recent deployment to Iraq as an Advise and Assist Brigade and Colonel Broadwater's personal deployment to Iraq and his experience training units for advise and assist operations at the National Training Center, inform the values and assumptions held by the organization.

require the Army's organizational culture to place the same value on engagement as other warfighting functions.

Explicitly measuring the degree to which engagement was valued by the 2/1 ABCT is not possible, but the unit's history and the experiences of its leadership offer indications. The BCT's previous deployment to Iraq as an Advise and Assist Brigade in support of Operation New Dawn in 2010 suggests the unit had experience with engagement-centric operations. Additionally, the senior leaders within the BCT, such as Colonel Jeffery Broadwater, have experience with multiple deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan where advising and training FSF was an essential part of the unit's mission.¹⁶⁵ These previous experiences suggest the unit placed significant value on engagement, and actions taken by the BCT commander reinforce this assessment. The value placed on engagement is evident in two actions taken by Colonel Broadwater while commanding 2/1 ABCT. One was making engagement an explicit priority in his mission and intent, and the second was organizing people, organizations, information, and process to support engagement related training.

Colonel Broadwater's original intent, published in October 2012, included understanding "the partnered learning environment," "enhancing partnered relationships," and developing "lasting relationships" as tasks critical to mission accomplishment.¹⁶⁶ This intent statement serves as a cultural artifact reflecting the value he placed on engagement. His guidance also took on a symbolic role when junior leaders, who lacked experience, interpreted the guidance to inform their own assumptions and values. Colonel Broadwater's attempt to increase the value placed on

¹⁶⁵ National Training Center, "Ops Group Commander Bio," accessed February 8, 2015, <http://www.irwin.army.mil/CommandGroupUnits/Units/OPSGRP/Pages/OPSGroupCommander.aspx>.

¹⁶⁶ Broadwater, "RAF Mission Back Brief," 7.

engagement was effective based on the actions of junior leaders in the BCT. One example is a first lieutenant, who led her military police platoon on a deployment to train the Ugandan Army for future operations in Somalia.¹⁶⁷ The platoon, operating on their own, over an hour away from the nearest Army unit, made adjustments to their training plan based on the needs of the Ugandan forces and interacted routinely with individuals from the United Nations, Department of State, and Ugandan officials to strengthen partnerships.¹⁶⁸ The overall effect of fostering a culture where engagement was valued included empowering decision makers at the lowest level and enabling deployed units to react to changing circumstances to deliver the best training to partnered forces.

The decision to reorganize the brigade staff to better support RAF operations also indicates the value placed on engagement by the organization. The brigade created four separate organizations to align people, information, and process to support the RAF concept: Dagger University, the RAF planning cell, the RAF execution cell, and the liaison cell. Of these, the Dagger University was most significant because it realigned personnel from the brigade fires coordination cell.¹⁶⁹ By changing the focus of these individuals from the fires warfighting function to address the need for regional and country-specific training, the BCT essentially

¹⁶⁷ Rich Bartell, "Ugandans Train for Future AMISOM Mission," US Army, October 24, 2013, accessed March 8, 2015, http://www.army.mil/article/113755/Ugandans_train_for_future_AMISOM_mission/.

¹⁶⁸ Darryl Williams, "2014 Green Book: Us Army Africa 2014," US Army, September 30, 2014, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.army.mil/article/134908/>.

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Roe, No. 14-11, *Regionally Aligned Forces: Lessons and Best Practices* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, July 2014), 95-96; Daniel Stoutamire, "Daggers' Begin Handoff of RAF Mission to 'Dragons'," Fort Riley, Kansas, May 19, 2014, accessed March 8, 2015, <http://www.riley.army.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/98/Article/484890/daggers-begin-handoff-of-raf-mission-to-dragons.aspx>. Personnel and resources were realigned with Dagger University, and engagement-centric program, from other warfighting functions, specifically personnel from the BCT fires cell.

aligned those personnel and processes into an engagement cell. As discussed earlier in this section, the Dagger University was a critical element of the BCT's training plan and was assessed by the BCT commander and officials from the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, to be effective.¹⁷⁰

The overall effect of publishing key tasks focused on engagement and re-aligning personnel of the BCT staff to create an engagement-focused organization reflects a BCT that valued engagement. Colonel Broadwater's actions combined with the unit's prior experiences were key factors in shaping the values of the soldiers in the BCT, especially those new to the Army or new to the unit. This analysis focused on just one BCT in the Army, but existing doctrine, such as FM 3-22 and the recently published US Army *Functional Concept of Engagement*, indicates the Army as a whole values engagement.

III. How does the addition of engagement as a warfighting function reflect change in the Army's organizational culture?

The Army established the engagement warfighting function in February 2014 with the publication of TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, *US Army Functional Concept for Engagement*.¹⁷¹ At that time, 2/1 ABCT was already executing RAF operations. Despite the absence of any doctrine regarding engagement as a warfighting function during the brigade's preparation for RAF in 2013, the training methodology and staff organization offer insights into how the unit valued engagement. These examples, combined with discussion from the previous section that traced the development and publication of the *US Army Functional Concept for Engagement*, indicate that the Army's culture values engagement.

¹⁷⁰ Field, Learmont, and Jason Charland, "Regionally Aligned Forces: Business Not as Usual," 61.

¹⁷¹ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 2.

During 2/1 ABCT's training and preparation for RAF operations, Army doctrine lacked sufficient emphasis on the capabilities and skills necessary to conduct partnership activities and influence the decisions and behaviors of other nation's security forces, governments, and populations.¹⁷² Without the considerable knowledge and experience gained from engagement-centric operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the BCT's leadership would not have been able to develop an engagement focused training program like Dagger University. It is important to emphasize here that the training organized as Dagger University was a unit-developed program not guided by doctrine. Additionally, the program relied significantly on external resources, such as advise and assist trainers from the 162nd Infantry Brigade and volunteers from the African Studies department at Kansas State University.¹⁷³

Additionally, 2/1 ABCT changed the structure of the brigade staff to align people and processes with engagement to support RAF operations. Dagger University, the RAF planning cell, and an expanded current operations cell were structural changes to support RAF operations. As discussed earlier, the Dagger University required staff members from the fires warfighting function to shift their focus to engagement. Similarly, personnel from the operations and plans section were aligned to support engagement-centric RAF operations. Selznick's idea of institutionalization, discussed in Section II, explains how these ad-hoc organizations tend to seek increasing legitimacy and power once created.¹⁷⁴ Institutionalization theory suggests that, because of generally positive feedback from senior leaders regarding the BCT's operations as well as the specific praise for Dagger University, the legitimacy of the engagement-focused organizations on

¹⁷² Ibid., iii.

¹⁷³ Field, Learmont, and Jason Charland, "Regionally Aligned Forces: Business Not as Usual," 61.

¹⁷⁴ Hatch, 56.

staff increased. The fact that the BCT continuously improved Dagger University and that the institutional Army is currently staffing ways to better resource similar programs indicates the increase in legitimacy is driving an increase in resources.¹⁷⁵ Further development of the engagement warfighting function in Army doctrine will likely lead to more structural change on Army staffs and increase the value placed on engagement to a level comparable with other warfighting functions.

A detailed account of the development of the engagement warfighting function in Section II determined that the Army's culture has changed over time and experiences conducting engagement-centric operations in Iraq and Afghanistan elevated the value of engagement to a level similar to other warfighting functions. Because future Army leaders will most likely not have the same degree of engagement-centric experiences as leaders today, future RAF operations will not be able to rely so heavily on key leader experience. As a result, future Army leaders will need to rely more heavily on doctrine to guide engagement-centric training and operations. The experiences of 2/1 ABCT serve as model for future engagement-centric training in support of RAF operations and will likely inform future doctrine.¹⁷⁶

The answers to focused questions II and III provide support to the hypothesis that RAF operations require the Army's organizational culture to value engagement to the same degree as other warfighting functions. Currently, the Army's leadership, informed by experiences from Iraq and Afghanistan, are fostering a culture that highly values engagement. This is evident in the recent publication of the *US Army Functional Concept of Engagement* and creation of the

¹⁷⁵ Williams, "2014 Green Book: US Army Africa 2014;" Stoutamire, "'Dagger University' prepares Soldiers for missions to Africa;" Field, Learmont, and Jason Charland, "Regionally Aligned Forces: Business Not as Usual," 61.

¹⁷⁶ Field, Learmont, and Charland, "Regionally Aligned Forces: Business Not as Usual," 61.

engagement warfighting function in doctrine. Furthermore, the change to doctrine and creation of a new warfighting function will institutionalize military engagement by developing engagement-focused organizations. According to Selznick, these organizations will seek to increase their legitimacy and power.¹⁷⁷ As engagement-focused organizations materialize, social construction theory tells us members of organizations will externalize and objectify with others thus sustaining and, in most cases, improving their organization.¹⁷⁸ In short, Army culture currently values engagement enough to be effective during RAF operations, and with the creation of the engagement warfighting function, steps are being taken to ensure those values are maintained over time.

As established in Section II, interdependence between CF and SOF is a multifaceted and broad topic, which includes integration, interoperability, and synchronization as subsets. This case study uses RAF operations conducted by 2/1 ABCT to assess the level of interdependence between CF and SOF by determining the existence and extent of a “mutual reliance” on capabilities between CF and SOF.¹⁷⁹ The next three focused questions assess the degree of interdependence by examining integration, interoperability, and effectiveness in detail.

IV. To what extent did integration occur between conventional and special operations forces under the RAF concept?

Assessing three areas, planning, mission execution, and training, determines the extent of integration between CF and SOF during 2/1 ABCT’s RAF operations. First, analysis of RAF planning in general indicates fully integrated planning between CF and SOF, but less so at the tactical level due primarily to the structural issues discussed in Section II. Second, similar to

¹⁷⁷ Hatch 85-86.

¹⁷⁸ Berger, 76.

¹⁷⁹ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 17.

planning, integration and synchronization during execution is more apparent at the theater level and less so at the tactical level. Integration and synchronization between the BCT and SOF occurred more notably during joint exercises. Third, the BCT's training program integrated SOF capabilities to better prepare Soldiers for RAF operations. Overall, the integration and synchronization between CF and SOF in this case indicates a degree of mutual reliance that supports an interdependent relationship.

First, during the planning process, the extent of integration varied based on context. For example, at the geographic combatant command level, AFRICOM planned and executed a theater security cooperation campaign where CF, including 2/1 ABCT, and SOF, were integrated and synchronized.¹⁸⁰ At the service component level, US Army Africa primarily conducts planning for Army CF and US Special Operations Command Africa, the theater special operations command, primarily does SOF planning. As discussed in Section II, this structural issue tends to inhibit the integration between CF and SOF.¹⁸¹ From the BCT perspective, planning for most missions occurred at or below the BCT staff level with support from US Army Africa.¹⁸² Joint exercises, such as Shared Accord 13, were an exception, and integrated CF and SOF during both planning and execution, resulting in a fully synchronized and interdependent operation.¹⁸³ In general, the planning process from the combatant command down to the brigade integrates both CF and SOF capabilities.

¹⁸⁰ Ham, 2.

¹⁸¹ Ames, 2.

¹⁸² Broadwater, *Dagger Brigade Regionally Aligned Brigade Mission Summary: March 2013 - June 2014*.

¹⁸³ Tamika Dillard, "U.S., South Africa Kick-Off Exercise Shared Accord 13," US Africa Command, July 30, 2013, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/newsroom/article/11086/us-south-africa-kick-off-exercise-shared-accord-13>.

Similar to RAF planning, operations across the region appear to be integrated and synchronized, but to a lesser extent when examining individual RAF missions executed by 2/1 ABCT. From a macro level, in 2014, CF and SOF conducted many operations in support of AFRICOM's mission. As an example, 2/1 ABCT played a key role in preparing over 4,000 African troops from Chad, Guinea, and Malawi, for future United Nations peacekeeping operations, and Special Operations Command Forward – West Africa conducted exercises in Chad to assist North and West African militaries to reduce sanctuary and support for violent extremist organizations.¹⁸⁴ In this instance, CF units trained the UN peacekeeping force and SOF capabilities focused on countering extremist threats. AFRICOM's reliance on both capabilities integrated into one approach demonstrates interdependence at the theater level.

On a micro level, individual missions conducted by Soldiers from 2/1 ABCT did not generally require much interaction with SOF. Most of the BCT's operations were small mission-tailored units sent to train specific CF skills to other conventional units. The military police platoon training in Uganda is a good example of a RAF mission that did not require any SOF capability.¹⁸⁵ Also, as noted during planning, joint exercises were an exception, integrating and synchronizing both CF and SOF capabilities into one operation. Again, Shared Accord 13 offers the best example of integration during execution.

RAF operations, like all military operations, require training and preparation. 2/1 ABCT's training program integrated SOF core capabilities such as regional and advising expertise, and niche capabilities, like foreign weapons expertise, to better prepare CF for RAF

¹⁸⁴ Bardha Azari, "Chad to Host Flintlock 2015," US Africa Command, December 12, 2014, accessed March 8, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/newsroom/article/24027/chad-to-host-flintlock-2015>; Anderson, "USARF Trains 4,000 Troops in Chad, Guinea, Malawi."

¹⁸⁵ Bartell, "Ugandans Train for Future AMISOM Mission."

operations. 10th Special Forces Group provided training at Fort Riley and in support of joint exercises such as Shared Accord 13, which integrated SOF.¹⁸⁶ In general, SOF have a much higher degree of regional expertise and can provide a range of training and advising beyond that of a typical conventional unit.¹⁸⁷ Despite the unique capabilities of SOF, in Africa the demand for military engagement in terms of training foreign forces exceeds what SOF can provide. As a result, CF are taking on missions traditionally performed by SOF.¹⁸⁸ Integrated training is a way to increase the effectiveness of CF by leveraging the expertise of SOF. RAF operations in AFRICOM offer evidence that integrating CF and SOF in training contributes to integration that is more effective during operations. Furthermore, the employment of more effective CF along with SOF results in a more robust security cooperation capability.

V. To what extent did interoperability between conventional and special operations forces impact mission effectiveness under the RAF concept?

The assessment of interoperability is limited based on the few instances where CF and SOF units interacted at the tactical level. Despite the limited number of examples, joint exercises like Shared Accord 13 demonstrate that CF and SOF can operate without interoperability challenges given proper planning and coordination.¹⁸⁹ Additionally, interoperability between CF and SOF headquarters above the brigade level did not appear to affect RAF operations.

¹⁸⁶ Roe, No. 14-11, *Regionally Aligned Forces: Lessons and Best Practices*, 100.

¹⁸⁷ JP 3-05, *Special Operations*, GL-11.

¹⁸⁸ Lesley Anne Warner, "Capacity-Building Key to AFRICOM's Mission," in "Economy of Force: Training US Partner Militaries," special issue, *World Politics Review* (February 5, 2013): 10.

¹⁸⁹ US Army, "Regional Alignment in Joint and Combined Exercises," *Stand-To*, last modified August 28, 2013, accessed March 4, 2015, http://www.army.mil/standto/archive_2013-08-28/.

Based on the lack of interoperability issues during joint combined exercises, this case study indicates that interoperability positively affected mission effectiveness under the RAF concept. However, the limited number of opportunities to assess interoperability warrants additional assessment during future RAF operations and training.

VI. How did SOF capabilities contribute to overall mission accomplishment?

According to the description of interdependence articulated in joint doctrine and the US Army functional concept for engagement, an interdependent relationship requires “purposeful reliance” on capabilities “to maximize the complementary and reinforcing effects of both.”¹⁹⁰ As noted in the previous two questions, the conventional capabilities of 2/1 ABCT were integrated with the capabilities of SOF during planning, execution, and while training. The extent of integration and interoperability both indicate an interdependent relationship between CF and SOF. In addition to the previously mentioned indicators of interdependence, specific analysis of SOF capabilities and their contribution to mission accomplishment provides additional evidence supporting the hypothesis that the relationship between CF and SOF conducting RAF operations requires interdependence.

To assess how SOF capabilities specifically contributed to overall mission accomplishment, it is important to revisit both the AFRICOM and BCT mission statements and determine linkages between capabilities and the tasks and purposes indicated in each mission statement. Analysis of the two missions and how SOF capabilities contribute to accomplishing each provides stronger evidence of interdependence at the AFRICOM level based on the inability for either CF or SOF alone accomplish the mission. At the BCT level, SOF capabilities are also

¹⁹⁰ TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-5, 36; JP 3-0, IV-6.

required for mission accomplishment but the linkage is not as direct. The remainder of this section discusses each in detail.

First, AFRICOM's mission as of March 2013, at the time 2/1 ABCT's regional alignment, included two tasks and two purposes. The first task was to strengthen the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations with the purpose of protecting and defending the national security interests of the United States.¹⁹¹ Based on joint doctrine, SOF are likely needed to complete this task because of the "politically and diplomatically sensitive environment," the requirement to "work with or through indigenous forces," and a "requirement for regional orientation and cultural expertise" greater than what CF typically possess.¹⁹² The two special operations core activities most directly tied to this task are FID and SFA. Doctrine provides a clear link between SOF capabilities and the AFRICOM mission.

In addition to this link in doctrine, in 2013 and 2014, SOF activities in Africa concentrated on strengthening the defense capabilities of African states that can counter threats to US national security interests. SOF activities included FID operations to train elite African forces, combined operations with African forces to counter extremist threats, and participation in exercises to bolster the counterterrorism capability of various African states.¹⁹³ The commander of US Special Operations Command Africa, Brigadier General James B. Linder, describes the role of SOF in Africa as determining where threats to the United States exist, and employing the

¹⁹¹ Ham, 2.

¹⁹² Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), ix.

¹⁹³ US Africa Command, "Exercises: Flintlock," AFRICOM, accessed March 4, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/what-we-do/exercises/flintlock>; Eliza Griswold, "Can General Linder's Special Operations Forces Stop the Next Terrorist Threat?"

unique capabilities of SOF to enable African forces to combat them.¹⁹⁴ The integration of SOF capabilities directly supported AFRICOM's mission essential tasks of strengthening African capabilities and protecting US national interests.

AFRICOM's second mission essential task was to, "when directed, conduct military operations" to achieve two purposes "to deter and defeat transnational threats, and to provide a security environment conducive to good governance and development."¹⁹⁵ According to joint doctrine, this task is also suitable for SOF for the same reasons stated earlier, plus the "time-sensitivity, clandestine or covert nature," and a higher degree of risk than for typical CF operations. In this case, the special operations core activities most likely required for this task include direct action to destroy, capture, or damage targets, and counterterrorism to neutralize terrorists and their networks.¹⁹⁶ Again, according to doctrine, SOF capabilities align with the task and purpose found in AFRICOM's mission.

Like the previous task, the link goes beyond doctrine and is evident in SOF operations to counter extremist organizations in Africa. SOF operations include direct action missions, such as the surgical strike, announced in September 2014, targeting the leader of al-Shabab in Somalia with Hellfire missiles and other munitions.¹⁹⁷ There are also operations into areas General Linder

¹⁹⁴ Eliza Griswold, "Can General Linder's Special Operations Forces Stop the Next Terrorist Threat?" *New York Times*, June 13, 2014, accessed March 4, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/15/magazine/can-general-linders-special-operations-forces-stop-the-next-terrorist-threat.html?_r=1.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ JP 3-05, *Special Operations*, ix-xi

¹⁹⁷ Craig Whitlock, "US Drone Strike in Somalia Targets Al-Shabab Leader," *Washington Post*, September 2, 2014, accessed March 4, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-drone-strike-in-somalia-targets-al-shabab-leader/2014/09/02/2c833104-32a3-11e4-9e92-0899b306bbea_story.html.

describes as “ungoverned spaces,” where governance and security are lacking, which provide safe haven for extremist groups. The aim of these operations, as described by one Special Forces soldier, is to work with “our partners across the desert” to strengthen governance, development, and security.¹⁹⁸ These operations provide further evidence of AFRICOM’s integration of SOF capabilities to accomplish the tasks and purposes central to AFRICOM’s mission.

Based on analysis of AFRICOM’s mission, special operations doctrine, and the activities of SOF in Africa, there is a clear link between SOF capabilities and mission accomplishment. Yet, of the 5,000 to 8,000 US military personnel typically on the ground in Africa, only around 700 are Special Forces.¹⁹⁹ Given the link between SOF capabilities and the AFRICOM mission, combined with the relatively small amount of Special Forces in Africa, there appears to be a strong requirement for an interdependent relationship between CF and SOF at the theater level.

However, examining 2/1 ABCT’s mission essential task of conducting security cooperation activities indicates that the capabilities of SOF are not explicitly required for mission accomplishment. Army doctrine, specifically FM 3-22, explains the role of Army forces in security cooperation. As described in Section II, this includes SFA tasks such as advising and assisting foreign forces. Despite the lack of a specific requirement for SOF capabilities in the mission statement, Colonel Broadwater recognized the need to increase regionally specific knowledge and skills by using Dagger University to provide an additional capability that is

¹⁹⁸ Eliza Griswold, “Can General Linder's Special Operations Forces Stop the Next Terrorist Threat?” *New York Times*, June 13, 2014, accessed March 4, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/15/magazine/can-general-linders-special-operations-forces-stop-the-next-terrorist-threat.html?_r=1.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

typical of SOF.²⁰⁰ Additionally, as stated earlier in this section, SOF capabilities were essential in some cases, particularly in joint exercises like Shared Accord 13.²⁰¹ Overall, at the BCT level, there was a degree of integration during planning, execution, and training, but from a capabilities perspective there is little evidence to support a claim of mutual reliance on capabilities during operations.

AFRICOM's stated mission and the 55 operations, 10 exercises, and 481 security cooperation activities conducted in Fiscal Year 2013 reflect the overall contribution of SOF capabilities toward mission accomplishment. An interdependent relationship between CF and SOF is evident from a theater perspective, but from the brigade level, little evidence supports a mutual reliance during most RAF operations.

When combined, the last three focused questions indicate that a significant level of integration exists between CF and SOF, and no significant interoperability issues interfered with operations. Additionally, there appears to be a mutual reliance on capabilities provided by CF and SOF capabilities for mission accomplishment at the theater level (and to a lesser degree at the BCT level). These findings support the third and final hypothesis, that the relationship between CF and SOF conducting operations under the RAF concept requires interdependence.

Conclusion

Overall, 2/1 ABCT's experience as the first BCT to prepare for and execute RAF operations provides useful insights for Army leaders charged with this mission in the future. Given the strategic context, AFRICOM's objectives and operational approach employ RAF

²⁰⁰ Chuck Weirauch, "Dagger Brigade," *MSandT: Military Simulation and Training*, February 2013, 1, accessed March 4, 2015, <http://halldale.com/insidesnt/culture-training/dagger-brigade>.

²⁰¹ US Army, "Regional Alignment in Joint and Combined Exercises," *Stand-To*, August 28, 2013, accessed March 4, 2015, http://www.army.mil/standto/archive_2013-08-28/.

capabilities to make significant impacts with minimal costs. Additionally, the focus on METL training was essential to all aspects of RAF operations, as well as ensuring the BCT contributed to the total forces available for contingency response. The six focused research questions provide evidence supporting a general reliance on military engagement as well as interdependence between CF and SOF.

The first hypotheses, that RAF operations require Army forces to conduct military engagement, specifically security force assistance tasks, is supported by the BCT's mission, a review of missions executed by the BCT, and the way RAF operations supported AFRICOM's objectives. According to Army doctrine, the BCT's mission essential task to conduct security cooperation activities requires military engagement to influence FSF. Additionally, the execution of over 200 RAF missions to improve the capabilities of over 12,500 foreign security force soldiers indicates a requirement for military engagement. The details of specific RAF missions, including joint exercises, confirms that SFA skills such as advising were critical to the majority of operations. Analysis of specific operations also confirms direct and indirect links to AFRICOM's stated objectives.

Next, the second hypotheses, that RAF operations require the Army's organizational culture to value engagement to the same degree as other warfighting functions, is supported by Colonel Broadwater's priorities and the way the BCT staff was organized to support military engagement. Focused questions two and three describe how the experiences of key leaders in the BCT informed their values and assumptions, which in turn influenced organizational culture. The ongoing development of an engagement warfighting function in Army doctrine also suggests a broader Army culture that highly values engagement.

The third and final hypotheses, that the relationship between CF and SOF conducting RAF operations requires interdependence, is generally supported, but to varying degrees based on the context. Analysis of integration, synchronization, and mutual reliance on capabilities from a

theater level provides more supporting evidence than conducting the analysis from a BCT level perspective. For example, the AFRICOM concept explicitly relies on the integration of both conventional and special operations capabilities to execute a synchronized theater security cooperation campaign. However, the BCT's planning and execution of RAF operations did not typically require the integration of SOF capabilities. Interdependent exercises that included integrated planning and execution were the most notable exception. Integration of SOF capabilities into training also contributed to mission effectiveness in general, which also supports this hypothesis.

Section IV: Recommendations

The RAF concept represents a significant change in how Army leaders train and conduct operations. RAF generally addresses the Army's broadening focus away from commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan and toward combating continuously evolving threats in an increasingly complex operational environment during a period of fiscal austerity. This study determined that the most significant challenges associated with the RAF concept are, first, balancing capabilities given the time and resources available, and, second, doctrine does not provide future leaders with an adequate guide to conducting engagement-centric operations. To overcome these challenges, this section discusses six proposals, each with various supporting recommendations spanning the DOTMLPF spectrum.

First, the primary focus for Army forces must remain on mastering the primary warfighting competencies commonly referred to as decisive action. BCT proficiency in offense, defense, and stability operations is a critical component to maintaining the creditable forces required to deter potential adversaries and prevent future conflict. Additionally, the costs of failing to win decisively in a future conflict are unacceptable. Proficiency in warfighting skills is also an essential element to shaping the security environment because CF conducting security cooperation activities must have a certain level of expertise in order to effectively advise, train,

and mentor FSF. In the near term, unit training management and the combat training center program will address current shortfalls in proficiency resulting in improved decisive action capabilities over time.²⁰² However, the Army must acknowledge and address the tendency to focus excessively on warfighting competencies and neglect partnership activities. There is a risk that leaders and soldiers will develop a mentality that warfighting solutions are the answer to all problems, and will not develop the engagement skills required to address complex problems other than large-scale war.

The second recommendation is to add ‘support a security cooperation campaign’ to the Department of the Army approved METL for Army BCTs. Engagement in general, and partnership activities in particular, must not be neglected in training. Due to the preponderance of effort and focus consumed by developing lethal BCTs, an engagement-specific METL task is an effective way to institutionalize engagement skills and preserve the capabilities developed over the past fourteen years. Sub-tasks would further specify the SFA tasks and planning capabilities required at each echelon from the BCT headquarters down to the individual Soldier. In FM 3-22, doctrine already defines the SFA tasks and provides a guide to supporting security cooperation at the BCT level. Using doctrine as a starting point, the Army must develop and integrate the individual and collective tasks associated with supporting security cooperation into the BCT METL to guarantee an enduring capacity to conduct effective military engagement.

Third, increase efforts to develop and publish doctrine that integrates the engagement warfighting function with the other elements of combat power. This will result in structural changes on Army staffs and further institutionalize critical capabilities in Army units. When considering the organizational and personnel changes to support the engagement warfighting

²⁰² John F. Campbell, Statement on Army Readiness before Senate Armed Services Committee (March 26, 2014), 6, accessed March 8, 2015, http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Campbell_03-26-14.pdf.

function, establishing a foothold in doctrine is an essential first step toward other changes across the DOTMLPF spectrum.

Fourth, increasing and efficiently integrating institutional resources to support unit-run cultural, regional expertise, and language training at the division and BCT level will increase engagement-related skills while allowing units to remain focused on building decisive action proficiency. Prior to addressing specific institutional level resources, the Army needs a more complete definition of regional expertise and an explicitly articulated set of engagement skills. Currently, the Department of Defense Directive 5160-41E, the Defense Language Program, defines regional expertise in terms of civilian education from accredited institutions concentrating on the political, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of specific countries or regions.²⁰³ A more explicit definition of what regional expertise means for regionally aligned divisions and BCTs is a necessary starting point to guide the management of institutional resources.

Options for expanding available resources include using professional military education to develop the individual soldier and leader skills common to the majority of engagement-centric activities. Specifically, leveraging centralized individual development, much like the structured self-development program that requires enlisted soldiers to complete online education prior to promotion, could be used to develop basic engagement skills for all Army leaders.²⁰⁴ Army schools must also develop engagement skills appropriate to each grade to build a level of proficiency that enables mid-career officers and non-commissioned offers to function in advising capacities when required. Synchronizing existing capabilities and programs with unit training

²⁰³ Department of the Army, *Assessment on Regionally Aligned Forces: Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 4-5.

²⁰⁴ US Army, "Structured Self-Development," *Stand-To*, August 21, 2012, accessed March 8, 2015, <http://www.army.mil/standto/archive/issue.php?issue=2012-08-21>.

plans and RAF operations offers an efficient way to enhance unit capabilities with minimal costs. The successful integration of advisor experts from the 162nd Infantry Training Battalion and the Asymmetric Warfare Group into recent RAF unit training and operations is one example. However, units need to better integrate language proficiency programs such as the courses provided by the Defense Language Institute, and there is a need for more institutional support to build partnerships across the interagency and civilian communities.

Fifth, updating FM 3-22 to incorporate lessons learned from the initial implementation phase of the RAF concept will provide a better guide for Army leaders. Currently, the manual only provides one model for how BCTs conduct security cooperation, and the model assumes a near full commitment of the BCT. This model, informed by the Advise and Assist Brigade concept used in Iraq and Afghanistan, is effective and applicable in some situations, but many future RAF operations, such as 2/1 ABCT's mission in Africa, will be smaller in scale using echelons below the BCT to conduct decentralized partnership activities. RAF doctrine must reflect a range of SFA models to provide Army leaders the best starting point for planning regardless of what theater they are operating in or the size of the commitment.

Finally, joint combined exercises provide valuable opportunities for Army units to not only develop their own capabilities, but to also increase capacity in partnered forces and practice CF and SOF interdependence. Increased funding for joint combined exercises is an efficient way to accomplish theater security cooperation objectives as well as to develop and sustain both engagement and warfighting proficiency.

Overall, these are just a few of many options that could better prepare Army leaders to plan, prepare, execute, and assess future RAF operations. Current initiatives to develop an expeditionary mindset and foster a culture of sustained readiness also benefit RAF operations. Additionally, longer combat training center rotations (increased from fourteen to eighteen days) offer an opportunity to not only validate METL proficiency, but also develop and validate

regionally specific knowledge and skills.²⁰⁵

Section V: Conclusion

This study proposed that RAF operations require Army forces to retain engagement related skills and integrate engagement with other warfighting functions to address the challenges presented by the contemporary and future operational environment. Additionally, developing an interdependent relationship between CF and SOF is essential to maximizing effective and efficient operations. In general, the evidence in this study supports that proposal. The implementation of the RAF concept is still underway and there is much more to learn regarding how Army leaders can best plan, prepare, execute, and assess regionally aligned training and operations. However, this study provides a basic understanding of the development and early implementation of RAF by analyzing the operations conducted by the first regionally aligned brigade. A structured focused case study of 2/1 ABCT's execution of RAF operations found that, at the theater level, the RAF concept effectively leveraged limited resources to pursue strategic objectives in AFRICOM's area of responsibility, largely through military engagement. Evidence from the case study indicates that RAF operations have a general reliance on military engagement as well as interdependence between CF and SOF. Testing three hypotheses determines the extent and nature of these findings.

The first hypotheses, that RAF operations require Army forces to conduct military engagement, specifically security force assistance tasks, is supported by the BCT's mission, a review of operations executed by the BCT, and the way RAF operations supported AFRICOM's objectives. The second hypotheses, that RAF operations require the Army's organizational

²⁰⁵ Michelle Tan, "Combat Training Rotations Will Increase to 18 Days," *Army Times*, February 6, 2015, accessed March 8, 2015, <http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2015/02/06/army-extends-ctc-rotations/22948785/>.

culture to value engagement to the same degree as other warfighting functions, is supported by Colonel Broadwater's priorities and the way the BCT staff was organized to support military engagement. The ongoing development of an engagement warfighting function in Army doctrine also suggests a broader Army culture that highly values engagement. The third hypotheses, that the relationship between CF and SOF conducting RAF operations requires interdependence, is generally supported, but to varying degrees based on the context. Analysis from a theater level perspective provided more evidence to support the integration, synchronization, and a mutual reliance on capabilities than from a BCT level perspective.

The review of literature and case study used the lens of organizational theory to analyze the implications of the RAF concept. Organizational culture theory explains that creating the engagement warfighting function reflects an increased value placed on engagement by Army leaders. Institutionalization theory in particular explains how establishing the engagement warfighting function can increase resources and ensure the enduring success of RAF operations. Organizational culture and structure also affect the synchronized integration of CF and SOF capabilities. An interdependent relationship between CF and SOF promises to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of RAF operations. The 2013 decision to put theater special operations commands under the operational control of the geographic combatant commanders and the establishment of the Strategic Landpower Task Force are attempts to overcome issues with organizational culture and structure to improve interdependence between CF and SOF.

The six recommendations in this study offer Army leaders a starting point for improving future RAF operations. First, maintaining the primary focus of Army forces on the core warfighting competencies required for large-scale war is important because these skills are not only essential to preventing and winning conflicts, but mastering those skills is necessary for effective military engagement with other CF to build capacity and shape the operational environment. Second, adding 'support a security cooperation campaign' to the Department of the

Army approved METL for Army BCTs will ensure an enduring capability in this area. Third, developing and publishing doctrine to fully establish the engagement warfighting function will help to integrate engagement with the other elements of combat power. Fourth, improving the integration of institutional resources into unit-run cultural, regional expertise, and language training programs at the division and BCT level will improve engagement-related skills while allowing units to remain focused on building decisive action proficiency. Fifth, updating FM 3-22 to incorporate lessons learned from the initial implementation phase of the RAF concept will provide Army leaders with a better guide to planning future operation. Sixth, increasing funding for joint combined exercises will provide Army units with more opportunities to develop capabilities while also increasing the capabilities of partnered forces and improve CF and SOF interdependence.

The military as whole would benefit from further research concerning regionally aligned forces and military engagement at the theater level. Specifically, an increased understanding of how theater security cooperation campaigns are planned and assessed would permit better analysis of the long-term effectiveness of RAF missions. Army leaders, in particular, would also benefit from a more refined understanding of what engagement capabilities are required at echelon, from the theater down to the squad and individual level, and how to best develop and sustain those capabilities. Finally, the recently established engagement warfighting function is an opportunity to make changes across the DOTMLPF spectrum to prepare Army forces for future challenges and avoid repeating mistakes made in previous conflicts; many would benefit from research regarding implementation of the engagement warfighting function.

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