

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

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PEACEMAKERS:

CHAPLAINS AS LIASIONS TO NGOS AND HUMANITARIAN ACTORS

by

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Biography

Chaplain, Major David Leonard joined the Air Force in 1987 and has also served in the Army and Air National Guards, as well as the Air Force Reserves before returning to active duty in 2004. He possesses a degree from Northwest Nazarene University and a Master of Divinity from Portland Seminary. He has five units of Clinical Pastoral Education from Walter Reed Army and San Antonio Military Medical Centers. He has deployed three times and served as Chaplain, CPE resident, Deputy Wing Chaplain, and Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) student. He will serve as an ACSC instructor following graduation.



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Abstract

In conflict regions military commanders are challenged with a complex architecture of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and international foreign humanitarian assistance mechanisms. Many humanitarian actors intersect in the battlespace seeking to alleviate human suffering, promote peace, and stability amidst competing interests. In conducting humanitarian action (HA) within conflict zones or following major disasters, commanders require subject matter experts who can efficiently communicate and coordinate action with humanitarian actors such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs, United States Agency for International Development, and various NGOs and IGOs. Department of Defense chaplains could significantly enhance national objectives by providing humanitarian Liaison Officer (LNO) capabilities to commanders at each level of military operations. Military commanders must work to coordinate movement and economy of effort with the various agencies who are often reluctant to meet with military forces for fear of compromising their image of neutrality. Commanders seeking to work effectively with humanitarian actors need a resource who understands the culture, mission, and values of the humanitarian space within the operational environment. Contemporary analysis on the subject lays a solid framework for the discussion of chaplains as LNO's in humanitarian assistance operations. As the commander's religious representative, chaplains may provide liaison to religious leaders, IGOs, NGOs, local civilian and military leaders, institutions, and organizations to the extent that those contacts relate to the religious or humanitarian purposes as approved by the commander. Current utilization as liaison is very limited and typically occurs on the tactical level. Chaplains must complete 72 hours of post-graduate work in relevant subjects, followed by two years training in a humanitarian

organization before commissioning. Furthermore, chaplains possess unique protections not afforded to other officers, making them ideal for selection to provide liaison with humanitarian actors. Currently, DOD civil-affairs teams are the commander's lead military agent in civil-military humanitarian action, yet lack representatives specifically qualified for work with humanitarian and religious groups. In the humanitarian space, various actors and government agencies bring distinctive capabilities and limitations in providing humanitarian action. Humanitarian liaison officers offer to provide requisite coordination and deconfliction in the humanitarian space. Military chaplains are the superlative candidate for this role. Military chaplains can significantly enable strategic objectives as LNOs to humanitarian actors at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.



*Peace is our profession.*¹

--Chaplain, Brigadier General Steve Schaick

Department of Defense chaplains could significantly enhance national objectives by providing humanitarian Liaison Officer (LNO) capabilities to commanders at each level of military operations. This monograph will review current scholarship, missions, and limitations regarding the utilization of military chaplains. It will frame the chaplain's advantage in working with non-governmental organizations (NGO), interagency, and international actors as prescribed by joint doctrine, and humanitarian organizational guidance. Finally, it will provide recommendations for implementation at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of employment.

In conflict regions where the US government operates, military commanders are challenged with a complex architecture of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), agencies, NGOs, and international foreign humanitarian assistance mechanisms. The "fog of peace" created by numerous organizations in the battlespace requires military leaders to develop and utilize tools for maximizing coordinated Humanitarian Assistance (HA).² US doctrine defines humanitarian and civic assistance as "assistance to the local populace (as) specifically authorized by Title 10."³ Title 10 authority applies to humanitarian action by a military department secretary which promotes US security interests and when conducted by personnel possessing the requisite "specific operational readiness skills."⁴ The type of work conducted under this authority includes medical, veterinary, educational, training/technical assistance, and construction or repair of

¹(All notes appear in shortened form. For full details, see appropriate entry in the bibliography.); Many thanks for Maj John Ball for his thoughtful contributions. All errors herein are my own; The SAC motto in Schaick, "Examining the Role of Chaplains as Non-Combatants," 8.

² Cole and Hsu. "NGO-Military Relations," 21; Emily Goldman, *Power in Uncertain Times: Strategy in the Fog of Peace*.

³JP 3-29, 107.

⁴ Title 10, 401.

basic infrastructure. Aid provided by Title 10 authority must not duplicate other US humanitarian efforts nor support military groups and consequently requires approval by the department of state (DOS).⁵ Joint publications further define this assistance as foreign military assistance and humanitarian assistance and disaster response. The United Nations Civil-Military coordination guidance labels all “assistance, protection, and advocacy action in response to human needs resulting from complex emergencies and natural disasters” as HA.⁶ The goal of HA is to save lives and alleviate suffering and broadly encompasses the entirety of the humanitarian action in the operational environment.⁷ Humanitarian actors accomplish these goals by following guidelines set forth by the International Committee of the Red Cross/Crescent (ICRC). The humanitarian principles of the ICRC are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.⁸ Neutral humanitarian actors may not always align with military objectives in the humanitarian space.

Military commanders must work to coordinate movement and economy of effort with the various agencies who are often reluctant to meet with military forces for fear of compromising their image of neutrality.⁹ In a hostile or uncertain environment, the military typically first establishes security, while NGOs often prioritize humanitarian needs and are resistant to military restrictions.¹⁰ NGOs tend to desire humanitarian action while avoiding a negative association with armed forces. However, the military desires to leverage the NGOs as force multipliers in the battlespace as part of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Essentially, military and

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ UN OCHA. *Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination*, 3.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ “Introduction to the Red Cross” 17 Jan 2018.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ JP 3-08, xii.

humanitarian actors exist in the same “humanitarian space;” needing one another, yet operating as reluctant partners.¹¹

Many commanders see non-DOD humanitarian work as an extension of US policy in counter-insurgent operations (COIN), while neutral humanitarian groups want no such perception. Often the NGOs and international organizations have more access to local populations, but lack security, logistics, or situational awareness of the battlefield. The ICRC explains that regardless how well-intentioned the military is, it will always be hated by some in the humanitarian space who are negatively affected by military actions. The ICRC explains that local populations are often resistant to military humanitarian action because it is temporary. For instance, the military might build a school, only to have it destroyed two weeks later because insurgents are hiding there. Because the military is perceived as the group bringing violence to the region, they lack trust from the humanitarian actors.¹² At times, humanitarian action brought by agents typically associated with violence, compromises the neutrality of other humanitarian actors. This is particularly true when violence has been disguised as humanitarian action. An InterAction representative cited a case wherein the CIA sponsored a polio vaccination program, intending to use it as a ruse to capture Osama bin Laden. The fallout from this deception resulted in polio vaccination workers being killed by insurgents ten years later.¹³ Todd Greentree, writing for *Journal of Strategic Studies*, concludes that the lack of trust is not only demonstrated by the humanitarian agencies. In 2001, USAID diverted cash for work funds and other unspecified priorities. These work projects were a critical tool for keeping fighting-age males from joining the Taliban. The change in policy worked against the military effort in the area. Some

¹¹Humanitarian space describes the shared operational environment to which both the DOD and humanitarian actors wish to shape in alleviating suffering while also promoting peace.

¹² Introduction to the Red Cross, 18 January 2018.

¹³ Ibid.

commanders began referring to USAID as “the source of instability.”¹⁴ The humanitarian actors do not trust the military while the military desires HA to work in concert with its own lines of effort.

Chaplain George Adams, a US Navy chaplain relates multiple accounts of chaplains who were effective in promoting trust with various groups in CENTCOM during Operation Iraqi Freedom. On one such occasion Marines from the 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment had been fighting with Fedayeen insurgents who had used Iraqi civilians as human shields. The fallout from this skirmish left many in the area enraged with the Marines. The unit chaplain was dispatched by the commander to contact local authorities to explain the actions of the Marines and illuminate the behavior of the insurgents. Furthermore, the chaplain compassionately leveraged his own understanding of Islamic belief and practices to ensure that the civilian dead were buried before sunset, even assisting in digging several graves. The timely and expert knowledge of one Navy chaplain quelled both negative perceptions of US activities and potential conflict on the battlefield.

Sidebar 1. Chaplain Liaisons Promote Peace in the Operational Environment.¹⁵

Building mutual trust between two communities with different priorities and values within the humanitarian space is essential to HA. Humanitarian assistance operations require a multi-tiered approach to coordinate humanitarian actors, host nation, and local leaders. Many facets of this challenge have been addressed in the civil-military literature. Commanders seeking to work effectively with humanitarian actors need a resource who understands the culture, mission, and values of the humanitarian space within the operational environment (OE).¹⁶ When asked what relationship most NGOs would like to have with the military, one representative responded with “We don’t and we won’t.”¹⁷ Yet, researching this project, I interviewed numerous representatives from the ICRC, American Red Cross, and InterAction agencies and concluded that while many humanitarian actors are tentative toward civil-military Interaction,

¹⁴ Greentree, *Bureaucracy Does its Thing*, 345.

¹⁵ Quoted in Ch, Brig Gen Steven A. Schaick, “Examining the Role of Chaplains as Non-Combatants While Involved in Religious Leader Engagement/Liaison” (research report, Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, 2009).

¹⁶ “Introduction to InterAction,” 18 Jan 2018.

¹⁷ Levine, “Coordination Without Borders,” 47.

they are open to it.¹⁸ A bridge that spans both functional cultures is necessary for maximizing humanitarian action in the shared space.

Literature Review

The chaplain is an often underutilized soft-power resource in the commander's toolbox. Contemporary analysis on the subject lays a solid framework for the discussion of chaplains as LNO's in humanitarian assistance operations. Joint doctrine directs chaplains to be used as liaisons to interagency, IGOs, NGOs, Multi-national forces, and local religious leaders "(to advise regarding) religious and humanitarian dynamics in the operational area."¹⁹ This literature review will assess existing chaplain liaison scholarship while identifying areas requiring further research.

Chaplain, Colonel (sel) Kleet Barclay who is currently the Commandant of the Air Force Chaplain Corps College, and Chaplain, Major Brandon Markette have both written professional papers discussing the emerging roles of chaplains to meet future Air Force missions. Barclay argues that declining worship attendance and expanding requirements will offer few opportunities for chaplains to lead congregational worship. He advocates that Title 10 chaplain duties be reevaluated to determine the best use of religious professionals to meet emerging strategic and operational challenges.²⁰ Marquette's work builds on this theme evaluating the importance of aligning chaplain utilization to humanitarian and religious liaison in the operating environment. Both works stop short of evaluating specific roles for future chaplain corps utilization.

Lieutenant Colonel David Levine gives a good picture of NGOs, their interests, and inhibitions as they relate to the military. He recommends assigning US military officers, dressed

¹⁸ "Introduction to the Red Cross," 16 Jan 2018; "Introduction to InterAction," 19 Jan 2018.

¹⁹ JP 105, II-1.

²⁰ Barclay, "Future of AF Worship," 8,21.

in civilian attire, to NGO world headquarters. He argues that this access will help the DOD to build relationships, rapport, and familiarity with military culture and capabilities. Most importantly, it will assist with initial access and security coordination in the operational areas.²¹ Levine makes effective use of both joint doctrine and NGO structures to make his case, but lacks recommendations for specific LNO selection qualifications nor does he address other strategic, operational, and tactical applications in the humanitarian space.

Perhaps the most significant work on this subject was written by Chaplain Colonel Sean Lee (et al) in the seminal work “Military Chaplains as Peacebuilders.” Lee effectively structures the future of chaplain utilization around the peacebuilding mission requirements. He suggests that the doctrinal role of chaplains must be expanded to allow for religious leader liaison to be a formalized part of stability operations.²² Furthermore, religious leader liaison is an increasingly vital and often overlooked aspect of US foreign policy diplomacy in stability operations requiring further development.²³ This work provides exceptional recommendations for measures of effectiveness (MOE) and provides relative case studies where other states have effectively used chaplains in this role. Additionally, Chaplain Steve Schaick, the USAF Deputy Chief of Chaplains, builds on this theme in his research paper on religious leader liaison. Both works make a compelling case for including religious leader liaison as a vital component of peace operations. However, neither work offers a specific methodology for religious leader liaison development and implementation structures.

Douglas Johnson and Cynthia Sampson have made a compelling case for the inclusion of religious leader liaison in the diplomatic space. In their book *Religion, the Missing Element of*

²¹ Levine, “Coordination Without Borders, 55.

²² Lee, Burke, and Crayne, “Military Chaplains as Peace Builders,” 2.

²³ Ibid., 3-4.

Statecraft, they argue that religion has historically played an essential role in peacebuilding. Adding to this, they provide models for conducting religious leader liaison at tactical, operational, and strategic levels of effort. Lending further credibility to their claim, former President Jimmy Carter affirms the diplomatic work accomplished through religious leader diplomatic engagement, writing

Religion has played an important role in peace negotiations (Arab/Israeli), Democratization (Zambia), and led to the Interfaith Conciliation Commission in Nicaragua wherein the Sandinistas made peace with the East Coast Indians.²⁴

To this end, Johnson and Sampson recommend the development of religious attaches, posted at diplomatic missions for the purposes of ongoing religious leader liaison. Religious actors can bring a unique skill-set for mediation in secular confrontations.²⁵ This book is both comprehensive and compelling but remains focused on diplomatic missions rather than operational utilization in multi-national and interagency operations.

Each of the pieces reviewed supports the claim that religious actors need to be utilized more effectively to meet strategic US objectives. However, these works fail to look beyond the religious and diplomatic aspects. Lacking a humanitarian application, they also offer no method for implementation on strategic and operational levels. There is both a doctrinal mandate and a glaring lack of scholarship in the use of chaplains as liaison to all relevant actors in the

²⁴ Jimmy Carter in Johnston and Sampson, *Religion the Missing Dimension*, vii.

²⁵ Johnston and Sampson, *Religion the Missing Dimension*, 16, 21.

humanitarian space. The chaplain has the expertise, experience, and credibility to work effectively with humanitarian actors.

Chaplain, Major Steve Survance and his chaplain assistant, Staff Sergeant Elton Gill exemplify the unique application of the chaplain's role in coordinating HA. In 2008, while assigned to SOUTHCOM, their team coordinated the US military and embassy support to local schools, hospitals, orphanages, and five NGOs working throughout Ecuador. The religious support team (RST) organized food, clothing, and water donation and distribution efforts enabling US humanitarian action and disaster relief efforts. In six months they distributed one million vitamins as well as significant amounts of clothing to orphanages and clinics following a devastating flood in the area. During their humanitarian efforts, they encountered a child, paralyzed from the waist down. Lacking mobility, she was only able to crawl across the floor in her home. The RST was able to locate and secure the donation of an electric wheelchair followed by a work project to install ramps and sidewalks which ensured her access to the world outside. The sustained and powerful impact of one deployed RST aligned distinct chaplain corps capabilities to geographic commander HA strategy in the region

Sidebar 2: Chaplain Expertise in Coordinating Humanitarian Efforts.²⁶

Missions and Limitations

Chaplains bring a robust set of qualifications and capabilities that are not paralleled by other DOD personnel. Chaplains must complete 72 hours of post-graduate work in subjects including counseling, social work, religious administration, world religions, the practice of religion, theology, religious philosophy, religious ethics, and religion-specific instruction. Additionally, they must be endorsed by a recognized religious body with a minimum of two years of experience before accession to the military.²⁷ The religious endorsement places the chaplain under two sets of authorities: the military which gives them the military commission, and the religious body which ordains them for religious work within the military. There is no other career field that is trained in broad subjects that have ready application to humanitarian settings. Chaplains are the only career field required to work in a non-profit humanitarian organization prior to serving in the armed forces. Chaplains spend two years of developmental training in

²⁶ Interview with Chaplain Survance, 27 March, 2018.

²⁷ DODI 1304.28

churches which are by nature non-profit, charitable humanitarian organizations. This unique set of skills develops chaplains as highly qualified subject-matter-experts for work as liaisons to humanitarian actors.

Lee provides a helpful matrix of qualifications in comparison to other career fields which I have modified for this analysis with ranking based on qualifications specific to humanitarian work:

	Training	Skills	Credentials	Accessibility	Non-combatant	Can refrain from collecting intelligence	Overall ranking
Civil Affairs	Limited	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	4
Chaplain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1
Intel	Limited	No	No	Yes	No	No	5
Personnel	Limited	Yes	Limited	Yes	No	No	3
JAG	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	2

Figure 1. Qualification of Humanitarian/Religious LNO in Comparison to Other Career Fields²⁸

Title 10 outlines the duties and basis for military chaplaincy.²⁹ Chaplains provide religious rites, services, accommodation, counseling, and advisement. Chaplains are to provide for the religious and spiritual support of military members and their families. In counseling, chaplains have privileged communication which protects the adherent’s confidentiality in all matters dealing with religion and conscience. Chaplains provide both religious services and advisement, assisting the commander by enabling the expression of faith or religious practice for all assigned personnel. As a special staff officer, the chaplain also advises commander and staff

²⁸ Lee, Burke, and Crayne, “Military Chaplains as Peace Builders,” 13.

²⁹ Ibid., 23.

on “issues surrounding moral and ethical decision making, (and) morale as affected by religion and personnel issues.”³⁰ Religious advisement informs leadership concerning the impact of religion on joint operations.³¹ As the commander’s religious representative, chaplains may provide liaison to religious leaders, IGOs, NGOs, local civilian and military leaders, institutions, and organizations, “to the extent that those contacts relate to the religious or humanitarian purposes (as) approved by the commander.”³² Current utilization as liaison is very limited and typically occurs on the tactical level. Not only qualifications, but also limitations, unique to the chaplain’s role in the military, serve to further support their utilization as humanitarian LNO’s in the operational environment.

Chaplains have protections and limitations not afforded to other career fields. International and US code limits the roles and responsibilities of chaplains in ways that enhance their ability to serve in liaison function to humanitarian actors. Chaplains are restricted from command, intelligence gathering, and combatant activities. The Geneva Convention identifies chaplains as “protected personnel” in their function and capacity as ministers of religion and chaplains are further restricted by US law from bearing arms as noncombatants.³³ Chaplains and medical personnel are the only uniformed military members permitted to wear the protected symbol of the Red Cross/Crescent.³⁴ This distinction ameliorates many of the concerns presented by humanitarian actors in the operational environment as will be identified below. While uniquely qualified to implement the commander’s strategy in conducting humanitarian action operations, the chaplain is seldom used in this function.

³⁰ JP105, 8.

³¹ Ibid.

³² JP105, I-2.

³³ JP105, viii.

³⁴ US Institute for Peace, “Guidelines for Relations,” 1 July 2017.

Currently, the primary role of chaplains is to provide religious services, warrior care, and leadership advisement.³⁵ The leadership advisement typically given to commanders involves religious requirements and sensitivities as they relate to the assigned unit. Rarely do chaplain duties involve strategic or operational applications beyond the religious care of US forces.³⁶ Chaplains are appointed by their religious bodies to provide religious services, yet HA further serves to save lives and ameliorate suffering; roles consistent with a chaplain's identity as "visible reminders of the holy."³⁷ To be relevant to the emerging needs of national and military

In 2011, the chapel team at Anderson Air Force Base in Guam led a reconstruction and medical mission to Cambodia. Working with an NGO tailored to orphan care in the region, a team of nine Air Force members and dependents deployed to Cambodia. They joined teams from three countries to provide medical care and manual labor to alleviate suffering for the poorest members of the rural Cambodian provinces. Over five days, hundreds of Buddhists and Christians with no access to medical care were screened and treated. Additionally, the US team improved Orphanages to ensure compliance with UNICEF standards as well as providing a well for clean water. The chaplain-led team brought together multinational partners, resources, and NGOs to significantly improve the lives of both the sick and the orphaned in support of US regional interests.

strategic objectives, the DOD chaplain corps must consider moving beyond its traditional utilization to additional applications consistent with their identity as peace-makers.

Sidebar 3. Chaplains as Effective Humanitarian LNOs.³⁸

Humanitarian Actors

"Humanitarian actor" describes the complex web of US inter-agency, private, national, and international humanitarian relief organizations active in the humanitarian space. During foreign humanitarian crises, humanitarian action is typically coordinated by the United States Agency for International Development, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA); the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN/OCHA); or some

³⁵ Barclay, "Future of AF Worship," 2.

³⁶ Ibid., 19.

³⁷ Ibid., 2.

³⁸ This project was led by the author.

combination of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Red Cross Federation. The lead organization will coordinate unity of effort between IGOs, NGOs, national, and US inter-agency services. While there are some outliers, most agencies will work to some degree with these organizing partners. IGO refers to the interaction between elements of the DOD, US government agencies, foreign militaries, international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector.³⁹ NGOs are private, self-governing, humanitarian agencies working to alleviate suffering; promote health care, economic, and educational advancement; and advocate human rights and conflict resolution.⁴⁰ Most legitimate NGOs are coordinated through the Red Cross or UN/OCHA, but there are some who work independently such as Doctors Without Borders.⁴¹ There are between 6,000-30,000 NGOs that annually provide more than eight billion dollars in aid helping more 250 million people.⁴² These various organizations coalesce around the cause of humanitarian action, but with different limitations and interests.

The commander needs an LNO with expertise surrounding the concerns, legitimacy, and operations of humanitarian actors. Humanitarian actors tend to be neutral, but neutrality is not always in the DOD's interest. Humanitarian actors seek a dialogue with the military without blurring the lines of neutrality.⁴³ InterAction, a clearinghouse of 195 NGOs, explains that the association of military uniforms with NGOs in the humanitarian space calls into question the NGO's neutrality, placing the NGO workers in danger. It will take time, patience, and someone who speaks the cultural language of these organizations to build bridges into their community. This can only happen with ongoing dialogue and relationship-building. Currently, the US

³⁹ JP 3-08, I-3.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ "Introduction to the ICRC," 17 January 2018.

⁴² Levine, "Coordination Without Borders," 22; "NGOs on Development Issues," 15 May 2018.

⁴³ "Introduction to the Red Cross," 16 Jan 2018.

military typically conducts HA through the civil-affairs teams aligned under the civil-affairs command (CACOM).

DOD civil-affairs teams are the commander's lead military agent in civil-military humanitarian action. Civil-military operations "establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relationships between military forces and indigenous populations and institutions. [They achieve this] by directly supporting the attainment of objectives relating to the reestablishment or maintenance of stability within a region or host nation."⁴⁴ The geographic combatant commanders "provide regional coordination and direction to their subordinate commanders for the integration and coordination of civil-military operations into military plans and operations."⁴⁵ Civil-military operations elements are located at the Joint Staff (J-9), Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Forces (JCMOTF), Civil-Military Operations Centers (CMOCS), and Civil-military teams (such as provincial reconstruction teams).⁴⁶ The J-9 provides, communicates, and coordinates support requests and activities while also providing analysis in support of the commander's assessment. A civil-military team utilizes diplomatic, informational, military, and economic (DIME) factors to stabilize the operational environment in a province, district, state, or locality. Civil affairs teams conduct military engagement, interorganizational coordination, and humanitarian assistance while also assessing the impact on military operations.⁴⁷ Civil-affairs teams are comprised of "special forces, military information support, legal support, public affairs, engineer, transportation, health support personnel, military police, security forces, and maneuver units."⁴⁸ None of these areas specialize in religious or humanitarian operations. The

⁴⁴ JP 3-57, ix.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, x.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, xi.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, xii.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, I-17.

component functional representatives lack expertise in conducting religious and humanitarian focused diplomacy. While the civil-affairs teams do provide humanitarian capabilities, they are currently not the best military representatives to serve as the commander’s LNO to humanitarian actors.

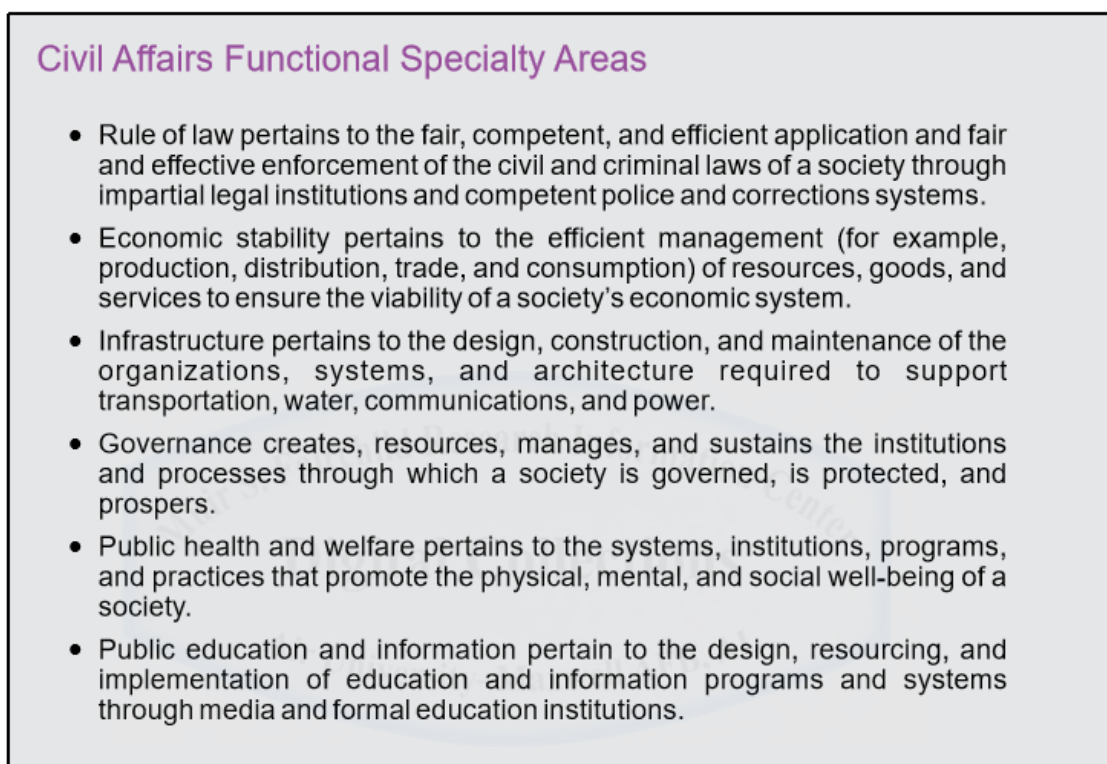


Figure 2. Civil-Affairs Functional Areas⁴⁹

The US Army CACOMS support commanders at the Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) level through the Joint Staff in five GCCs: US Pacific Command (PACOM), US European Command (EUCOM), US Central Command (CENTCOM), US Africa Command (AFRICOM), and US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM). EUCOM and AFRICOM are supported by the same civil-affairs command element. In this capacity, they “develop plans, policy, and programs through planning and regional engagement while providing civil

⁴⁹ JP 3-57, I-17.

component analysis at the strategic and theater level.” LNO placement alongside humanitarian actors in the operational environment is selected on an ad hoc basis which varies between each GCC.⁵⁰ At the operational level they may function as part of a Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force (JCMOTF), or with the formation of a CMOC, Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center (HACC), or Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC). The CMOC is mission specific, augmented with engineer, medical, and transportation assets; and is the primary coordination element for US forces, indigenous populations and institutions, humanitarian organizations, IGOs, NGOs, multinational forces, host nation government agencies, and other USG departments and agencies.⁵¹ The CMOC facilitates coordination among the key participants, including Service and functional components, USAID, embassy country team, and interagency liaisons.⁵² The HACC is typically established under the direction of the host nation, UN/OCHA, or possibly the USAID/OFDA. The humanitarian assistance coordination center includes senior representatives from the affected country, the US embassy, joint force and other major organizations involved in the operation.⁵³ It may be organized as a temporary body that operates in early planning and coordination stages until a CMOC or HOC can be established.⁵⁴ These varying civil-military constructs provide coordination but lack capability for military expertise in achieving commanders’ objectives as shaped by civilian religious and humanitarian actors.

⁵⁰ Mastriano, Interview, 13 March 2018; Colonel (ret) Mastriano served as USAREUR LNO to EUCOM.

⁵¹ JP 3-57, I-18.

⁵² Ibid., II-20.

⁵³ Ibid, I-17.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

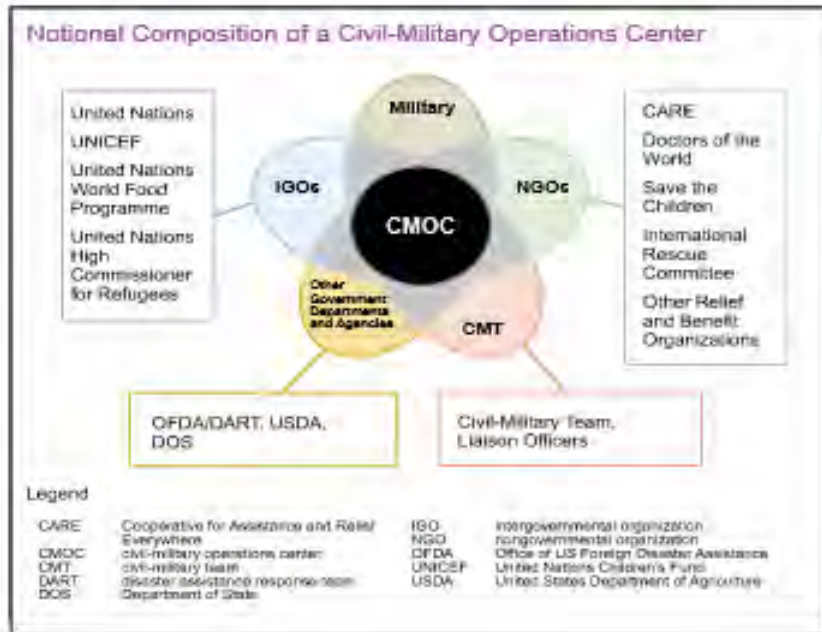


Figure 3. Notional Composition of a CMOC⁵⁵

Civil Affairs teams are excellent at providing military coordination and expertise in logistics but are limited in scope as they lack specific training, qualifications, and experience in engaging humanitarian actors. Religion can be a contributing factor in many conflicts due to the manipulation of ideologies. It is important that military forces recognize religious and cultural sensitivities and ideologies, so as not to hinder military operations. JP 3-57 recognizes that chaplains, in their distinctive role as non-combatants, “will participate as appropriate in planning for the impact of religion on current and future operations.”⁵⁶ They may also “conduct liaison with key civilian religious leaders and faith-based organizations, with the goal of fostering understanding and reconciliation.”⁵⁷ The current doctrine already allows for chaplains to do the liaison activities, but chaplains are not currently assigned as permanent members of Civil-affairs teams in the same way that lawyers and engineers are, nor are any LNO’s routinely collocated

⁵⁵ JP 3-57, II-20.

⁵⁶ Ibid., III-14.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

with the humanitarian actors. By permanently assigning chaplains to function as LNOs, in the same manner as other subject matter experts, the commander can achieve economy of effort while also utilizing the best resources available. This is particularly relevant in its application to humanitarian coordination elements where the US military does not have the operational lead.

In Nigeria, USAID entered into an agreement with the Interfaith Mediation Center (IMC) to “train leaders on religious and national co-existence (TOLERANCE).” This project seeks to enhance trust and strengthen conflict prevention and mediation.⁴⁴ The IMC, a faith based organization, seeks to address religious conflict, violence and extremism through shared religious dialogue. Radical Islam and religious conflict have threatened Nigerian stability. Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa have begun to attack both Christian and traditional Islamic groups. The TOLERANCE project involves USAID, partnering with a faith based NGO to engage local religious leaders. TOLERANCE enhances trust and relationship-building efforts within local communities by engaging religious and traditional leaders while also encouraging them to shun hate-speech. This dialogue promotes peace and religious tolerance between the Islamic and Christian forces in the region. From 2013 to 2015, more than 80 dialogues were publicly broadcast reaching over 3.1 million listeners in the region. Additionally, the IMC works with local religious groups to promote, peace and interfaith cooperation. TOLERANCE has also targeted politicians and community leaders with education and training; working towards trust and forgiveness. This project resulted in the formation of a joint resolution to reduce interfaith conflict.

Sidebar 4: USAID Use of Religious LNOs in Humanitarian Assistance and Reconciliation.⁵⁸

Frequently, USAID will coordinate unity of effort for humanitarian actors when providing foreign humanitarian aid, with the USAID administrator designated as the US humanitarian assistance coordinator for emergency response.⁵⁹ USAID will coordinate the work of participating NGOs in the humanitarian space. At times, unity of effort is challenged by competing ideologies. JP 3-57 states “some NGOs may have policies that are purposely antithetical to both the US military forces and USG departments and agencies, but they may have resources and capabilities that could promote the accomplishment of military objectives.”⁶⁰ Not all NGOs are the same and many must be fully vetted for legitimacy. Some NGOs will accept

⁵⁸ Quoted in Smith, “Spiritual Connections,” 17-19.

⁵⁹ JP 3-57, I-8.

⁶⁰ Ibid., V-2.

money but not follow through on promised humanitarian action. Ongoing relationships with known organizations will help to determine legitimacy.⁶¹ In achieving unity of effort, the military commander requires an LNO who can accurately evaluate the actors in the humanitarian space. This will require military experts who understand issues relating to heritage, cultural resources, communication, media, law enforcement, religion, and cultural/historic property.⁶² Chaplains have been trained to understand culture and religion in the operational environment and will add a distinct value alongside the other staff officers in this capacity. These skills can be further developed through an increased partnership with other USG lead agencies and international humanitarian actors.

In 2011, Chaplain, Colonel David Terrinoni was deployed in AFRICOM as Deputy of Religious Affairs for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. During this deployment, Chaplain Terrinoni demonstrated the impact that qualified chaplain LNOs bring to the mission. He met with religious leaders throughout the region finding that these engagements assisted with lines of effort in support of task force objectives. He was requested by the command to build relationships with religious leaders in preparation for an increase of US forces in the area. Ch Terrinoni built bridges with local leaders by leading prayer services for the region which caught the attention of a key business owner in attendance. This event led to an introduction to other religious leaders. Common ground was established based on shared faith, opening up a dialogue that engendered the trust of the local religious council. In this region, religious leaders are highly influential among the civilian populace. In subsequent meetings with members of Protestant, Catholic, Anglican and Islamic communities, Chaplain Terrinoni coordinated humanitarian aid requests in support of local concerns. Additionally, he effectively communicated the US intent, building trust and tolerance for US military deployments in the area. Chaplain Terrinoni was seen as a “representative of peace who listened to their concerns.” His presence was viewed as a positive message posing the US as “a people of values.” His work established local trust which effectively calmed widespread concerns regarding US deployments in the region.

Sidebar 5: Chaplain LNO in Coordinating DOD/Religious Leader Dialogue.⁶³

UN/OCHA has developed a guide for militaries which outlines engagement, coordination, and limits of civil-military coordination. The UN recognizes that the military may

⁶¹“Red Cross Training and Implementation,” 18 Jan 18.

⁶² JP 3-57, V-2.

⁶³ Smith, “Spiritual Connections,” 6-8.

provide helpful assistance in HA while recognizing that the military mission (to gain acceptance, provide security, or gather intel) is not HA. They are concerned, as are many humanitarian actors, that military humanitarian assistance operations blur the lines between military and the work of humanitarian actors. This blurring of roles endangers neutrality and shows partiality in the humanitarian space.⁶⁴ The skewed perception produced, hinders the work of the civilian HA teams. To mitigate this, the UN recommends that humanitarian action primarily should be conducted by designated humanitarian and local partners through the coordination of local authorities and community leaders.⁶⁵ Humanitarian actors seek to develop a humanitarian space where they can operate unhindered.

UN/OCHA operates at the global strategic, operational, and tactical levels and presents a vital conduit for developing LNO capacity. Most coordination is developed at “the global strategic level through the inter-agency standing committee which comprises 18 major humanitarian organizations.”⁶⁶ At the operational level, the UN resident coordinator is the lead representative of the UN Secretary-General. The resident coordinator is the link to the global level. When required, a humanitarian country team is formed to bring together all major UN and non-UN organizations in the humanitarian space in a process called “cluster coordination.”⁶⁷ A cluster is a group of humanitarian agencies active in the operational environment. Humanitarian actors prefer military engagement on their terms and will not advocate for the US commander’s requirements. Increased LNO capacity will facilitate better communication and civil-military understanding. Levine rightly observes, “direct coordination (requires) personal relationships

⁶⁴ UN OCHA, “Civil-military Coordination,” 4-5; “Introduction to the ICRC,” 18 Jan 2018.

⁶⁵ UN OCHA, “Civil-military Coordination,” 8,12.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

between the US military and coalition military organizations, IGOs, and NGOs.”⁶⁸ The military would be well-served by having a representative humanitarian LNO specialist at each level of UN/OCHA planning and coordination.

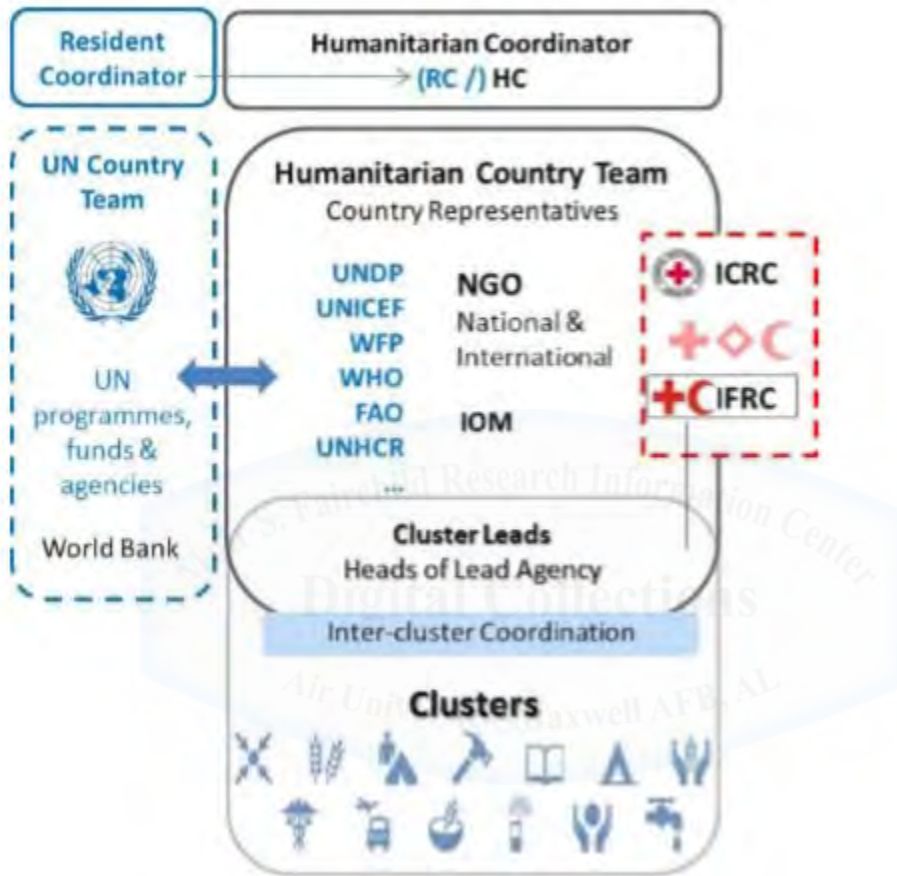


Figure 4. HCT Notional Concept⁶⁹

The Red Cross/Red Crescent is neither NGO nor IGO. As explained by the UN guidance for civil-military relations,

The components of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement—the ICRC, IFRC, and the national societies are neither NGOs nor IGOs. They have a special legal status, role and

⁶⁸ Levine, “Coordination Without Borders, 41.

⁶⁹ UN OCHA, “Civil-military Coordination,” 23.

relation to the military based on the Geneva Conventions, the Movement's statutes and national law.⁷⁰

It is a “neutral and independent humanitarian organization” as affirmed by the Geneva Conventions in 1949. The ICRC provides assistance, protection, and education governing international humanitarian law. A sister organization, the Red Cross Federation, brings together national arms of the Red Cross/Crescent which aim to coordinate the effort of 189 Red Cross/Crescent national organizations. The Red Cross/Crescent comprises the largest volunteer-based humanitarian organization in the world. The national organizations provide assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, prevent human suffering, and protect life and health for all.⁷¹ In a conflict region, the ICRC will usually take the lead along with the Federation to coordinate humanitarian effort when UN/OCHA is not present.⁷² The strength of the various elements of the Red Cross/Crescent movement is that it is a trusted neutral agent, prolific, and persistent humanitarian force in the regions where it operates. They do not wish to meet regularly with military members and request military to be in uniform when doing so.⁷³ They, like many humanitarian actors, are concerned with tainting their neutrality when seen meeting with military personnel. Military non-combatants who are permitted the wear of the red cross emblem on their uniform could potentially mitigate these concerns.

Each of these humanitarian actors and government agencies brings distinctive capabilities and limitations in providing humanitarian action. The military can best utilize these soft power elements by: not confusing its mission with theirs; not compromising their neutrality; and through the development of enduring LNO relationships at each level of military operations. The

⁷⁰ UN OCHA, *Civil-military Coordination*, 18.

⁷¹ *Discover the ICRC*, 6, 10-11.

⁷² “Introduction to the ICRC,” 17 Jan 2018.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

chaplain provides the best resource for this mission as they are noncombatants who are restricted from intelligence gathering while possessing superior training, skills, and education. Key areas for development include accessibility, specific civil-military training, and focused employment of chaplains as humanitarian LNO specialists.

Recommendations for employment

Developing a position for religious/humanitarian LNO specialists will require civil-military training, strategic and operational employment, and specific utilization capability. Other countries have effectively developed their chaplains to serve in similar roles. South Africa has utilized its chaplains as religious, mediation, and negotiation experts, and as NGO/religious leader engagement specialists in peace operations. Norway has developed doctrine defining the operational role of chaplains in stability operations.⁷⁴ Training can be accomplished through the existing Political Affairs Specialist (PAS) structures with follow-on development at USAID, UN/OCHA, ICRC, or NGO global headquarters.⁷⁵

PAS is already a well-established intermediate developmental education (IDE) track that is not currently available to chaplains. As a specific developmental course, it refines selectees at the major or lieutenant colonel level with an “international pol-mil affairs assignment on their first or second post-IDE assignment.”⁷⁶ The PAS development opportunity is specifically geared to give future senior military leaders valuable politico-military education and experience through a single, well-managed developmental assignment opportunity.⁷⁷ Utilization tours would be preferred at the UN/OCHA, World Council of Churches, ICRC, GCC (J-9 staff), NGO headquarters, Chaplain Corps Colleges, or Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Forces as

⁷⁴ Lee, Burke, and Crayne, “Military Chaplains as Peace Builders,” 20.

⁷⁵ Levine, “Coordination Without Borders,” 55.

⁷⁶ Sarnoski, “International Affairs Officer Program,” 12-14.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

required. This program could prepare chaplains to apply politico-military strategic concerns to HA operations. Additionally, courses on religion and humanitarian action should be included in the curriculum. Adding chaplains to the PAS development track would require the procurement of suitable post-IDE assignments.

To meet the intent of strategic development military officers for utilization in support of national objectives will require employment at key strategic points. UN/OCHA, ICRC, or the World Council of Churches could serve as executive level assignments for chaplain colonels, giving them the ability to advocate DOD interests with a high-level site picture of global HA initiatives.⁷⁸ Chaplain lieutenant colonels could be positioned in joint billets at the GCCs, working alongside the J-9. They would enable civil-military forces to ensure persistent coordination with humanitarian actors within the Area of Responsibility (AOR). These assignments could also align with those GCCs with civil-affairs command elements currently assigned.⁷⁹ Chaplain majors could serve operational interests through assignment at USAID, or in fellowships with ICRC, Red Cross Federation, or NGO clearinghouses such as InterAction. While opportunities to work with non-US governmental agencies do not currently exist, there has been some precedent established.⁸⁰ Agencies such as InterAction, Catholic Relief Services, or World Vision could make excellent training partners. These fellowships would build enduring relationships furthering coordination and communication with humanitarian actors in the operational environment. Another key area for employment could be at the respective service chaplain corps colleges. Chaplain majors could be utilized to teach chaplain corps personnel about NGO, IGO, and religious leader engagement requirements at the tactical level. This could

⁷⁸ Johnson and Sampson, *Religion the Missing Dimension*, 292.

⁷⁹ JP 3-57, II-7

⁸⁰ "Introduction to InterAction," 19 Jan 2018.

also be a “rapid mobility” billet in support of joint civil-military operations task force or CMOC operational deployments. In these assignments, the assigned chaplain should determine with the hosting agency whether civilian or military attire is most appropriate. When in uniform, the chaplain should display the Red Cross/Crescent emblem as noncombatant identification at all times. Implementation will require clear communication with endorsers, an expanded understanding of the Title 10 employment of chaplains, and administrative tracking of the selected chaplain’s utilization.

The DOD will accomplish this shift through dialogue with religious endorsers and clarification of Title 10 requirements while also developing PAS assignments and requisite administrative systems. “Title 10 gives the Secretary of Defense ‘authority, direction, and control’ over DoD, including all subordinate agencies and commands.”⁸¹ First, Title 10 authorization will need to be clarified for chaplains to allow their role in providing religious and humanitarian liaison.⁸² Second, endorsers must be consulted by the service chiefs of chaplains as to this new mode of employment.⁸³ In some instances, this development could serve both the military and the endorsing agent, such as developmental assignments with national church humanitarian agencies. This non-combatant role will serve to further the care and amelioration of suffering while also promoting peace. This will certainly align with the values of religious groups currently represented in the DOD. Third, leaders at the headquarters level must develop and secure LNO assignments at the global, national, and military strategic levels for employment. Finally, selection for a humanitarian LNO specialist must be administratively connected with existing programs. The PAS program needs to be expanded to include military

⁸¹ Wall, “Demystifying the Title 10 Debate,” 98.

⁸² Barclay, “Future of AF Worship,” iv.

⁸³ Eubank, Interview, 13 March 2018; Lieutenant Colonel (ret) Donald Eubank serves as the military endorser for the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

chaplains with emphasis on politico-military affairs, world religions, and NGO studies. Selected chaplain LNOs should be tracked with a special experience identifier (SEI) to enable identification and vectoring. This working model will provide commanders a vital connection between the strategic national objectives and the humanitarian actors in the OE.

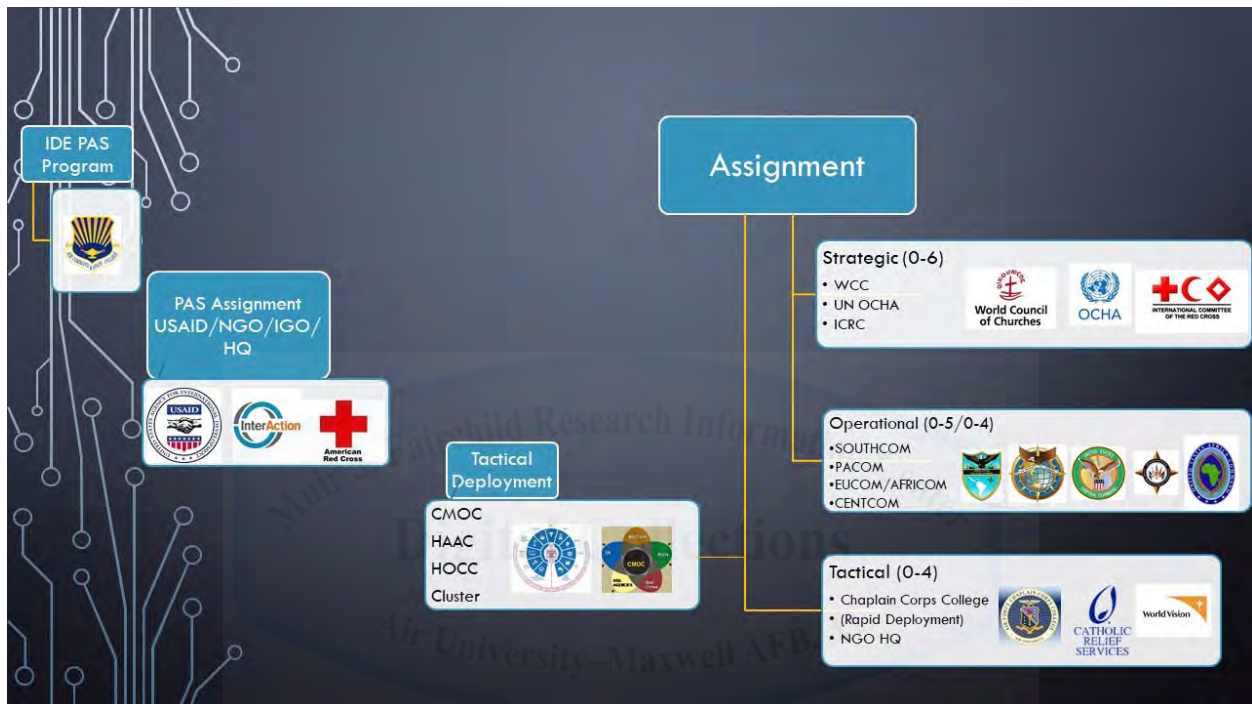


Figure 5. Notional Chaplain LNO Concept

USAF Deputy Chief of Chaplains, Brig Gen Schaick recounts an effort in 1993 to distribute 65 tons of toys and candy to war-torn children in the EUCOM. His team of 400 volunteers collected donations, packaged them, and arranged for a C-130 air-drop over Bosnia-Herzegovina. This humanitarian action was a compassionate mission to encourage the children there who were affected by an ongoing regional civil war. The operation, later called PROVIDE SANTA, was lauded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, CNN, and Good Morning America. The event even drew the attention and support of then-Vice President Al Gore who personally came to Rhein Mein Air Base to deliver his own donation and officially launch the operation. Chaplain Schaick concludes, “We demonstrated to the world that the US military is not just about ‘breaking things and killing people’...peace is our profession.”

Sidebar 6: Strategic Impact of Humanitarian LNOs⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Schaick, “Examining the Role,” 7-8.

Conclusion

Military chaplains can significantly enable strategic objectives as LNOs to humanitarian actors at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. This position should come with the creation of a new SEI—the Humanitarian Liaison Officer (HLNO). HLNOs will fuel the commander’s understanding of the operational picture and help them to leverage humanitarian agencies in pursuit of national objectives. Military chaplains have not been frequently used outside of their role in providing religious accommodation. While this new utilization is stretching the traditional boundaries of the chaplain’s role, it is not outside of the noncombatant limitations. On a tactical level, civil-affairs teams have been functioning in this space, yet there is strong evidence to suggest that the military would be better served by adding religious specialists to increase this capability. Some humanitarian actors may be reluctant to embrace a chaplain within their organizations. Time and proximity will build relationships based on shared interests between chaplains and humanitarian actors that will enable civil-military coordination. The opportunity costs of implementing this program will include less funding and utilization for other personnel. This program will entail fewer opportunities for other specialties to develop as experts in HA. By making these positions joint, the manpower cost will be shared by all services, yet there will be fewer chaplains to fill traditional billets. To fill these requirements, current programs will need reevaluation and prioritization. Training and fellowship programs will remove chaplains from operational utilization for extended periods of time, potentially placing the most qualified officers into a permanent “HLNO track.” To fill training, fellowship, and utilization manning requirements will require eight chaplains per service component. In utilizing resources already vetted, trained, and equipped for this type of mission, however, commanders can expect a significant return on investment. Chaplains will develop strategic relationships that will exponentially enable military HA efforts. Further research should look at ways to develop,

employ, and combine religious leader liaison, diplomatic, and reconciliation capabilities under the HLNO specialist.



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