



DOD RESOURCE SHARING: USAFRICOM & USEUCOM FORCES

GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the structures and mechanisms for how the Department of Defense shares resources among its combatant commands and identify areas for improvement. This graduate research project sought to answer research questions describing how combatant commands share resources, specifically how agreements between USAFRICOM and USEUCOM facilitate force sharing, and how that structure is performing. The research questions were answered through a grounded theory study, consisting of depth interviews and survey of action officers within USAFRICOM and USEUCOM. The research identified force sharing between USAFRICOM and USEUCOM was vital in the accomplishment of USAFRICOM's missions. Additionally, force sharing and the dual-hatting of some service component commands represent personnel and resource efficiencies within the Department of Defense. Research revealed force sharing is intended to be short in duration, responsive, and is an essential tool for acquiring forces, but it also involves risk.

The research culminated in the development of a decision tree for operational planners to determine when to execute force sharing or Global Force Management processes. Several recommendations for action and future research are outlined.

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I would like to express my sincere thanks to my research advisor, Maj Benjamin Hazen, for his patient guidance and support through the process of this graduate research project. Additionally, I would like to thank all the unnamed research participants who took valuable time out of their schedules to speak to me on this topic.

The men and women of the combatant command staffs work tirelessly to produce plans and plan operations in line with the objectives and guidance of our national leaders. My thanks and praise go to them, their efforts, and the work they do to provide for our national defense.

Brett J. Messer

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I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (2015) estimates the world population will reach 9.7 billion people by the year 2050. As the population grows, more resources are consumed. Unfortunately, the rate of resource consumption is outpacing resource replenishment. As Garrett Hardin predicted in his seminal 1968 article, if the population continues to grow unchecked, common resources will be consumed until there are none left to share.

As more and more people compete for the same resources, it is imperative that we find ways to efficiently share common resources and maximize resource capacity where excess capacity can be found. This is broadly known as “collaborative consumption” and in the commercial world, the “sharing economy.” As an example, commercial enterprises such as Airbnb and Uber have found ways to profit from excess capacity. With Airbnb, an extra bedroom in a house is converted into profit for the owner and helps to allay the need for another high-rise hotel in the city. In the case of Uber, empty seats in a car become additional fare revenue as a person provides or shares a ride in their vehicle.

The United States Department of Defense (DoD) experiences its own challenges with under-utilized capacity and efficiencies. The Congressional Budget Office reports that national defense spending accounts for approximately one-sixth of all federal spending (2017). The DoD has a duty to be fiscally responsible with the resources entrusted to it. Like the civilian sector, the DoD must find efficient methods of resource sharing. It must keep Hardin’s ‘tragedy of the commons’ in mind however, and not over-exploit the shared resources for individual, stove-piped benefits. All DoD entities need to use common resources responsibly, in a way that optimizes benefit at the enterprise-level, vice the local level.

Background

Before the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, mission command and military decision-making resided in military service silos (Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy). Each service chief was responsible for operational decisions as well as ‘organize, train, and equip’ (OTE) activities. When President Reagan assigned responsibility for warfighting and operational command to the combatant commanders (CCDR) via Goldwater-Nichols, the service chiefs retained the OTE mission. However, the CCDRs cannot perform their missions without forces, so by several different processes operational forces are assigned, allocated, or apportioned to them. The mix of capabilities and number of forces are dependent on the mission of the combatant command (CCMD).

The Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) are each responsible for a particular area (Area of Responsibility, AOR). As history has shown since 1986, certain GCCs execute more activities and have different strategic responsibilities from others. Depending on the type of mission each GCC accomplishes, additional forces may be required beyond what it has already been assigned. The force providers (the military services) provide these forces to the GCCs. In this way, the force providers are essentially administrators of shared resources to the combatant commands (including the functional combatant commands). Sometimes, the demand for joint capabilities exceeds the service’s ability to provide.

United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) accomplishes its missions with little assigned forces by working with all the different force providers. It also has agreements with United States European Command (USEUCOM) for the sharing of certain forces for limited periods of time. Some of these shared capabilities are “high demand and low density” (HD/LD), occasionally leading to unfilled resource requirements. Capabilities often in high demand are

warfighting capabilities like aerial attack or special operations, and enabling capabilities like joint inspection, airport and seaport services, traffic management, and airlift.

Problem Statement

Continuous wars, force reductions, and inadequate financing contribute to the extant resource scarcity among the branches of service. These and other factors lead to increased competition for limited resources across commands. As the United States Government considers resource allocation, and the Services consider how to continue to do more with less, there is a need to examine new ways of pooling and sharing joint enabling resources across GCCs.

Purpose

Some of the GCCs have written agreements between them outlining resource sharing policies and procedures. The purpose of this research is to examine how GCCs can more effectively pool and share resources. Force sharing agreements are unique to the specific bilateral relationships between CCMDs, but there may be a GCC pair with a very efficient agreement in place that could be benchmarked. In this research, the case of USAFRICOM and USEUCOM is used as a representative resource pooling and sharing arrangement. However, this particular force sharing agreement is not the only avenue for USAFRICOM to acquire mission resources. Coupled with the Request for Forces (RFF) process and Global Force Management (GFM), there are multiple ways for USAFRICOM to gain the required capabilities to execute its missions.

Research Questions

- What are the current strategies and structures with respect to how the military pools and shares resources? Across GCCs?
 - Why are they structured this way?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of these structures?

- Regarding the USAFRICOM – USEUCOM agreement:
 - What is the nature of the USAFRICOM-USEUCOM agreement?
 - What are the positive and negative outcomes associated with the resource sharing agreement with USEUCOM?
 - How does the USEUCOM force sharing agreement compare to the standard RFF process? What are the comparative advantages and disadvantages?
 - What improvements can be made to the way USAFRICOM acquires joint capabilities?
- What could an effective resource pooling framework for GCCs look like?

Methodology

To answer these questions, research was conducted using a grounded theory approach with data gathered via survey and depth interviews. The research questions noted above were the basis for a list of more detailed interview questions. Using grounded theory, responses from interviews were categorized and coded to identify commonalities and themes across the spectrum. The process was iterative as data were analyzed. Interview questions were semi-structured, and then gathered data was contextualized. Commonly occurring concepts were used to generate a framework for conceptualizing and making decisions regarding DoD resource sharing. This management framework and decision-making process aims to describe how to better accomplish military resource sharing and inform managers on the ideal way to pool their common resources.

Primary and secondary data were used in the research process. The USAFRICOM and USEUCOM staffs were engaged to explore historical uses of the force sharing agreements, and to answer questions about the RFF process. The Joint Operational Planning and Execution

System (JOPES) and some operational orders (OPORDs, EXORDs, TASKORDs, etc.) were reviewed for historical Requests for Support (RFS) that would trigger a use of the force sharing agreement. The personnel interviewed for this study consisted primarily of military and civilian Department of Defense professionals in key positions across these staffs to exhibit how commands share resources with each other.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

To begin, the concept of sharing resources among common users is not a new one. For millennia, humans have looked for ways to maximize resource and labor capacity. However, new and improved information technologies have given rise to increased opportunities for collaborative consumption and the sharing economy. The concept of collaborative consumption has far-reaching applications for commercial industry, the US Government, and the DoD.

This literature review is divided into four sections. First, resource sharing and the sharing economy are defined and discussed. Next, some specific applications of resource sharing in commercial industry are explained. Third, the review explores how governments also apply resource sharing in many of their activities, similar to those examples found in commercial industry. Finally, progressing from the overarching government examples, the literature reveals how the DoD has found ways to share limited resources between some of its major commands as it balances budget fluctuations and operational risk.

The Sharing Economy

Many people have participated in some sort of sharing economy construct. The sharing economy is broadly defined and covers a wide array of businesses, consumers, markets, and communities. Merriam-Webster defines the sharing economy as “economic activity that involves individuals buying or selling temporary access to goods or services especially as arranged through an online company or organization” (2017). While this definition explains much of the concept’s activity, it is still being applied to any venue where broad segments of the population collaborate to maximize under-utilized inventory, usually for a fee (Zervas et al, 2014). It can apply to a diverse menu of products and services, such as transportation, housing and lodging, and even pets. Generally speaking, accessing the sharing economy for a product or service

instead of a traditional vendor, such as a hotel chain, car rental company, or taxi service, enables consumers to procure them at lower cost.

Another definition of the sharing economy includes it as the trend of making under-used assets into something productive, usually by an individual (Wallsten, 2015). Some forward-thinking entrepreneurs have even seen the potential profits associated with the sharing economy and made it the basis of an entire business (i.e. Uber, Airbnb, etc.).

The occurrence of sharing economy transactions and associated businesses seems to have increased significantly after the global economic recession of 2008. As a result of rapid evolution in information and communication technology, the conditions were ripe for significant sharing economy growth for the past decade (Cohen & Kietzmann, 2014). As data transfer speeds and information accessibility increase, the sharing economy will continue to grow. The principles undergirding the sharing economy are worth pursuing regardless of what the individual user is seeking.

Resource Sharing in Industry

Commercial industry makes great use of the sharing economy. As mentioned in the previous section, many businesses have captured the power of the sharing economy and made it central to their models. A few common examples are shared here, in hopes of developing a common understanding of how and why sharing economy constructs can enable collaboration and performance.

eBay is now a household name in the United States. Accessible globally to anyone with an internet connection, eBay enlists the power of 169 million worldwide buyers browsing 1.1 billion auction and sale listings in the first quarter of 2017 alone (eBay, 2017). The company operates a global marketplace, where anyone with an account can sell and purchase items. Some

products sold through eBay are from retail companies, many with brick and mortar stores. Many other eBay items are sold by individual consumers seeking to sell their own unused or unneeded property. This is another example of an everyday consumer using an online information sharing forum to maximize under-utilized inventory of goods and creating value where the resource may have been previously non-value-added.

Airbnb is another example of a sharing economy stakeholder, although they operate in a different market sector than eBay. Airbnb was founded in 2008 and specializes in capitalizing on unused housing capacity for temporary traveler lodging. Airbnb has over 3 million listings worldwide in 191 countries (Airbnb, 2017). These listings are privately owned properties where the owners offer a variety of accommodations, ranging from single beds to whole castles. The Airbnb web service facilitates the sharing of information and financial transactions for the peer-to-peer business model. At the heart of Airbnb's (and similar firms') popularity is the ease of information sharing, and the fact that it is a tool for any property owner to maximize under-used capacity of resources they own and turn it into something more valuable.

Uber has also become a household name in recent years, launching in 2008 as a taxi alternative. The concept of ride-sharing has ballooned into multiple companies performing similar functions. Much like Airbnb maximizes unused space in homes, Uber maximizes unused time and space in vehicles. By driving for Uber in their personal vehicle, car owners are able to easily convert their time and vehicle into monetary income, while providing a service to riders seeking an alternative to public transportation, taxis, or shuttles. Collateral benefits from Uber's car sharing business are a "proven ability" to reduce the total number of vehicles in cities, lowering carbon emissions (Cohen & Kietzmann, 2014). Like the aforementioned examples,

Uber owes its success to the concept of the sharing economy and is dependent on the visibility and convenience offered by the latest information sharing technology.

eBay, Airbnb, and Uber are just three examples of companies whose entire business model is based on the concept of connecting users in collaborative online environments. They are dependent on information sharing to gain more value from sub-utilized resources. Yet the concept of resource sharing can be applied in some way to any commercial organization.

Resource sharing is often seen in supply chain management, where it is used to reduce resource and energy consumption (Chen, 2013). Supply chains are units where effective resource sharing can have significant impacts on the profitability of a business. For example, this could take the form of a multi-functional machine in a manufacturing plant.

In China, researchers acknowledge that to remain competitive, organizations must formulate efficient logistics solutions (through resource sharing) to eliminate redundancy and maximize resources, all to keep pace with the country's economic growth (Zhang, 2013). The same scholars found that in order to put these resource measures in place, deliberate planning for resource sharing in future systems must occur. Often the solutions are simple, and many organizations are missing integration opportunities due to poor planning.

A specific, practical example of resource sharing is shared warehousing. The goal in shared warehousing is to lower the overall warehousing costs shared between two or more firms (competing or non-competing). Through this effort the firms are able to take advantage of economies of scale, with such shared resources as operators, equipment, systems, and management personnel (Franklin & Spinler, 2011). Much like Uber or Airbnb, these shared warehousing arrangements often arise from a single business unit having insufficient volume for a dedicated facility, or because their products have seasonal or unpredictable demand. In some

situations, a Third Party Logistics Provider (3PL) will run a shared warehouse, fully sharing costs across all users, reducing overhead and average costs (Franklin & Spinler, 2011).

Resource sharing is not a panacea for companies looking to reduce costs and run more effective operations; there are drawbacks. Typical effects of resource sharing are reduced flexibility, and the high level of coordination required between the affected business units with equities in the resource (Govindarajan & Fisher, 1990). By definition, resource sharing implies the resource is not dedicated to a single organization 100% of the time. Shifting operations from using dedicated resources to shared resources inherently results in reduced flexibility to the firm, but if flexibility is not an operational imperative to the business unit, the level of resource sharing should be high (Govindarajan & Fisher, 1990).

In joint business ventures, resource sharing highlights similar effects to business units. The term “joint ventures” refers to any organization formed by the pooling of resources and equities by two or more independent firms to perform a specific supply chain function (Vivek & Richey, 2013). Where resource sharing among joint ventures is high, higher levels of coordination must follow, costing time and money, as well as assuming some reduced flexibility (Vivek & Richey, 2013). Conversely, for business partners who have high levels of commitment and trust, levels of resource sharing and communication increase in positive correlation, resulting in high joint performance.

Resource Sharing in Government

As the sharing economy grows, and commercial industry uses resource sharing to great effect, governments should take advantage of sharing benefits as well. The literature reveals several studies regarding resource sharing applied to government humanitarian and disaster response operations. As with other enterprises, humanitarian relief can benefit from resource

sharing. Eliminating operational silos and sharing critical response resources is essential to optimize resource load and decrease operational response time (Maghsoudi & Pazirandeh, 2016). Much like the commercial industry applications mentioned earlier, humanitarian resource sharing is only possible through robust information sharing and visibility, to know what capabilities may be available.

In the early 2000s, the newly christened Department of Homeland Security (DHS) wanted to develop comprehensive approaches for resource sharing and tied funding to accomplishment of resource sharing objectives (Reinertson, 2005). These measures were developed specifically to create new capabilities for crisis response. Prior to this DHS initiative, individual counties in the state of North Dakota “haphazardly” executed CBRNE response resources, thus creating weak links in the response chain (Reinertson, 2005). To comply with the direction, North Dakota built a plan to have larger fire departments train smaller departments and established mutual aid pacts for certain geographic areas. The state put together a regionally-based response plan with shared responsibilities between the mutually aiding departments. Regionalizing the crisis response in this way allowed the government to consolidate personnel and resources. This plan was staged to yield significant cost savings, had the plan been implemented; it was cancelled due to reasons unexplained.

In a more specific example of crisis response, we can look to a devastating earthquake in Sumatra in 2009. As Setiawan (2016) points out, disasters do not discriminate, and one can destroy civilization wherever it may be. However, the worst effects are usually in those areas with scarce resources and inadequate response capability. When the earthquake hit, local governments were on their own to respond and provide relief. In reviewing the aftermath of the earthquake and the inadequacy of the governments’ response, Setiawan (2016) ran scenarios

through a model that showed pooling vehicles and aid resources into temporary distribution centers ultimately would have reduced overall human suffering tied to the earthquake. The distribution centers allowed centralized control of shared resources, and those resources could be directed to the point of greatest need, maximizing capacity and responsiveness, while minimizing redundancy.

Resource Sharing in the Department of Defense

The DoD is a large organization that accounts for a significant portion of the US Government's discretionary spending. With the increasing deficit, and the potential for reduced military spending, it is imperative the DoD find ways to share resources among its organizations.

An initial example of resource sharing in the DoD is the management of TriCare support contracts. TriCare is a Defense Health Agency program that offers health care plans to uniformed service members and their families. TriCare was initially established in the mid-1990s during a time when there was an effort to reduce overall government healthcare cost associated with Managed Care Support Contracts (McCue, 1996). As part of the program's initiation, an emphasis was placed on Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs). The RSAs would allow the Managed Care Support contractor to work directly with Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) in a variety of ways. There was evidence in many MTFs of under-used resources like clinic space, beds, idle operating rooms, or idle skilled personnel. The sharing agreements allowed the civilian health contractors to treat their referred patients in the MTF. Depending on the individual agreement, the civilian provider could see a TriCare patient in an MTF, or a military provider could see a patient in a civilian facility (McCue, 1996). Arrangements through the RSAs provided ways to maximize government resources, and made care more convenient for non-military family members, who no longer had to travel off-base to see their providers.

A large group whose function is dependent on resource sharing is The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO can be viewed as a type of force sharing arrangement. The purpose of NATO is to “safeguard the security of its members” through the idea of assurance--if one member of the alliance is attacked then other member countries respond (NATO, 2017). Agreements of this kind eliminate the need for every single country to have an enormous military and can greatly reduce defense spending by accepting more risk. Sharing resources among NATO member countries is difficult because each nation has its own budget and tax system, with its own command and control, organizational hierarchy, recruiting system, and manpower management (Peebles, 1988). In 2014 the NATO member countries pledged to increase their defense spending to 2% of their GDPs within the following 10 years (Techau, 2015). The 2% budget requirement represents a commitment to contribute to a type of military resource pool. This collective resource pool then naturally acts as a deterrent to would-be aggressors. Each member nation could (in theory) draw from the NATO resource pool in its defense.

Among the United States CCMDs, resources are generally allocated based on the mission of each command. Among the GCCs, USAFRICOM is the newest, established in 2008. USAFRICOM has very few forces assigned to it. Like the other GCCs, USAFRICOM has service component staffs for each of the military services (Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy). There is resource sharing even at the service component staff level. For example, only US Army Forces Africa (USARAF) is a component fully dedicated to USAFRICOM’s mission. The other three, Air Forces Africa (AFAF), Marine Forces Africa (MARFORAF), and Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF), are all dual-hatted staffs serving multiple commanders. Each component between NAVAF, AFAF, and MARFORAF also fulfill responsibilities as USEUCOM’s service

component staff. On paper, this is the commander their fielded forces support; all of AFAF's assigned forces are assigned to it in its capacity as USEUCOM's Air Force component (United States Air Forces Europe, USAFE), not as USAFRICOM's.

The nature of these divisions leaves USAFRICOM in an under-resourced position; tough decisions must be made every time it needs to resource a mission. There are a number of different processes to resource these missions. First, USAFRICOM looks to forces it currently possesses. If these are inadequate, it then moves to external sourcing. If the mission is temporary, it may "ask" another CCMD for temporary sharing of resources; usually 30 days is the maximum amount of time to borrow a resource. This is normally referred to as a Request for Support (RFS). For USAFRICOM, these borrowed forces traditionally come from USEUCOM and USTRANSCOM. If the mission will be an enduring one, the official Request for Forces (RFF) process is used. To utilize this, USAFRICOM publishes an operational order directing its service components to perform a mission, and the component staffs submit RFFs through USAFRICOM, and ultimately to the Secretary of Defense, for approval. The timeline from submission to force employment through an RFF can be lengthy; an RFS, while temporary, is much shorter.

Specific to USAFRICOM, in an effort to codify the forces and capabilities that are available via RFS from USEUCOM, the two GCCs signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The MOA is known to members of the staff as "The Force Sharing Agreement," and describes the procedures to access each command's various shared capabilities. Without this agreement, USAFRICOM might find it difficult to resource rapid reaction or short-duration missions for which the RFF process would not be responsive enough.

To every organization that uses resources to accomplish objectives, the concept of sharing those resources among various functions is a way to be more efficient. Individuals and

businesses have made it central to some of their operational philosophies in the so-called “sharing economy.” Traditional commercial entities make use of resource sharing in manufacturing plants and their supply chains. The United States Government, across many departments, has planned and implemented various resource sharing strategies in a way to reduce spending and maximize capacity. The DoD likewise seeks for ways to be effective and efficient with its resources while accomplishing its mission. Sharing staff resources and operational capabilities between commands is one of the ways this is currently in use.

It is a fact the DoD has resource sharing constructs and agreements currently in use. However, scholarly literature on the purpose, benefits, evaluation, and future development of DoD resource sharing is lacking. What this research project explores is a specific application of resource sharing in the DoD. This project will add to the bank of literature by investigating some of those known DoD resource sharing constructs and agreements, opening doors for future research. In this particular case, the DoD has found a way to ‘collaboratively consume’ resources by sharing forces across multiple commands, instead of individually assigning more forces to the GCCs.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

During the literature review it became apparent there is a dearth of research concerning resource sharing in the DoD. Absent this foundational research, a grounded theory study, with its focus on qualitative data gathering and theory building, is a good place to begin. Charmaz (2014) was an informative guide in building the research methodology.

The design for data gathering was primarily depth interviews. The sampling of research subjects was not random, but carefully selected. A random sample of subjects would not have been adequate as many people in the potential pool would have been unfamiliar or at least not well-acquainted with the research topic. For example, at the time this research was conducted, the HQ USAFRICOM staff was roughly 1,700 people and comprised of broad areas of responsibility and expertise. Only select offices have the knowledge and operational experience to speak at length on the subject of resource sharing.

To properly address the research questions, an interview guide was developed for submission to key members of HQ USAFRICOM and HQ USEUCOM. This guide provided information to answer questions related to the specific force sharing agreement between the two commands. It was known to the author that HQ USAFRICOM and HQ USEUCOM had extensive experience in the topic of military force sharing and would be uniquely positioned to answer questions relevant to the goal of this project. Research participants were carefully selected members in key positions on the staffs which have direct participation in the planning, ordering, and writing of this particular force sharing agreement. Chosen participants were action officers within the headquarters staffs familiar with operations, logistics, force sharing, and

global force management (GFM). There were a total of 10 participants selected for research participation.

Research Execution

All proposed research participants were contacted either in person, via email, and re-engaged via telephone if necessary, to describe the intent and method of the research, and to gain participant permission to contact them with the interview guide questions. Reference Appendix A for the question listing that was sent with the research solicitation message. The request to participate articulated the research design and purpose and included the interview guide. The solicitation messages were sent via email to all potential participants, however not all were willing to participate. Concerning the combatant command staff participants, eight out of ten respondents acknowledged they would participate in the study. The two who declined to participate did so because they stated they did not know enough about the topic.

Over the course of 4 months, a total of six face-to-face interviews with audio recording were conducted with members of both HQ USAFRICOM and HQ USEUCOM. Two positive respondents declined to be interviewed, but instead offered to participate by answering the interview guide questions in survey form. The mean interview time across all participants was 32 minutes, with a standard deviation of 14.

After all the interviews were accomplished, the audio recordings were transcribed word-for-word to text documents. After all interviews texts were compiled, initial coding began. A general initial coding guide from Charmaz (2014:110-137) was used. Codes were kept simple and short, with actions preserved. The initial codes were then analyzed for individual significance and recurrence among the different research subjects. As the list of initial codes

were condensed, sorted, and filtered, a new list of focused codes emerged. These can be seen in Figure 2 in Chapter IV.

IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Coding

As described in the methodology, initial coding was performed before focused coding began. Initial coding across all data sources yielded 284 total codes, with some of the codes repeating across data sources. Reviewing the initial codes revealed common themes among the responses from the participants. The list of focused codes was developed from these groupings and common themes and is presented in Figure 1.

Code	No. of Occurrences
Force sharing is quicker than GFM/RFF	13
General Officer involvement speeds the process	4
Force sharing is a collection of authorities	5
Force sharing is for short duration/GFM for long term	6
Joint Staff is the adjudicator	3
Force sharing involves risk	13

Figure 1. Focused Codes

Again, Charmaz's explanation of the purpose of focused coding was an excellent guide in capturing the relevant data for analysis (2014: 138-146). Some of the focused codes, compared the number of initial codes, may seem to contain a relatively low number of instances. However, some of the focused codes were listed in Figure 2 due to the occurrences they had across the respondents, and not just the number of total occurrences. The bulk of the analysis that follows centers around each individual focused code.

Force sharing is quicker than GFM/RFF

During the research process, all participants described, in effect, that the CCMDs have several avenues available to them in order to apply forces to each mission. In general terms there are three ways: 1) use assigned forces, 2) submit a request-for-forces (RFF), 3) submit a request for force sharing. Each CCMD is assigned a suite of designated forces with which to accomplish its mission. As each CCMD has unique missions, the assignment of forces is not identical

between them, and varies greatly. USAFRICOM has very few assigned forces. Therefore options 2 and 3 are usually the courses of action taken within that command.

A RFF is typically generated when one of the CCMDs' service component commands receives a mission and determines the forces necessary to execute the mission are not available (either because they are not assigned or not available). The service component command then puts together the RFF, detailing the capability they require, the start and stop dates the capability is needed, and submits it to the CCMD. The CCMD validates it and it goes to the Joint Staff and SECDEF for approval and sourcing. A staff planning factor for most RFFs is 120 days from submission of the requirement to forces on the ground. In some cases that require adjudication, it can be months before the forces are even approved, much less notified to deploy.

With this kind of planning timeline, the CCMDs need a way to source forces faster, especially for short duration missions. Force sharing, as opposed to the GFM and RFF process, according to respondents from both USAFRICOM and USEUCOM, "allows for rapid action." With the right prior coordination, force sharing requests can sometimes be turned in a matter of days. Executing a force sharing request avoids the time-consuming GFM process, requires no Joint Staff adjudication and no Secretary of Defense approval, because it is coordinated between two CCMDs directly. Force sharing is the fastest way for the CCMD to acquire forces to accomplish a specific mission when those forces are not available organically.

General Officer involvement speeds the process

In many cases, force sharing requests can execute without direct involvement from a general officer (GO). Action officers (AO) coordinate with other AOs between the commands to set the groundwork, conduct feasibility assessments, discuss the availability of forces, and the nature and duration of the mission. After AO coordination, RFS documentation is generated by

the service component command that needs the forces, submitted to their CCMD for validation, then transmitted to the supporting CCMD. The supporting CCMD either approves, rejects, or amends the RFS, and publishes orders as necessary to their own service component commands to fulfill the request and generate the forces.

During the entire process outlined above, it is possible to go all the way through with a GO only being briefed that force sharing is necessary, without the GO's direct involvement. However, in some cases, especially with very short-notice requests, or crisis response operations, direct GO to GO communication can greatly speed the process. This is true regardless of the circumstances of the mission or the forces being requested. Force sharing requests coordinated at the AO level alone, while still faster than the GFM process, can take weeks to be approved. But if a GO contacts a GO in another CCMD with a request for force sharing, the request can be approved and executed in a matter of days, potentially even the same day (dependent on the circumstances). General officers in the CCMDs, especially the CCDR, deputy commander, or the Director for Operations (J3), have the authority to issue verbal commands (VOCO) to forces to execute force sharing requests. After the VOCO is given to execute, the staffs follow up the order with the appropriate RFS documentation. The VOCO gives the authorization for forces to move when time is a factor, and action is needed faster than the paper or emails can flow. For those mission requirements where forces needed to be requested and in place in less than a week, one interview participant noted that GO involvement would be "required" to make sure the request received the right amount of attention, in order to "guarantee mission success."

Force sharing is a collection of authorities

During the course of the interview process, it became apparent that no one person was perfectly aware of 100% of the relevant background and source authorities for force sharing. The

majority of the research participants acknowledged that force sharing information was not collected into a “single document” or order, but rather force sharing guidance and authority was contained in several different types of operational orders. In some cases, force sharing authority given in a particular order was later codified further with more detail in a bi-lateral Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between two commands.

Therefore, in the current state, it is not possible for an AO working on a staff to go to a single document or reference to find out what can or cannot be force shared, or for how long. Force sharing authorities come from a variety of orders as mentioned previously. In every RFS the command produces to acquire forces, there should be a reference to a specific order that gives the authority for force sharing for that type of mission, whether it is counter-terrorism, or theater security cooperation, or something else. In the case of USAFRICOM and USEUCOM, there is at least one MOA containing specific guidance on what types of forces can be shared, for what duration, for a specific type of operation. Having this agreement pre-authorizes those named forces for sharing, allows planners a good reference document when performing operational planning, and speeds the process once forces are being requested. One respondent acknowledged “there is no single reference for force sharing guidance,” and “it would help planners to be able to go to one document to get the answer.”

Force sharing is for short duration/GFM is long-term

The results suggest there is a line between when it is appropriate to execute force sharing (via RFS), and when to use the GFM process (via RFF) to acquire forces to perform a mission. All participants acknowledged the force sharing process is generally used for “short duration missions,” regardless of the lead time up to the mission. When planners and their commanders

determine a particular mission will be enduring, the proper route is to acquire forces through the GFM process. Research subjects in this study could not say definitively if there was a rule for the duration of the mission, and where the line between RFS/RFF was, but most agreed the ‘rule of thumb’ was 30 days. For operational requirements lasting less than 30 days, it was appropriate to employ the force sharing route to acquire forces. For requirements longer than 30 days, it was appropriate to submit an RFF.

Some force sharing situations are unique. Especially with crisis response operations, for example, it is plausible a requirement is only expected to last 2 weeks. However, due to the nature of the crisis, the operation extended to 60 days. Originally, force sharing was executed to support this requirement, with the understanding it was a short duration mission. Additionally, because of the no-notice nature of the crisis, it was understood the GFM process was not responsive enough to get troops on the ground in time to be effective. Once the mission approached the 30-day mark, the supporting and supported CCMDs stay in contact and discuss the operation. During this coordination, it is possible to extend the 30-day limit for an additional 30 days, or even longer, provided the supporting commander’s other priorities are not suffering due to the lack of forces. Extensions can be granted, but they are not always guaranteed. One respondent noted that without a force sharing mechanism, it would be “next to impossible” for USAFRICOM to successfully complete many of its short-term missions.

Joint Staff is the adjudicator

Normally, force sharing requests are coordinated and executed between two CCMDs without the need for the Joint Staff to be involved. In some operational orders however, the Joint Staff may include a line concerning force sharing, indicating the CCMDs are to “keep the Joint Staff informed” when forces are shared, noting what type and for how long. Multiple research

participants noted during their interviews that sometimes a CCMD would go to another CCMD with a force sharing request, but for whatever reason that request would be denied, or alternate execution dates would be negotiated. The supported CCMD in that situation would be dissatisfied with the answer, saying the forces were needed in line with their original request. The two CCMDs would then be at an impasse, but since the supporting CCMD owned the forces being requested, the CCDR was under no binding obligation to provide the forces.

When a situation like this arises, if the supported CCMD is adamant the forces requested for sharing are absolutely essential, they can appeal to the Joint Staff for help in adjudicating the force sharing request. The Joint Staff would then review the nature of the request and priority of the mission, and the justification of both CCMDs concerning the request. The adjudicator would make a decision with the authority to either deny or approve the sharing request. If the force sharing request was approved by the Joint Staff, they could publish an order to the supporting CCMD telling them to provide the forces. The opposite could also happen; in reading the justification of the supporting CCMD on why they could not share forces, the Joint Staff could inform the supported CCMD force sharing was not appropriate for that requirement at that time.

Participants acknowledged the Joint Staff also “adjudicates” all RFFs submitted by the supported CCDR. The Joint Staff receives those RFFs, reviews and validates them, and determines force allocation with the military services. Since the Secretary of Defense approves (or denies) all force allocation decisions in the GFM process, the Joint Staff vets those requests and packages them prior to Secretary of Defense review.

Two participants brought up an additional concern with this code. They noted while the Joint Staff adjudicates “the impasses,” there is currently no mechanism to show the Joint Staff how often forces are shared, for what purpose, and for how long. Their point was they thought it

would be useful information for the Joint Staff to see, for instance, how often USEUCOM had forces shared to USAFRICOM, in order to “paint the picture” of the need for forces across the CCMDs. Their concern was the Joint Staff may not be aware of how often force sharing was being exercised, and if they were, it would provide good information that could affect the future division of forces among the commands.

Force sharing involves risk

One of the two most frequently occurring themes revealed during coding was the idea that force sharing involves risk. The force assignment tables in the GFM Implementation Guidance (GFMIG), in addition to the Forces for Unified Commands memo, inform the DoD what commands are assigned which forces (*JP 5-0*, 2017). As noted previously in this study, the unified commands use these forces to conduct their assigned missions. Forces are not split evenly, but specifically tailored to the workload and nature of each unique CCMD.

Risk is inherent in force sharing because, by definition, it means one CDR is giving forces to another command for a purpose which they were not originally assigned or allocated. Therefore, the decision for a supporting CDR on whether or not to share forces involves an assessment of risk to his own mission. Compounding the risk decision is the fact many of the force sharing requests ask for forces that are HD/LD. This means exactly how it sounds; the forces are frequently used or requested, but there are not enough to go around.

The CCMDs are not resourced to perform a sister command’s mission in addition to their own. When an RFS is filled by a supporting CDR, that command accepts risk (whether it is high, low or negligible) having their own forces gone for the duration of the force sharing. One study participant showed sometimes force sharing requests are granted with the caveat that

should a higher priority requirement present itself in the supporting CCDR's area of responsibility (AOR), the commander can pull back the forces for the higher priority.

Tough decisions are made by commanders every day concerning the force sharing between commands. The CCDRs and their staffs have to balance a global enterprise view, and overall DoD mission accomplishment, with accepting amounts of risk in their own AOR when they make decisions about whether or not to share forces. As an example, fighter aircraft are requested by USAFRICOM to conduct 30 days of strikes in their AOR. The nature of the request requires repositioning them to a base somewhere in Africa. The USEUCOM commander then must make a decision whether or not to accept risk by sending fighters out of his AOR for 30 days, degrading his own capability during that time. However, the USEUCOM commander knows USAFRICOM does not have the forces organically and their mission is a valid one. Two respondents informed that much of what operational planners do is "communicate risk to the commander," and whenever shared forces are "out-of-pocket" for any length time, it represents risk taken that the commander should know about.

Dual-hatted component commands

While not a specific focused code, each interview conducted in the course of this research led to a discussion on the nature of the dual-hatted service component commands between USEUCOM and USAFRICOM. USAFRICOM had only one service component commander (and staff) who was wholly dedicated to USAFRICOM: U.S. Army Forces Africa (USARAF). Special Operations Command Africa (SOCAF) was also dedicated to AFRICOM, but it is not a service component command. The Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps service component commands are dual-hatted, serving both USAFRICOM and USEUCOM. While the forces

assigned to those commands are assigned specifically to USEUCOM or USAFRICOM, the commander and his HQ staff frequently find themselves with competing priorities.

This topic during the interviews highlighted this is another example of force sharing in the DoD. Instead of each CCMD having their own dedicated service component command, decisions were made to save resources by having the service component commander and his or her staff serve both CCMDs. This decision, like the previously discussed focused code, entails risk. This risk includes the service component commander having to balance priorities, decision-making, and planning bandwidth to one CDR or the other. It is a lot to balance day to day. Action officers on the planning staffs at either CCMD sometimes feel they do not have their service component command's full attention, assuming they may be getting pulled in a different direction by the other CCMD. This leaves the component commands in difficult situations, balancing priorities for two CDRs. Multiple respondents indicated whenever they encountered a perceived "lack of support" from one of their dual-hatted component commands, sometimes it would be instantly assumed they were working priorities for their other CCMD.

In some cases, dual-hatted component commands can be an advantage, especially in terms of force sharing. Sometimes a service component command's feasibility assessment on whether or not they have assets to share was an easy decision, as they were essentially being asked to borrow from themselves. For example, if USAFRICOM had a requirement for fighters to respond to a crisis, it assigned the mission to Air Forces Africa (AFAF). Being dual-hatted, the AFAF planning staff (and commander) are also United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE). The same planners at the service component headquarters staff who received the mission know they will need to execute force sharing to fill the requirement. Because they are familiar with both AORs, they know where to go to access fighters in USAFE, and the feasibility

assessment is conducted very quickly. Then it is only a matter of receiving approval from USEUCOM to share the forces or not.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research Conclusions

The focused codes detailed in Chapter IV of this study accumulate a representation of some of the collected knowledge of force sharing at the AO level in a CCMD. At the end of the study, it was clear all the relevant knowledge of force sharing did not rest with a single person or single office. Each research participant knew of certain pieces of the entire force sharing construct at large but could not articulate a comprehensive DoD view. The specific force sharing arrangement between USAFRICOM and USEUCOM may be unique within the DoD, especially given the close geographic proximity of the AORs.

While each participant acknowledged there was room for improvement in the force sharing authorities and agreements, each also acknowledged the current construct seemed to be “working well” for both commands. For the most part, forces were being acquired and used where needed, and missions were being accomplished. The authority pushed from the Secretary of Defense through the Joint Staff to the CCMDs for force sharing was serving its purpose and was being utilized often.

Conducting this study clarified the decision process on what methods and mechanisms USAFRICOM uses to acquire forces when organic capabilities were not available or not sufficient. Figure 2 shows a decision tree of the options and applicable criteria.

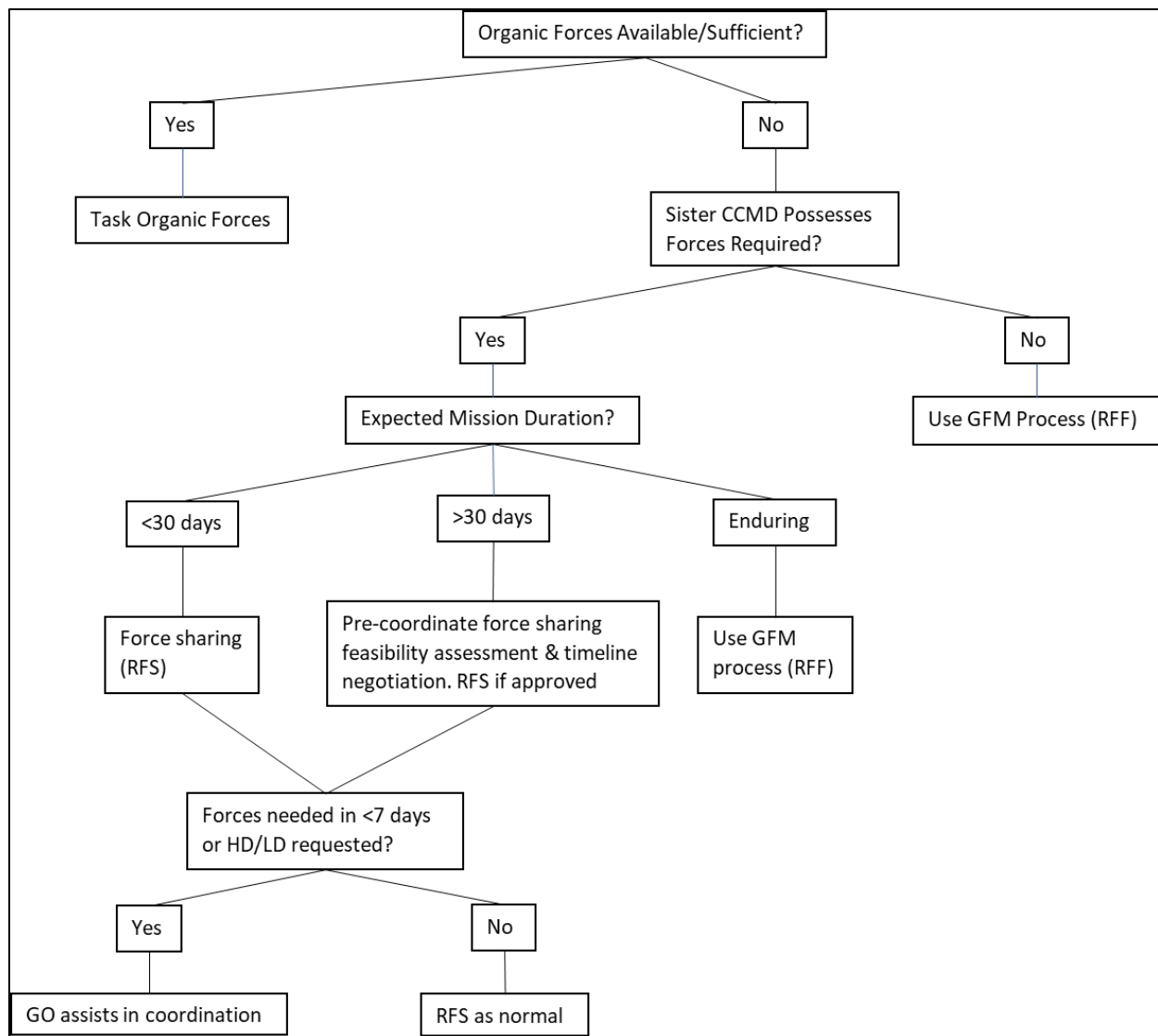


Figure 2. Forces Decision Tree

Significance of Research

The decision tree in Figure 2 can aid AOs working at USAFRICOM in making decisions or conducting operational planning involving force sharing. Learning the intricacies of the GFM process and the mechanism of force sharing can take an entire tour at the CCMD staff. The decision tree can cut down on that time significantly. That decision tree could be used by the deliberate planners in the J5, logistics planners in the J4, and operational staff and planners in the J3.

The study made clear that force sharing between the CCMDs is the quickest way to acquire forces. However, force sharing has limits on the duration those shared forces can be used. The lead time to acquire those shared forces can also be reduced even further by coordinating for a GO to champion the request. This research additionally showed that people familiar with the force sharing process thought it involved risk. This was primarily a “risk to mission” for those supporting CCDRs who approved forces to share with the supported CCDR. Between USAFRICOM and USEUCOM, while the force sharing authorities were bi-lateral, anecdotally it is usually USEUCOM sharing forces to USAFRICOM. In each case, commanders conducted feasibility and risk assessments to determine how much risk to their own mission they were willing to accept when giving forces to USAFRICOM. As previously stated, each command is resourced with a set of forces unique to their mission set and AOR. Removing forces from that theater results in risk taken in those mission sets for which those forces were originally assigned.

This study also highlights some of the difficulties associated with dual-hatted commanders and staffs. Those entities frequently find themselves in situations where determining their priorities can be tough, and possibly feeling they lack the staff and decision-making bandwidth to support both CCDR’s battle rhythms and priorities simultaneously. It is possible each CCMD feels they would be best supported by a single dedicated service component command, yet the dual-hatting of these commanders represents another way the DoD has gained some efficiencies similar to the sharing economy. They have taken resources and recognized a situation where it made sense to dual-purpose them. The results may not be optimal for mission execution, but it represents a significant personnel and resource efficiency gained.

Recommendations for Action

During the course of the study, opportunities for action revealed themselves in ways to improve force sharing and acquisition of forces. While the research did not clearly reveal a complete view of every step in the GFM or force sharing process, two areas for action were identified.

First, several research participants expressed that even though the force sharing process was faster than submitting an RFF, it could be even more responsive. Sometimes they felt like unnecessary bureaucracy “slowed the process,” or AOs that were coordinating on the request were “taking too long to get it to the next staff action.” One way to solve this might be to attach time standards within any specific force sharing agreements or orders that give authority for force sharing. Two participants said there should be a very specific list of the most requested capabilities that could be on a “fast-track approval” process of some kind, to cut down on staff churn to generate the forces. Another suggestion was some kind of technological solution where instead of emailing RFS documents or waiting for official Automated Message Handling System messages to be delivered, requests could be submitted in a Sharepoint or Workflow type of system that would allow for rapid coordination and tracking of requests. Another suggestion was to review the Time-Phased Force Deployment Data (TPFDD) Letters of Instruction (LOI) in the CCMDs and annotate time standards for force sharing requests in those directives. Specific guidance on how to submit force sharing requests, and what kinds of data is needed in those requests could be specified within the TPFDD LOIs.

The second area for action is for the body at a higher echelon than the CCMDs that writes their directive guidance. At the Joint Staff or Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) level, GFM guidance could be consolidated. Every research participant noted that force sharing

guidance was not contained in a single document or reference, but it was spread across a vast web of governing directives and operational orders. This leaves AOs to hunt for the right directive document for their force sharing request for a specific mission type. If GFM and force sharing guidance could be consolidated into a single publication of some kind, AOs and planners would have an easier time producing plans and orders, and they would not have to hunt through references to see if force sharing was authorized for a particular type of mission.

Recommendations for Future Research

Only one item for future research was identified through this study. It was the feeling of most USAFRICOM participants that USAFRICOM did not possess adequate forces to execute the missions it frequently undertook. Without suitable organic forces, this leaves USAFRICOM with no choice but to submit an RFF or RFS for the majority of its activities on the continent. If DoD leadership is not already aware, it might help to have the data to show a comparison of all the missions USAFRICOM undertook year to year and what forces were required for each activity. Then research could show how USAFRICOM acquired forces for those missions. This could exhibit how many times USAFRICOM asked USEUCOM for forces, when those forces were granted, how often and for how long those USEUCOM forces were away from their primary mission. It would be relevant to know this given what the study previously discussed about CCDRs accepting risk when choosing to share their forces. If every decision to share forces represents risk taken, a CCDR might want to know over the course of a given year, how much risk they were actually assuming over time by sharing forces. It would also help to know how many requests for force sharing were denied, and the impact of the denial on the intended mission. This would also paint a picture to the Joint Staff and OSD that one command or another may not be adequately resourced for its responsibilities.

Appendix A: Interview Guide

- 1) How effective is the resource sharing agreement with EUCOM?
- 2) What are the positive and negative outcomes associated with the resource sharing agreement with EUCOM?
- 3) How does the EUCOM force sharing agreement compare to the standard RFF process?
What are the comparative advantages and disadvantages?
- 4) What improvements can be made to the way AFRICOM acquires joint logistics enabling capabilities?
- 5) What is the current agreement lacking?
- 6) What are some of the ways your command shares resources with the rest of the DoD?
- 7) What types of resources are typically shared?
- 8) What types of resources have the highest demand?
- 9) Can you give an example of resource sharing 'gone wrong'?
- 10) Can you give an example of resource sharing 'gone right'?
- 11) What could a better logistics resourcing pooling framework for GCCs look like?

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Vita

Major Brett J. Messer graduated from the Leavenworth Senior High School in Leavenworth, Kansas. He entered undergraduate studies at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Behavioral Science and was commissioned a 2d Lieutenant in May 2008.

His first assignment was at Columbus AFB as a student in Undergraduate Pilot Training in August 2008. In November 2008, as a Logistics Readiness Officer, he was assigned to the 721st Aerial Port Squadron, Ramstein AB, Germany where he served as duty officer and flight commander. After serving as the Wing Executive Officer in the 521st Air Mobility Operations Wing, he was assigned to the 92d Logistics Readiness Squadron, Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. During his assignment at Fairchild, he was Materiel Management Flight Commander, Deployment & Distribution Flight Commander, and completed a deployment as an airlift requirements planner in the Combined Air Operations Center in Southwest Asia.

His next assignment was to the HQ USAFRICOM staff in Stuttgart, Germany, where he was an operational logistics planner in the J3, a battle captain in the Joint Logistics Operations Center, and a staff officer in the J4. After the combatant command staff tour, he was assigned as the squadron Director of Operations at the 39th Logistics Readiness Squadron in Incirlik AB, Turkey.

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14. ABSTRACT The purpose of this research was to examine the structures and mechanisms for how the Department of Defense shares resources among its combatant commands and identify areas for improvement. This graduate research project sought to answer research questions describing how combatant commands share resources, specifically how agreements between USAFRICOM and USEUCOM facilitate force sharing, and how that structure is performing. The research questions were answered through a grounded theory study, consisting of depth interviews and survey of action officers within USAFRICOM and USEUCOM. The research identified force sharing between USAFRICOM and USEUCOM was vital in the accomplishment of USAFRICOM's missions. Additionally, force sharing and the dual-hatting of some service component commands represent personnel and resource efficiencies within the Department of Defense. Research revealed force sharing is intended to be short in duration, responsive, and is an essential tool for acquiring forces, but it also involves risk. The research culminated in the development of a decision tree for operational planners to determine when to execute force sharing or Global Force Management processes. Several recommendations for action and future research are outlined.					
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