



NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**SHARED HISTORY, SHARED MISSIONS, MAXIMIZED
INTEROPERABILITY: BEST PRACTICES FOR USSOF
AND THE CIA**

by

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December 2018

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INTEROPERABILITY: BEST PRACTICES FOR USSOF AND THE CIA**

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ABSTRACT

Since the Global War on Terrorism began, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) have been engaged in a collaborative partnership within United States Country Teams. With a shared history, including shared successes, the two organizations have experienced mission overlap, with United States Special Operations Forces (USSOF) sometimes participating in intelligence collection, and the CIA on occasion conducting more kinetic operations. Opportunities for operational overlap have helped both organizations, allowing increased mission success through increased location access, augmented numbers, shared resources, and other benefits that aid their performance. However, areas of friction also exist, including in communications platforms, Title 10 and Title 50 authorities, and lack of awareness of each other's organizational norms. This thesis details the shared history starting before World War II, examines the policies that uphold both, and conducts interviews with USSOF and CIA personnel, including those at the Naval Postgraduate School's Defense Analysis Department. This thesis finds several positive benefits from USSOF and CIA collaboration and identifies key areas of potential friction so as to document best practices for maximized interoperability that support national security interests.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADCI/MS	Associate Director of Central Intelligence for Military Support
ADDO/MA	Associate Deputy Director of Operations for Military Affairs
ADMA	Associate Director of Military Affairs
APC	Armored Personnel Carriers
AQ	Al-Qaeda
ASD (SO/LIC)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict
BDA	Battle Damage Assessment
C2	Command and Control
CA	Civil Affairs
CA	Covert Action
CALL	Center for Army Lessons Learned
CENTCOM	Central Command
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Groups
CIG	Central Intelligence Group
COC	Chain of Command
COI	Coordinator of Information
COM	Chief of Mission
COS	Chief of Station
CT	Counterterrorism
CTC	Counterterrorism Center
CWMD	Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction
DA	Defense Analysis
DATT	Defense Attaché
DCIA	Director of the Central Intelligence Agency
DDCI	Deputy Director for Central Intelligence
DHS	Defense HUMINT Services
DNI	National Intelligence Director
DO	Director of Operations

DoD	Department of Defense
DOS	Department of State
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
GCC	Geographic Combatant Commander
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
HN	Host Nation
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
IC21	Intelligence Community in the 21 st Century
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JTF	Joint Task Force
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel
MACV	Military Advisory Group in Vietnam
MFP	Major Force Program
MLE	Military Liaison Element
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NDS	National Defense Strategy
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIC	National Intelligence Center
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
NRO	National Reconnaissance Organization
NSS	National Security Strategy
NSW	Naval Special Warfare
ODA	Operational Detachment Alpha
ODE	Operational Detachment Echo
ODG	Operational Detachment Gulf
OG	Operational Groups
OMA	Office of Military Affairs
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSS	Office of Strategic Services

PRU	Provincial Reconnaissance Units
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
RAND	Research and Development
RAO	Regional Affairs Office
SFG	Special Forces Group
SI	Secret Intelligence Branch
SIDS	Secondary Imagery Dissemination System
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service
SO	Special Operations Branch
SOCOM	Special Operations Command
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SOF	Special Operations Forces
TSOC	Theatre Special Operations Command
UN	United Nations
USCT	United States Country Team
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
USSOF	United States Special Operations Forces
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VEOs	Violent Extremist Organizations

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since the onset of the Global War on Terrorism, U.S. Special Operations Forces (USSOF) has assumed roles of increased responsibility in a wide range of operations. Many USSOF roles require that personnel work in concert with non- Department of Defense (DoD) partners such as host nation (HN) allies, U.S. Embassy country teams (USCTs), non-governmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations to include the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). USSOF and the CIA often experience mission overlap, which can positively impact the mission. Over the past 17 years, USSOF and CIA operations have primarily, but not exclusively, focused on implementing counterterrorism (CT) practices, fighting violent extremist organizations (VEOs) and affiliates, and countering weapons of mass destruction (CWMD). The raid that killed Osama bin Laden, for example, on May 2, 2011, demonstrates USSOF and CIA's ability to collaborate—leveraging capabilities to achieve strategic, operational, and tactical objectives. Partnerships between USSOF and the CIA often result in increased mission success through a common operating picture regarding global threats; personnel also build interagency trust and increase awareness of others' tasks and organizational norms, but increased mission success requires high levels of collaboration and communication to reduce any friction areas.¹

By examining recent successes resulting from collaboration and operational overlap, USSOF and the CIA can gain understanding of best practices to improve communication, maximize interoperability, and optimize capabilities for mission accomplishment. Primarily, areas of friction between USSOF and CIA fall into three categories: issues of legal authorities since the two organizations operate under, respectively, Title 10 and Title 50 authorities; communications issues, including those resulting from different communications platforms; and information sharing issues, and

¹ Erik Eaton et al., *Supporting Persistent and Networked Special Operations Forces (SOF) Operations: Insights from Forward-Deployed SOF Personnel* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2017), https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1300/RR1333/RAND_RR1333.pdf.

lack of awareness of each other's organizational norms. Currently, USSOF and the CIA need to increase their collaboration and to deconflict ongoing efforts between each organization due to the increased demand for USSOF to enforce and execute U.S. policy worldwide in areas where the CIA maintains long-lasting relationships with host-nation partners. Other opportunities for domain crossover have resulted from the Global War on Terrorism with USSOF shifting focus to intelligence operations and the CIA assuming more kinetically-oriented roles in addition to their traditional areas of specialty.

With missions only increasing in sensitive, permissive, and non-permissive environments, USSOF elements will have increasing exposure to operations historically dominated by the CIA. Increased demand on USSOF has amplified the U.S. Special Operations Command's (USSOCOM) operational tempo; in 2017, USSOF deployed to roughly 70 percent of the world's nations, operating in 138 countries to counter state and non-state actors.² USSOF often employs a small-footprint mode of operation, relying on highly trained professionals to collaborate with a variety of actors. USSOF teams, including Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alpha (ODA), U.S. Special Forces Operational Detachment – Golf and Echo (ODG&E), and teams from Naval Special Warfare (NSW), Civil Affairs (CA), and Psychological Operations (PSYOPs) all deploy and work in small groups to integrate with their host nation counterparts. This small-footprint approach is an efficient means for USSOF to address the underlying causes of instability in locations critical to U.S. national security interests while minimizing the presence of military personnel.

Simultaneously, since 9/11, as USSOF has necessarily shifted focus and increased operational tempo, the CIA has undergone a fundamental transformation. Rather than a strict focus on gathering intelligence and providing analysis for strategic decision makers, the Global War on Terror and other threats have meant a dramatically increased presence

² Nick Turse, "Americas Special Ops Forces Have Deployed to 70 Percent of the World's Countries in 2017: and We're Only Halfway through the Year," *The Nation*, June 26, 2017, <https://www.thenation.com/article/american-special-ops-forces-have-deployed-to-70-percent-of-the-worlds-countries-in-2017/>.

in tactical kill and capture operations for the CIA.³ Emerging CIA missions relate to foreign internal defense, CT, and building partner nation capacity, which form the traditional USSOF core tasks. Notably, CIA personnel from the Agency's Special Activities Center expanded their scope of activities to include training host-nation militias, as in Afghanistan.⁴ As USSOF and the CIA continue to shape future operational environments, their lines of effort will continue to blend and merge, intensifying the need for coherent cooperation, education, communication methods.

Regardless of challenges, the interactions and relationships USSOF and CIA elements have fostered over the last two decades have proved critical to current and future operational success. "Developing and operating with [interagency] partners is a long-term endeavor that requires a sustained commitment to produce the desired results."⁵ While USSOF plays a critical role in countering current and emerging threats, USSOF cannot operate in isolation and requires specific government partnerships to address interrelated issues that cut across Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) boundaries.⁶ The need for mutual best operating practices between USSOF and CIA is critically essential to avoid potential friction points and for optimizing effectiveness to address national security concerns.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

Given current and likely future U.S. national security requirements, how can the United States Special Operations Command and the Central Intelligence Agency integrate their best practices to maximize interoperability in achieving policy objectives? By

³ Greg Miller and Julie Tate, "CIA Shifts Focus to Killing Targets," *The Washington Post*, September 1, 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/cia-shifts-focus-to-killing-targets/2011/08/30/gIQA7MZGvJ_story.html?utm_term=.bc954998cf10.

⁴ Miller and Tate, "CIA Shifts Focus to Killing Targets."

⁵ Linda Robinson, *The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces, Council Special Report No. 66*, Council on Foreign Relations, accessed October 3, 2018, https://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/Special_Operations_CSR66.pdf, 16.

⁶ *U.S. Special Operations Command: Testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Armed Services*, 115th Cong. (2017) (statement of Raymond A. Thomas, III, U.S. Army Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command), https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Thomas_05-04-17.pdf.

examining how USSOF and the CIA leverage mutual assets and capabilities to achieve overall mission accomplishment, the research aims to identify best practices to enhance their communication, improve unity of actions, and increase levels of interoperability. The study presumes that increased interoperability will enhance the capacity of both organizations to accomplish U.S. national security objectives.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

With very little formal analysis on the partnership between USSOF and the CIA, this literature review provides background on four relevant areas: the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the National Defense Strategy (NDS), improvements to the Global SOF Network, operational overlap, and Title 10 and Title 50 authorities.

1. The National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy

USSOCOM and the CIA both rely on the NSS and the NDS for determining lines of effort and priorities of action, which has led to efforts to decrease the resulting mission overlap between the two organizations. One specific area of the NSS that directly incorporates USSOF and CIA capabilities is the pursuit of threats to the U.S. at their sources of origin. The threats posed by Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) continue to be a high priority for policymakers when addressing U.S. national security. Both USSOF and the CIA play vital roles in countering Al-Qaeda (AQ), the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), and other extremist organizations in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Libya, the Sahel region of Africa, the Philippines, and Central and South America.⁷

However, before 2001, USSOF CT missions lacked reliable and timely intelligence to drive missions, leading USSOF units to collect more operational intelligence through human intelligence (HUMINT), an area that has been historically dominated by the CIA. Conversely, the CIA began increasing kinetic operations, acting on field intelligence and drone assets, creating a duplication of efforts between the two organizations. To remedy the duplication of efforts, USSOF units developed interagency teams in Washington D.C.

⁷ Thomas, testimony on U.S. Special Operations Command, 6.

to utilize all available U.S. intelligence sources needed to support operations.⁸ Co-locating personnel from each of the intelligence agencies proved highly successful at flattening communications across the interagency community and USSOF commands conducting operations on the ground.⁹

2. Improvements to the Global SOF Network

Based on these successes, USSOCOM developed a framework centered on improving the Global SOF Network to address transnational issues, which focused on three supporting elements: small footprints and low-level presence, responsiveness, and capacity building.¹⁰ According to Szayna and Welser IV, “low-level presence consists of small deployed teams that deter aggression, and enable SOF to attain situational awareness, and understand local conditions, shape the operational environment, train new partners, and gain actionable intelligence.”¹¹ Responsiveness “enables SOF to respond rapidly to terrorist attacks, hostage situations, assaults on U.S. embassies, and other contingencies that may erupt with little or no warning.”¹² Finally, regional USSOF capacity building consists of embedding USSOF in an interagency network that enables USSOF contacts to focus on security issues and support local partners to develop USSOF capabilities and increase coordination and interoperability between USSOF and their international USSOF partners.¹³ Although the Global SOF Network successfully increased USSOCOM’s integration with host nation partners, several challenges emerged as USSOF began expanding operations within areas that historically only leveraged DoS and the CIA to achieve U.S. policy objectives.

⁸ Christopher Lamb, “Global SOF and Interagency Collaboration.” *Journal of Strategic Security* 7, no. 2, (Summer 2014): 8–20, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.7.2.2>.

⁹ Lamb, “Global SOF and Interagency Collaboration.”

¹⁰ Thomas S. Szayna and William Welser IV, *Developing and Assessing Options for the Global SOF Network* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR340.html, 1.

¹¹ Szayna and Welser IV, *Developing and Assessing Options for the Global SOF Network*, 1.

¹² Szayna and Welser IV, 1.

¹³ Szayna and Welser IV, 5.

While working in Washington D.C., USSOF interagency teams collaborated with the CIA and other government organizations to fill intelligence gaps for current and future operations. The mutual exchange of resources helped facilitate trust between USSOF personnel and their counterparts, which led to greater success in accomplishing missions. Anyone with system permission can access the information added to the Global SOF Network, designed to prevent data from becoming compartmentalized or inaccessible, and improve information sharing. There is inherent trust built into using the Global SOF Network because all users strive for the same U.S. policy goals.

During the expansion of the Global SOF Network, USSOCOM personnel expanded their operations by placing USSOF at U.S. Embassies throughout GCCs to support the initiative and complement successes of interagency integration. Former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld, beginning in the early 2000s, expanded USSOF's role to give the DoD a more active position in intelligence gathering and military targeting outside of traditional war zones. USSOF personnel operating within embassy military liaison elements provide small teams to the Chief of Mission (COM) and USCTs to gather intelligence and assist in direct and indirect CT operations traditionally conducted by the CIA. In most U.S. embassies, the DoD does not have a conventional military presence outside the DATT, which requires USSOF personnel to operate under the approval of the DATT and COM. The approval requirement ensures that USSOF operations are transparent and have full sponsorship from the ambassador.¹⁴ With USCT and GCC approval, USSOF personnel are permitted to advise, assist, train, and equip foreign troops to combat terrorism threats at the local level.¹⁵ USSOF personnel filling new positions in USCTs created an operational overlap with CIA operations, which forced the two entities to examine respective roles and demonstrated duplication of efforts in the process.

¹⁴ Kashkett, Steven. "Special Operations and Diplomacy: A Unique Nexus." *The Foreign Service Journal*, no. 6 (June 2017): 1–10, <http://www.afsa.org/special-operations-and-diplomacy-unique-nexus>.

¹⁵ Suzanne Goldenberg, "Special Forces Assigned to U.S. Embassies," *The Guardian*, March 8, 2006, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/mar/09/usa.suzannegoldenberg>.

3. Operational Overlap

The growing USSOF role outside of traditional war zones increased concerns about mission responsibility between the DoD and the CIA due to overlapping operational requirements. CIA personnel under the Chief of Station (CoS) authority conducted intelligence operations.¹⁶ With the introduction of USSOCOM driven intelligence operations, USSOF military liaison elements (MLE) received separate authority to conduct operational preparation of the environment (OPE) through active and passive intelligence collection, which placed a strain on DoD and CIA relationships.¹⁷ It became advantageous for the CIA to cooperate with USSOF units because USSOCOM is the only DoD component directed by law to plan and conduct CT operations.¹⁸ However, despite the potential for and advantages of collaborative work, the organizations' authorities fostered a competitive environment over finite resources that led to limited information sharing. Additionally, USSOF and the CIA sometimes have differing ideas on how to use intelligence for targeting and exploitation. The CoS has responsibility over all intelligence collection efforts and has the authority to determine when to share information with DoD liaisons, and can prevent USSOF intelligence operations from potentially crossing into CIA equities.

4. Title 10 and Title 50 Authorities

Another layer of ambiguity between USSOF and CIA involves Title 10 and Title 50 authorities, which provide funding, permissions, oversight, and transparency to military and intelligence agency operations.¹⁹ Policymakers and the interagency community have concerns that the military's increased intelligence operations role takes from the CIA's

¹⁶ Suzanne Goldenberg, "Special Forces Assigned to U.S. Embassies."

¹⁷ David Ignatius, "The Blurring of CIA and Military," *The Washington Post*, June 1, 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-blurring-of-cia-and-military/2011/05/31/AGsLhkGH_story.html?utm_term=.07bbd9722c86.

¹⁸ John M. Collins, "Special Operations Forces in Peacetime." *Joint Forces Quarterly: JFQ*; Spring 1999; <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a282476.pdf>, 21.

¹⁹ Andru Wall, "Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate: Distinguishing Military Operations, Intelligence Activities & Covert Action," *Harvard National Security Journal Vol 3*, no.1 (2011): 87, <http://harvardnsj.org/2011/12/demystifying-the-title-10-title-50-debate-distinguishing-military-operations-intelligence-activities-covert-action/>, 87.

“rice bowl” by expanding its HUMINT capabilities under the guise of Title 10.²⁰ Intelligence-related operations are traditionally the responsibility of the CoS in USCTs, and the overlap of operations between the military and intelligence community and the blurring of lines between Title 10 and Title 50 authorities create bureaucratic infighting over scarce resources and operational primacy in a given area.²¹ Overlap of USSOF and CIA activities necessitates greater coordination and deconfliction between the organizations with a clear understanding of permissions through Title 10 and Title 50 authorities.

5. Conclusion

With the changing nature of conflict around the world, USSOF and particularly U.S. Army SOF (ARSOF) units shifted focus from kinetic CT operations to higher levels of non-kinetic operations in the human domain that have crossed into traditional CIA lanes.²² The evolution of “operations outside designated war zones, moreover, will necessitate greater collaboration [between interagency and] foreign forces, particularly foreign SOF”.²³ For this reason, a partnership with the CIA is crucial for effective collaboration and avoiding duplication of effort, as well as for maximizing efficiency to meet mission requirements. Increased efforts to enhance interoperability will improve outcomes for both USSOCOM and the CIA.

D. METHODOLOGY

This thesis explores how USSOF and the CIA can improve collaboration and reduce areas of friction that regard capabilities, authorities, and information gaps. The thesis details and describes the two organizations' shared history then utilizes interview

²⁰ Wall, “Demystifying the Title 10-Title 50 Debate,” 89–90.

²¹ Wall, 89.

²² Christopher Lamb, “Global SOF and Interagency Collaboration,” *Journal of Strategic Security* 7, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 8–20. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.7.2.2>, 14.

²³ Thomas and Dougherty, “Beyond the Ramparts: The Future of U.S. Special Operations Forces.” May 10, 2013, <https://csbaonline.org/research/publications/beyond-the-ramparts-the-future-of-u-s-special-operations-forces>, 80.

responses from both USSOF and CIA personnel to analyze previous successes and to discover opportunities for improvements.

The thesis's research team conducted extensive research and also interviews with USSOCOM and CIA personnel that have previous experience working in an interagency environment and joint capacity. From USSOCOM, the research analysis focused on Theatre Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) that filled positions as Special Operations Liaison Officers (SOLO), Special Operations Forces Liaison Elements (SOFLE) or MLEs to conduct Theatre Security Cooperation Plans (TSCP) and campaign activities by, with, and through USCTs or as a part of a Joint Task Force (JTF). The research also focused on CIA personnel who operated within Embassy Regional Affairs Offices (RAO) and other directorates that worked jointly with USSOCOM forces. All interviews focused on understanding best practices and friction points during joint USSOCOM and CIA operations by examining examples of USSOF and CIA successfully integrating capabilities for operational success.

USSOF officers studying in the Defense Analysis (DA) Department at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) provided valuable information regarding USCT integration and USSOF operations. DA students delivered relevant and recent knowledge, which illuminated the nuances and inter-workings of USCTs from various viewpoints. Interviews with multiple personnel within the CIA, both domestic and abroad, provided the research team with a more rounded perspective of future USSOF-CIA integration. Interviews with personnel from various regionally-focused backgrounds provided opportunities to analyze an extensive variety of experiences within the field.

Personal interviews providing first-hand accounts of USSOF-CIA cooperation were also the ideal means to collect recent, applicable data. The research team used a list of questions to guide the interviews; however, interviewees had the flexibility to expound on any topic if they chose to do so. The research team conducted over 20 total interviews with experienced professionals to ensure a variety of responses, with the goal of identifying patterns and commonalities that pertain to information sharing, operating procedures, and field operations.

The research team also examined other sources of information on USSOF and CIA interoperability including open source analysis of case studies, historical vignettes illustrating both success and failures in stateside and forward deployed joint operations. The research team collected additional open-source documentation through the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) reports and Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) library releases. From these reports, the research team attempted to extract examples of USSOCOM and CIA cooperation through all phases of operations to examine mission overlap and duplication of effort.

The research team vetted all data—to include interviews, case studies, and post-operation reports—to ensure accuracy and relevance in supporting the research question, and compared findings from each interview to determine how USSOCOM can better prepare forces likely to interact with the CIA in future operations. The research team hopes to provide best practices that contribute to USSOF and CIA interoperability and that can help reduce areas of friction between the two organizations.

E. CHAPTER OUTLINE

This thesis examines the history of USSOF and CIA integration and interoperability to identify areas of friction and best practices between each organization. Chapter II highlights the inception and successes between USSOF and the CIA starting pre-World War II and through the Vietnam War. Chapter III then highlights the organizational changes that later took place—following the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the first Gulf War, and the conclusion of the Cold War, through 9/11, and the commencement of the GWOT—that established the conditions for modern USSOF and CIA relationships. Chapter IV then identifies overarching trends from a series of interviews with USSOF and CIA personnel to elucidate best practices and pitfalls the two organizations have experienced during joint operations. The concluding chapter provides lessons learned, best practices recommendations for USSOF and CIA personnel that are likely to work together on future assignments, and suggested areas for future research.

II. EARLY HISTORY OF U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES AND THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

U.S. Special Operations Forces (USSOF) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) share a mutual history, and, by examining their common roots, it becomes apparent why these two organizations gravitate towards similar objectives and encounter mission overlap. Chapter II explores the evolution of USSOF and the CIA through early milestones that illustrate the development of modern operational practices. Both organizations dealt with significant opposition from within the U.S. government, and both fought for relevancy in the realm of warfare and international affairs. The history of USSOF and the CIA also reveals early indicators of both organizational cooperation and rivalry, both still present today. The chapter contains five sections: the creation of the Office of the Coordinator of Information (1941), the beginning of the Office of Strategic Services (1942-1943), OSS successes in World War II, complications with intelligence services post-World War II, and intelligence services during the Vietnam War.

A. THE CREATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION (1941)

USSOF and the CIA can trace their respective histories back to a common link, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), but understanding the organizations' true origins requires a closer look at what first generated the need for specialized organizations focused on intelligence operations. Following the commencement of World War II, President Roosevelt believed that U.S. intelligence services—including U.S. Army Intelligence, U.S. Navy Intelligence, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)—lacked efficient coordination and provided insufficient intelligence support.²⁴ To rectify the situation, President Roosevelt appointed William J. Donovan, a Wall Street lawyer and World War I Medal of Honor recipient, to create a new organization that would “replicate the information gathering techniques of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and

²⁴ “COI Came First,” Central Intelligence Agency, June 28, 2008, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/intelligence-history/oss/art02.htm>.

Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), which proved effective against the German army in occupied European countries.”²⁵

During the summer of 1941, Donovan created the Office of the Coordinator of Information (COI), which aimed to collect and analyze all information pertinent to national security for direct use by the White House.²⁶ Along with information collection and analysis, the COI inherited foreign intelligence missions from the U.S. military branches. In general, the armed forces were not comfortable executing espionage missions during peacetime and decided the COI was better suited for such clandestine operations.²⁷ To meet the unique personnel requirements of clandestine operations to combat the spread of Nazism through Europe, Donovan sought out the “best and brightest” individuals from universities, businesses, and law firms who had studied world affairs and had experience traveling abroad.²⁸

During the latter half of 1941, before Pearl Harbor, Donovan’s COI staff regularly produced intelligence reports regarding European events. As the United States prepared for potential combat operations, President Roosevelt reorganized the COI to perform a wider variety of clandestine missions; he also placed it under the control of the newly formed Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to ensure it received Department of Defense (DoD) support.²⁹

B. THE BEGINNING OF THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES (1942–1943)

In 1942, the COI was renamed the OSS, which incorporated two subordinate units, the Special Operations Branch (SO) and the Secret Intelligence Branch (SI). The OSS’s

²⁵ John W. Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II,” *Studies in Intelligence* 54, no. 2 (June 2010), <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a525040.pdf>, 2.

²⁶ “COI Came First,” Central Intelligence Agency, June 28, 2008, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/intelligence-history/oss/art02.htm>.

²⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, “COI Came First.”

²⁸ Central Intelligence Agency.

²⁹ Central Intelligence Agency.

primary objectives included intelligence collection, counterintelligence, psychological operations, guerrilla operations, and covert resistance movements.³⁰

Donovan then appointed Garland H. Williams, head of the New York office of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and a reserve U.S. Army Major, to develop a training course and recruitment criteria for the first class of OSS candidates.³¹ Williams replicated the SO training program of the British SOE and, in April 1942, established training centers in remote woodland locations, referred to as Recreational Demonstration Areas, near Thurmont, Maryland, and Quantico, Virginia.³² The SI branch established a similar training school outside of Washington DC on a 100-acre estate, informally referred to as “the Farm.”³³

Crucially, the OSS had to select appropriate personnel for these unique missions, assessment cadre used various criteria to hire specially qualified people. Assessors looked for key qualities including high intelligence, aptitude for foreign languages, knowledge of foreign customs, social integration ability, and physical fitness.³⁴ Donovan famously described the ideal OSS candidate as “a Ph.D. who can win a bar fight.” Candidates had to possess a variety of skills that could predict their ability to operate behind enemy lines in an austere environment.

After selection, OSS students commenced training at one of the “Recreational Demonstration Areas” or “the Farm” where instructors from a broad spectrum of law enforcement and military fields tested students' physical and mental endurance.³⁵ Students learned skills that included tactics and weapons training from U.S. Army infantry officers; demolitions from U.S. Army engineers; radio operations from signal specialists; and undercover operations, martial arts, intelligence gathering, land navigation, sabotage

³⁰ Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II,” 2.

³¹ Chambers, 2.

³² Chambers, 3.

³³ Chambers, 8.

³⁴ Donald W. Fiske et al., *Selection of Personnel for Clandestine Operations: Assessment of Men* (Walnut Creek, CA: Aegean Park Press, 1993), 14.

³⁵ Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II,” 11.

techniques, and parachute infiltration from airborne instructors.³⁶ Williams and Donovan based their training model on practical exercises, so training followed a four-step model: explanation, demonstration, application, and examination.³⁷ The training often culminated in scenario-based exercises that included shoot-houses in which trainees fired live ammunition at paper targets with photographs of individuals to add realism, sabotage missions that required students to place fake explosives on an actual structure such as a bridge or a dam, and breaking into industrial facilities.³⁸

For European operations in May 1943, Donovan organized the SO branch into two elements based on size and operational specific requirements. Operational Groups (OGs) each contained 34 men specializing in commando operations utilizing guerrilla tactics and capable of sustained independent action for extended periods of time.³⁹ The other element, known as “Jedburgh Teams,” consisted of three men trained to parachute into occupied France and operate behind German lines in conjunction with the commencement of Operation Overlord.⁴⁰ Both organizations were predecessors to modern USSOF and CIA small tactical teams.

To be successful, the OGs and Jedburgh Teams required a high level of personal trust amongst unit members. Fostering personal trust and dependability among members through direct interaction during training led to the ability to predict the conduct of individuals based on collective interactions and experiences.⁴¹ Shared training activities augmented trust within the teams. OGs and Jedburgh Team members’ lives depended on

³⁶ Chambers, 11.

³⁷ Garland H. Williams, “Training,” 5–6; an eight-page, typed memorandum, undated, located in OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 161, Folder 1754, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

³⁸ Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II,” 7.

³⁹ William J. Donovan, Special Order No. 21, issued May 13, 1943, effective, May 4, 1943, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 140, Folder 1460, National Archives II, College Park MD; and Col. Ellery C. Huntington, Jr., C.O. Operational Groups, to Lt. Cmdr. R. Davis Halliwell, Chief of S.O., 22 June 1943, subject: Operational Groups, OSS – Organization and Functions, OSS Records (RG 226), Entry 136, Box 140, Folder 1460, National Archives II, College Park MD.

⁴⁰ Chambers, “Office of Strategic Services Training During World War II,” 9.

⁴¹ Barbara D. Adams, and Robert D.G. Webb, “Trust in Small Military Teams,” Command and Control Research Program, accessed June 8, 2018, http://www.dodccrp.org/events/7th_ICCRTS/Tracks/pdf/006.PDF, 5.

all team members being reliable and proficient at their jobs. The small size of the teams meant that the members became very familiar with each other's individual personalities, which led to closer unit cohesion.⁴²

C. OSS SUCCESSES IN WORLD WAR II

During World War II, the OSS was active across European, Asian, and North African theaters, participating in operations that utilized the full scope of its organizational capabilities. In Europe, OGs conducted operations with partisan forces from France, Italy, and Norway, among other countries, organizing and training fighters to combat Nazi occupying forces, utilizing guerrilla tactics against a much more robust force.⁴³ Partisan forces, with SI assistance, also distributed propaganda designed to frighten collaborators and encourage German troops to surrender before they became overwhelmed by Allied troops.⁴⁴ Crucially, sabotage operations also disrupted German supply trains throughout Europe, depriving the Nazi military of vital resources. One example of sabotage operations included the OSS working with Greek resistance forces to demolish railway bridges in northern Greece to help stop the movement of metal imports from North Africa to German war factories.⁴⁵

Also active in the Pacific Theater, OGs operated in China, Burma, and India, conducting operations against the Japanese military. OSS unit Detachment 101, for example, was assigned to Burma to harass the Japanese military with partisan forces, to identify and clear jungle runways for aircraft, and to conduct rescues of Allied prisoners of war.⁴⁶ Composed of only a few hundred Americans, Detachment 101, according to official statistics, recorded impressive results with a loss of only 22 Americans, over 5,400

⁴² Barbara D. Adams, and Robert D.G. Webb, "Trust in Small Military Teams," 7.

⁴³ Tom Moon, *This Grim and Savage Game: OSS and the Beginning of U.S. Covert Operations in World War II* (Los Angeles: Burning Gate Press, 1991), 199–207.

⁴⁴ Moon, *This Grim and Savage Game*, 203.

⁴⁵ Moon, 211.

⁴⁶ Carl H. Marcoux, "Yankee Guerrillas in Burma: The Story of OSS Detachment 101, Warfare History Network," March 20, 2017, <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/daily/wwii/yankee-guerrillas-in-burma/>.

Japanese soldiers killed, and 574 Allied personnel rescued.⁴⁷ OSS in Burma also successfully organized resistance groups in Northern Burma to combat Japanese forces.⁴⁸ The organizational structure and operational methods of the OGs provided an initial model for U.S. Special Forces at its inception following World War II.

Much like the OSS OGs, the Jedburgh Teams played a crucial role in the European Theater of World War II. The night before Operation Overlord began, Jedburgh Teams parachuted into France to prepare for the Allied assault on Normandy. The teams organized and armed resistance movements against German military units and provided liaisons for oncoming Allied forces.⁴⁹ OSS Jedburghs procured vital intelligence, supported operations after Allied forces secured a foothold on Normandy, and conducted sabotage missions to reduce German resistance for Allied advance.⁵⁰ In the weeks that followed Operation Overlord, the Jedburgh Teams worked with French fighters to cut Germany's lines of communication and to prevent retreating German units from destroying key or historical infrastructure throughout the country.⁵¹ After the Allied forces reached the OSS elements' locations, the OGs and Jedburgh Teams returned to rear assembly areas, after successfully completing their missions.

D. EARLY POST-WORLD WAR II USSOF AND CIA OVERLAP

Following World War II, Congress sought to demobilize all agencies that had served exclusively wartime purposes;⁵² as a result, the OSS quickly dissolved. Additionally, although William Donovan had planned for the OSS to remain as a dedicated intelligence establishment, President Truman, who was not fond of William Donovan,

⁴⁷ William R. Peers and Dean Brelis, *Behind the Burma Road: The Story of America's Most Successful Guerrilla Force* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1963), 217–220.

⁴⁸ Troy J. Sacquety, *The OSS in Burma: Jungle War against the Japanese* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2013), 5.

⁴⁹ Richard Harris Smith, *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (Guilford, CT: The Lyons Press, 2005), 160.

⁵⁰ Moon, *This Grim and Savage Game*, 242–243.

⁵¹ Smith, *OSS*, 178–179.

⁵² “An End and a Beginning,” Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs, June 28, 2008, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/intelligence-history/oss/art10.html>.

feared that the public would view the OSS as an American Gestapo.⁵³ To retain OSS capabilities and to preserve the wealth of training and experience, Secretary of War John J. McCloy transformed the SI branch into a peacetime intelligence agency dubbed the “Strategic Services Unit.”⁵⁴ President Truman, trusting McCloy’s judgment, worked with Congress to create a new organization known as the Central Intelligence Group (CIG) into which they incorporated the Strategic Services Unit.⁵⁵ Due to the Soviet threat in 1947, under the National Security Act, the CIG became the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the nation’s first non-military intelligence agency.⁵⁶ Although the CIA differed structurally from the OSS, earlier OSS operations—including clandestine missions, intelligence collection, and conspiring with foreign nationals against adversarial governments—became foundational CIA tasks.⁵⁷

Shortly after establishing the CIA, the Department of the Army in the early 1950s organized a special operations division to execute missions focused on supporting partisans, commando raids, and covert and clandestine activities previously conducted by OSS SO branch.⁵⁸ Colonel Aaron Bank, an OSS Jedburgh veteran, was recruited as the operations officer for the new division and, along with other former OSS members, became responsible for creating its doctrine and structure.⁵⁹ The majority of the initial recruits were experienced World War II veterans who had served in the OSS, Army Rangers, and Airborne infantry.⁶⁰ Colonel Bank also based the organizational design of a Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alpha (ODA) on the original OSS 15-man OG design.⁶¹

⁵³ “An End and a Beginning,” Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs.

⁵⁴ Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs, “An End and a Beginning.”

⁵⁵ Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs.

⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs.

⁵⁷ Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs.

⁵⁸ Thomas K. Adams, U.S. *Special Operations in Action: The Challenge of Unconventional Warfare* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 1998), 54.

⁵⁹ Adams.

⁶⁰ Adams.

⁶¹ Aaron Bank, *From OSS to Green Berets* (New York: Pocket Books, 1986), 176.

In case of future conflict with the U.S.S.R., the special operations units within the division were intended to organize, train, and equip anti-Soviet resistance forces in Eastern Europe. The division led to the formation of the Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF), which had a mission to conduct unconventional-warfare operations, initially focused on enabling partisan operations to resist a possible Soviet occupation of Western Europe. In the summer of 1952, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) became the first post-World War II unit focused on special military operations that in many ways overlapped with CIA missions.⁶²

The similar nature of ARSOF and CIA tasks led to a burgeoning bureaucratic competition between the two organizations. ARSOF leaders resented civilian CIA operations in non-war combat zones, an area they considered their own exclusive realm of the evolving battlefield.⁶³ Unconventional warfare activities were not exactly “military,” but they were not entirely civilian, either. The novelty of both organizations and their mission similarities sustained the competitiveness as they proved their operational worth to the U.S. government.

The Korean War provided both ARSOF and the CIA opportunities to validate their organizations through missions against the Soviet Union and the North Korean military. Special Forces-trained soldiers in Korea embedded with conventional army units assisted with guerrilla-warfare efforts against the North Korean army. Similarly, the CIA conducted counter-Soviet missions throughout Europe that focused on intelligence collection, source operations, sabotage, and propaganda to undermine the spread of communism. Following the Korean War, some Special Forces officers went to the CIA to receive intelligence collection training, which highlights the connection between Special Forces and CIA covert and clandestine operations.⁶⁴ The CIA also recruited many Special Forces soldiers during training, furthering tension between the two organizations.⁶⁵

⁶² Bank, 184–185.

⁶³ Adams, *U.S. Special Operations in Action*, 56.

⁶⁴ Adams, 57.

⁶⁵ Adams, 57.

E. INTELLIGENCE SERVICES DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

During the Vietnam War, ARSOF and CIA strengthened their relationship through the development of unconventional warfare concepts that are still in existence today. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, with the threat of communism spreading through underdeveloped countries becoming more apparent, Soviet Union-sponsored insurgencies and subversion operations occurred in China and Indochina.⁶⁶ Many U.S. military and civilian officials acknowledged that communist movements were a multi-faceted problem because they intrinsically involved political and economic factors in addition to conventional military elements.⁶⁷ John F. Kennedy, prior to becoming president in 1961, became keenly concerned with Soviet-backed insurgencies and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's pledge to support "just wars of national liberation."⁶⁸ To counter Soviet efforts in Southeast Asia and to combat communist regimes in the region, specifically in Vietnam, the United States sent personnel from both the CIA and ARSOF.

In Vietnam, the Military Advisory Group in Vietnam (MACV) was the special operations directorate for unconventional warfare initiatives and missions.⁶⁹ To oppose the influence of communist Viet Cong soldiers originating from North Vietnam, Special Forces ODAs from 5th Special Forces Group (SFG) (Airborne) became military advisors to irregular forces from rural southern Vietnamese villages.⁷⁰ The ODAs were an integral part of CIA's Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDGs), which aimed to build cohesive paramilitary forces to defend local villages against Viet Cong regular forces.⁷¹ The CIDGs received training from ODAs and logistical support from the CIA. The CIDG program

⁶⁶ Adams, 64.

⁶⁷ Adams, 64.

⁶⁸ Adams, 64.

⁶⁹ Adrian English et al., *The Green Beret: U.S. Special Forces from Vietnam to Delta Force* (New York: Villard Books, 1986), 28–29.

⁷⁰ Linda Robinson et al., *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations: A Case History Analysis* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2018), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2026.html, 55.

⁷¹ Adrian English et al., *The Green Beret: U.S. Special Forces from Vietnam to Delta Force*, 28–29.

thrived from Spring 1961 to 1962, totaling over 23,000 villagers, the equivalent of a small army.⁷²

As the CIDG effort expanded, the program shifted from a covert initiative to a widely known operation, and U.S. government officials in both Saigon and Washington put MACV entirely in command of the CIDG program, a transfer known as Operation Switchback that became an area of contention between MACV and the CIA.⁷³ Some CIA officers felt the transfer was required to prevent overburdening the agency, while others believed the CIA should retain the CIDGs because MACV lacked the CIA's political aim and would distort the program.⁷⁴ Under MACV, the CIDG program eventually began to shift away from creating village defense platforms to creating bases for offensive strike force operations.⁷⁵ Overall, considered a success, the CIDG program continued persistent operations through 1970.⁷⁶ ODAs supporting CIDG operations solidified Special Forces as the premier unit for training and equipping indigenous forces to fight alongside U.S. soldiers.

Under MACV, the CIA and Special Forces experienced other collaborative efforts that reinforced a vital working relationship between the two organizations. After MACV assumed control, the CIA focused on developing counterinsurgency programs, including small units of irregular soldiers focused on executing missions against insurgent leaders within the Viet Cong.⁷⁷ Initially referred to as Counter-Terror teams, the CIA informally relied on ODAs to train Vietnamese fighters in guerrilla tactics such as sabotage and long-range reconnaissance.⁷⁸

⁷² Robinson et al., *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, 57.

⁷³ Robinson et al., 57.

⁷⁴ Robinson et al., 57.

⁷⁵ Francis J. Kelly, *Vietnam Forces: U.S. Army Special Forces 1961–1971* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, Department of the Army, 1973), 33–34.

⁷⁶ Francis J. Kelly, *Vietnam Forces: U.S. Army Special Forces*.

⁷⁷ Robinson et al., *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, 58.

⁷⁸ Robinson et al., 58.

The Counter-Terror teams expanded from 1965-1966 and subsequently earned the name Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRUs).⁷⁹ However, the CIA became spread too thin in their ability to advise and oversee the PRUs during field operations.⁸⁰ In 1967, they formally requested assistance from the military to aid with PRU operations.⁸¹ The MACV commander at the time, General Westmoreland, approved a detail of Special Forces soldiers to assist as PRU advisors.⁸² Westmoreland authorized Special Forces advisors to accompany missions to coordinate crucial support, including medical evacuation helicopters and indirect fires from U.S. forces.⁸³ The PRU missions were comparable to the undercover operations conducted by the Special Forces “black ops” units that collected intelligence on enemy locations and dispositions, as well as other more aggressive missions including assassinations, sabotage, and snatches or rescue missions.⁸⁴ Operating unilaterally, PRU and ODA intelligence collection efforts proved essential for conventional military units and MACV headquarters' planning purposes. The CIA and Special Forces conducted successful PRU operations until the Tet Offensive of 1968 caused significant shifts in U.S. domestic politics, and the adoption of a “Vietnamization” policy, which forced a dramatic reduction of support to the PRUs.⁸⁵

The Vietnam War, despite the overall outcome, was a valuable proof of concept experience for ARSOF and the CIA conducting unconventional warfare together in a modern combat environment. The nature of the conflict provided ARSOF and the CIA with opportunities to demonstrate their guerrilla warfare skills, to refine training, and to advise indigenous forces on fighting various enemies. Despite friction with conventional military units, Special Forces effectively conducted clandestine operations with partnered forces, which significantly contributed to successful campaigns against the Viet Cong. CIA and

⁷⁹ Robinson et al., 59.

⁸⁰ Robinson et al., 59.

⁸¹ Robinson et al., 59.

⁸² Robinson et al., 59.

⁸³ Robinson et al., 59.

⁸⁴ English et al., *The Green Beret*, 44.

⁸⁵ Robinson et al., *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, 60.

Special Forces joint operations helped refine the relationship between the two organizations and identify gaps in organizational abilities, which allowed them to complement each other for maximum effectiveness. Although very flexible as an organization, the CIA often lacked adequate personnel numbers to accomplish initiatives such as the PRUs, but MACV could augment with Special Forces soldiers, and, together, they could achieve the mission. Conversely, MACV had to abide by the more rigid, traditional standards of the U.S. military and its associated bureaucracy, whereas the CIA could execute missions more quickly to the benefit of both organizations. Overall, the Vietnam War illustrated ARSOF and the CIA's ability to work together cohesively, due to their similar operational objectives and capabilities to effectively execute mission goals, during a time of war.

F. CONCLUSION

Chapter II detailed how intelligence services began before World War II and demonstrated early successes of both the CIA and military intelligence units. When they shared objectives and capabilities, both experienced increased mission success. Chapter III examines the re-organization efforts and policies that followed the Vietnam War as well as analyzing how some potential friction areas arose.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING AND THE EMERGENCE OF FRICTION BETWEEN USSOF AND THE CIA

Following the end of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, ARSOF, possessing special skills unique to wartime environments, saw a dramatic reduction in numbers and maintained a low profile for most of the 1970s.⁸⁶ ARSOF reemerged in the early 1980s due to the increasing threat of international terrorism, which caused ARSOF units to specifically dedicate efforts to counter terrorist threats worldwide.⁸⁷ In the 1980s, ARSOF underwent a significant organizational restructuring following the events of Operation Eagle Claw in 1980, Operation Urgent Fury in 1983, and the implementation of the Goldwater-Nichols DoD Reorganization Act of 1986.⁸⁸ These events led to the organizational restructuring of U.S. Special Operations Forces (USSOF), which began the modern evolution of contemporary USSOF.

While Chapter II described the early milestones that created shared roots between ARSOF and the CIA, Chapter III details the modern evolution of USSOF and the CIA's relationship and focuses on how both organizations retained their shared origins and remained focused on similar strategic security concerns. The chapter contains six sections: a background on the need for organizational restructuring; the Goldwater-Nichols Act; Creation of the Counterterrorism Center (CTC) and Defense HUMINT Services (DHS); Congress, DoD, and the CIA: the Gulf War and post-Cold War; further organizational change from 9/11 and the 9/11 Commission Report; and a final analysis regarding seventeen years of USSOF and CIA interoperability and challenges.

A. BACKGROUND: THE NEED FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, both USSOF and the CIA underwent significant organizational restructuring that converged their respective mission sets and necessitated

⁸⁶ English et al., *The Green Beret*, 44.

⁸⁷ English et al., 44.

⁸⁸ Robinson et al., *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, 63.

closer integration to effectively counter emerging threats to U.S. security. These organizational changes enhanced the interoperability between the two organizations, but also created an environment where missions overlapped and friction emerged regarding which would maintain primacy over specific operations due to similar activities authorized under, respectively, Title 10 and Title 50 authorities. The following sections highlight organizational changes that occurred throughout twenty years of modernization following the Goldwater-Nichols Act and how the transition led to blurred operational boundaries between USSOF and the CIA.

Previous literature published by Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) highlighted that the organizational decisions in the 1980s and 1990s—including the 1986 passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the establishment of the U.S. Special Operations Command, the establishment of the CIA’s Counterterrorism Center (CTC), and the 1992 formation of the Defense Intelligence Agency’s Defense Human Intelligence (HUMINT) Service—prompted a closer relationship between the two organizations.⁸⁹ These major changes, resulting from the failures during Operation Desert Eagle (or Operation Desert One) and Operation Urgent Fury, indicated a greater need for joint-collaboration and interoperability.

B. THE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS ACT (1986)

Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act as part of a defense reorganization process that meant to identify ways of increasing SOF influence by creating the first unified combatant command for all of Special Operations Forces which was headed by a four-star general.⁹⁰ The act also established an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC)), created a coordinating board for low-intensity conflict within the National Security Council, and, most importantly, started

⁸⁹ David Oakley, “Partners or Competitors? The Evolution of the Department of Defense/ Central Intelligence Agency Relationship since Desert Storm and Its Prospects for the Future” (JSOU Report, Joint Special Operations University, 2014), <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a616472.pdf>, 5.

⁹⁰ “United States Special Operations Command History, 1987–2007,” Federation of American Scientists, accessed October 2, 2018, <https://fas.org/irp/agency/dod/socom/2007history.pdf>, 6–7.

a new USSOF Major Force Program (MFP-11), which established a line of funding to protect USSOF-centric funding from the Joint Chiefs and the other services.⁹¹

The legislation enhanced USSOF's control over their resources, allowing them to modernize the force, and encouraged cooperation by placing a single commander over all of USSOF.⁹² This influential four-star Commander in Chief, in unison with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, could now voice USSOF concerns within the highest echelons of the DoD.⁹³ Although not specifically mentioned within the legislation, the restructuring of USSOF elements and the providing of higher responsibility positions directly promoted post-9/11 collaboration with the CIA by making collaborative efforts less complex and reducing internal bureaucratic restrictions within the USSOF hierarchy.⁹⁴

C. CREATION OF THE COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER (1986) AND DEFENSE HUMINT SERVICES (1992)

Terrorist attacks in the late 1970s and early 1980s—including the capturing of U.S. Embassy personnel in Tehran, the Beirut bombings at the U.S. Embassy and Marine Corps barracks, and the embassies in Kuwait—prompted President Ronald Reagan's Administration to increase counterterrorism initiatives.⁹⁵ Foremost, the administration established the Counterterrorism Center (CTC) in February 1986 to ensure there was a single government organization focused on international terrorist threats.⁹⁶ The CTC provided a direct linkage between CIA and USSOF for future counterterrorism efforts as

⁹¹ "United States Special Operations Command History," 6–7.

⁹² "United States Special Operations Command History," 7.

⁹³ "United States Special Operations Command History," 7.

⁹⁴ Oakley, "Partners or Competitors?," 6.

⁹⁵ "Terrorist Attacks on Americans, 1979–1988; The Attacks, the Groups, and the U.S. Response," PBS Frontline, accessed October 2, 2018, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/cron.html>.

⁹⁶ Nathaniel L. Moir, review of *The Art of Intelligence-Lessons from a Life in the CIA's Clandestine Service*, by Henry Crumpton, National Defense University's *PRISM* 4, no.1, https://cco.ndu.edu/Portals/96/Documents/prism/prism_4-1/prism148-150_moir.pdf.

the CTC plan in 2001 to infiltrate Afghanistan with 110 CIA officers and 316 USSOF personnel targeted against the Taliban demonstrated.⁹⁷

Furthermore, the final organizational change that shaped future DoD/USSOF and CIA relationships was the decision to centralize all HUMINT under the Defense HUMINT Services (DHS) in December 1992 to strengthen CIA and DoD relationships.⁹⁸ Although each organization had had a HUMINT mandate, they did not collaborate effectively, and intelligence remained compartmentalized.⁹⁹ DHS helped to improve the “efficiency and effectiveness of DoD HUMINT activities and eliminate[ed] duplication [of efforts while it also] ensure[d] coordination of DoD HUMINT activities with the Director of Central Intelligence, as appropriate.”¹⁰⁰ While establishing the DHS did not increase SOF and CIA HUMINT partnerships immediately, it provided an initial step to influence future collaborative efforts by ensuring that DoD increased collaboration and developed standardized processes.¹⁰¹

D. CONGRESS, DOD, AND THE CIA: GULF WAR AND POST-COLD WAR

The beginning of the Gulf War and the Cold War cessation both demonstrated that the Goldwater-Nichols Act did not correct all problems between the DoD and the greater intelligence community. Following the Gulf War, General Norman Schwarzkopf briefed the Senate Armed Services Committee, saying that battlefield analysis from the intelligence agencies was “caveated, disagreed with, footnoted and watered down” emphasizing that the intelligence community had not always provided timely and useful

⁹⁷ H. Frederick Hutchinson, Jr., review of *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA*, by George Tenet, with Bill Harlow, *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 20 (2007), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08850600701473028>, 733.

⁹⁸ Oakley, “Partners or Competitors?,” 8.

⁹⁹ David W. Becker, “Coming in from the Cold...War: Defense HUMINT Services Support to Military Operations Other Than War” Master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2000, 16.

¹⁰⁰ Department of Defense, *Centralized Management of Department of Defense Human Intelligence (HUMINT) Operations*, DoD Directive 5200.37. (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 1992), <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a272198.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ Oakley, “Partners or Competitors?,” 8.

intelligence reports to his military field commanders.¹⁰² Exacerbating the problem many units in the field maintained incompatible communications systems preventing the different services from communicating intelligence with one another.¹⁰³ General Schwarzkopf recommended that the intelligence community develop a system that could deliver real-time intelligence to battlefield commanders rather than relying on overhead imagery from satellites, spy planes, gun cameras, and unmanned aerial aircraft, which were the primary tools that the CIA and National Intelligence Agencies leveraged for intelligence assessments.¹⁰⁴

Two years later, the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services House of Representatives released a report on the intelligence successes and failures in Operations Desert Shield/Storm.¹⁰⁵ The report analyzed intelligence collection, distribution, and analysis processes, highlighting major flaws within each of the three categories including agencies being unfamiliar with or unresponsive to the collection needs of the warfighter.¹⁰⁶ The report also highlighted that “senior CENTCOM commanders were unfamiliar with the capabilities and limitations of U.S. intelligence systems; [and] lacked collection assets under its direct control and no joint intelligence architecture of substance to guide the buildup of in-theater intelligence capabilities.”¹⁰⁷ Additionally, only 4 of the 12 theater-deployed Secondary Imagery Dissemination System (SIDS) could deliver imagery down to the operating unit level while “key intelligence staff, failed to pass much useful information down to the air wings and ground units.”¹⁰⁸ Finally,

¹⁰² Molly Moore, “Schwarzkopf: War Intelligence Flawed,” *The Washington Post*, June 13, 1991, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1991/06/13/schwarzkopf-war-intelligence-flawed/2c33d9b3-e56e-47bb-9e29-a99c986681ca/?utm_term=.d561edeb3811.

¹⁰³ Moore, “Schwarzkopf: War Intelligence Flawed.”

¹⁰⁴ Moore, “Schwarzkopf: War Intelligence Flawed.”

¹⁰⁵ U.S. Congress, House, Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Intelligence Successes and Failures in Operations Desert Storm/Shield: Report*, 103rd Cong, 1st sess., 1993, H. Rep. I-31, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a338886.pdf>, 1.

¹⁰⁶ U.S. Congress, House, Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, *Intelligence Successes and Failures in Operations Desert Storm/Shield: Report*, 1.

¹⁰⁷ U.S. Congress, House, Committee, *Intelligence Successes and Failures*, 1.

¹⁰⁸ U.S. Congress, House, Committee, *Intelligence Successes and Failures*, 13.

the report also identified another significant intelligence analysis failure: the U.S. Army did not have a method or doctrine to conduct assessments on tactical Battle Damage Assessments (BDA), including Iraqi tanks and Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs).¹⁰⁹ These failures were largely attributed to the individual services that had little to no oversight by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 had intended to fix these issues, but the Gulf War highlighted significant remaining concerns in intelligence distribution and analysis.¹¹⁰

In response to these critiques, the CIA implemented measures to provide better support to the DoD, including establishing the Office of Military Affairs (OMA), now called the Associate Director of Military Affairs (ADMA), “to serve as the DoD’s formal entryway into CIA for support, information, and deconfliction of various issues.”¹¹¹ The CIA also created a senior military advisor position in the office of the Director of Operations (DO), and the Associate Deputy Director of Operations for Military Affairs (ADDO/MA), and, later, raised the ADDO/MA out of the DO and created the Associate Director of Central Intelligence for Military Support (ADCI/MS).¹¹² This transition made a flag officer responsible for ensuring that the CIA and DoD partnership reported to the highest echelons of the CIA (DCIA) rather than through the Deputy Director for Operations.¹¹³ These transitions significantly increased DoD and CIA collaboration, and, post-9/11, a review group recommended merging ADCI/MS and OMA, resulting the formal creation of the ADMA.¹¹⁴ Jointly staffed by Agency and military personnel, ADMA “operat[es] as one team to coordinate, plan, execute, and sustain joint CIA and DoD worldwide activities based upon priorities established by the Director of the CIA, to

¹⁰⁹ U.S. Congress, House, Committee, *Intelligence Successes and Failures*, 18.

¹¹⁰ U.S. Congress, House, Committee, *Intelligence Successes and Failures*, 33.

¹¹¹ “History,” Central Intelligence Agency, Offices of CIA, accessed October 3, 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/offices-of-cia/military-affairs/history.html>.

¹¹² “History,” Central Intelligence Agency.

¹¹³ Oakley, “Partners or Competitors?,” 12–13.

¹¹⁴ “History,” Central Intelligence Agency.

achieve National Security objectives.”¹¹⁵ Establishing senior-military positions within the Agency and creating ADMA significantly enhanced USSOF and CIA relationships by establishing formal positions for DoD and USSOF within the Agency Headquarters, providing a conduit for further collaboration and deconfliction.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the 1991 Persian Gulf war, since the Soviet Union was no longer a peer adversary, debates emerged over national security policies as well as whether to reform or eliminate various intelligence functions. Looming spending cuts, due to an ongoing recession and inward-looking focus to address domestic concerns, on the U.S. federal budget influenced internal debates.¹¹⁶ For the first time since the beginning of the Cold War, Congress began closely examining the basic financial and structural arrangements supporting U.S. intelligence efforts.¹¹⁷ Also, the Aldrich Ames spy scandal, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, and military failures in Somalia persuaded Congress that the intelligence community needed a thorough examination.¹¹⁸ The resulting scrutiny led to President Clinton appointing a Congressional team along with distinguished private citizens and former defense secretaries to the new Aspin-Brown Commission,¹¹⁹ where the primary aim “was to determine how best to adapt the intelligence community to the challenging new world that had emerged following the end of the Cold War.”¹²⁰ That same year, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence staff conducted an additional review entitled the *Intelligence Community in*

¹¹⁵ “History,” Central Intelligence Agency.

¹¹⁶ Weinrod, W. Bruce, “U.S. Intelligence Priorities in the Post-Cold War Era,” *World Affairs* 159, no. 1 (Summer 1996): 3–11, www.jstor.org/stable/20672472, 7.

¹¹⁷ Weinrod, “U.S. Intelligence Priorities in the Post-Cold War Era,” 7.

¹¹⁸ Michael Warner and Kenneth McDonald, “US Intelligence Community Reform Studies since 1947,” CIA, accessed October 3, 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/US%20Intelligence%20Community%20Reform%20Studies%20Since%201947.pdf>, 33.

¹¹⁹ Warner and McDonald, “US Intelligence Community Reform,” 35.

¹²⁰ Loch K. Johnson, “The Aspin-Brown Intelligence Inquiry: Behind the Closed Doors of a Blue Ribbon Commission.” *CSI Publications* 48, no. 3 (April 14, 2007), <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol48no3/article01.html>, 1.

the 21st Century (IC21) that focused on where the intelligence community needed to be in the next 10–15 years.¹²¹

Congress moved to merge divergent proposals from both studies; it crafted the Intelligence and Defense Authorization Acts for the fiscal year 1997 and enacted them as amendments to the National Security Act of 1947, establishing a Deputy Director for Central Intelligence (DDCI) for Community Management and three Assistant Directors of Central Intelligence.¹²² These positions coordinated collection, administration, analysis, and production for intelligence.¹²³ Although both committees utilized significant resources, and a large amount of input from academia (RAND), intelligence scholars, and policy experts, both the Aspin-Brown inquiry and the IC21 proposal failed to drastically change the intelligence community.¹²⁴ The public did not perceive the committee's findings and recommendations as significant because the committee largely left a flawed system intact.¹²⁵ The intelligence community budget remained the same, counterterrorism and counterintelligence efforts continued to lack focus, and the limits of covert action were never defined.¹²⁶

Throughout the 1990s, the Gulf War and the end of the Cold War greatly influenced the DoD and intelligence community construct by creating high-level positions within both organizations to encourage enhanced interoperability. The final IC21 study and the Aspin-Brown Commission Report served as the final intelligence reforms before 9/11. The September 11 attacks created an urgent need for closer, more collaborative relationships between USSOF and the CIA.

¹²¹ Warner and McDonald, "US Intelligence Community Reform," 35.

¹²² Warner and McDonald, 36.

¹²³ Warner and McDonald, 36.

¹²⁴ Johnson, "The Aspin-Brown Intelligence Inquiry."

¹²⁵ "Spy Pabulum." *The New York Times*, March 3, 1996, <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/03/03/opinion/spy-pabulum.html>.

¹²⁶ Johnson, "The Aspin-Brown Intelligence Inquiry."

E. FURTHER ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: 9/11 AND THE 9/11 COMMISSION REPORT

Crucially, 9/11 resulted in the creation of additional national-level agencies to improve unity of effort between strategic intelligence and operational planning against Islamic terrorists. Less than a year after 9/11, the United States published the 9/11 Commission Report, which highlighted several DoD, CIA, and other agency shortcomings and failures. Further, it identified that missed opportunities to prevent 9/11 resulted from a larger management issue.¹²⁷ Poor information-sharing and stovepiping among agencies had led to poor planning and blended assignment of responsibilities for joint operations between the CIA, FBI, DoS, DoD, and other agencies responsible for homeland security.¹²⁸ Due to budget constraints highlighted after the Cold War, the CIA had had minimal capacity to conduct paramilitary operations, and it did not attempt to expand paramilitary capabilities before 9/11.¹²⁹ Conversely, DoD was never fully operationalized against AQ even though it was possibly the United States' most dangerous adversary.¹³⁰ The Commission Report provided several recommendations that directly affected SOF and the CIA to include creating a Director of National Intelligence (DNI) position and establishing the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), which promoted information sharing and decreased organizational tendencies to stovepipe information.¹³¹

By establishing the DNI and NCTC, the government aimed to create standard operating procedures in reporting intelligence and to limit structural complexities under divided management chains (see Figure 1). The DNI position served two primary functions: “(1) to oversee national intelligence centers that combine experts from all the collection disciplines against common targets...and (2) to oversee the agencies that

¹²⁷ National Commission on Terrorism, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission of Terrorist Attacks upon the United States: Executive Summary* (Washington, D.C.: National Commission on Terrorism, 2004), https://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report_Exec.pdf, 10–11.

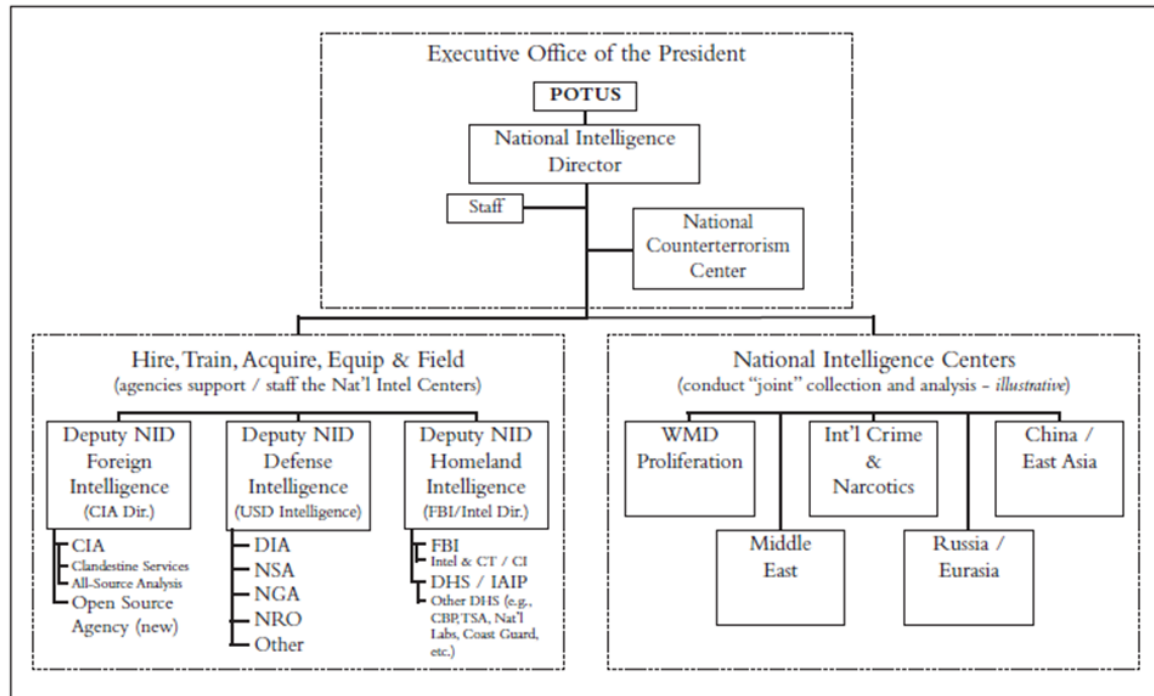
¹²⁸ National Commission on Terrorism, 10–11.

¹²⁹ National Commission on Terrorism, 10–11.

¹³⁰ National Commission on Terrorism, 10.

¹³¹ National Commission on Terrorism, 20–25.

contribute to the national intelligence program, a task that includes setting common standards for personnel and information technology.”¹³²



Unity of Effort in Managing Intelligence

Figure 1. The 9/11 Commission Report’s Reform for Intelligence Organizations.¹³³

Figure 1 demonstrates the new intelligence community structure with the addition of the DNI and the NCTC under the President, the three Deputy DNIs—for Foreign Intelligence (CIA), Defense Intelligence (DoD), and Homeland Intelligence (FBI, Homeland Security)—directly under the DNI and NCTC. Additionally, the chart shows the National Intelligence Centers (NIC) as unified commands of the intelligence world, responsible for executing field intelligence operations.¹³⁴ The DNI position removed responsibilities from the DCI; it also assumed responsibility for producing the President’s

¹³² National Commission on Terrorism, 22.

¹³³ National Commission on Terrorism, 23.

¹³⁴ National Commission on Terrorism, 23–24.

Daily Brief (PDB), for the Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Center (WINPAC) with a Non-Proliferation center reporting to the DNI and established new safeguards to ensure that credible intelligence supported National Intelligence Estimates.¹³⁵ The DNI replaced the DCI as the president's primary intelligence adviser, which gave the DNI greater authority over budgetary and personnel decisions across the intelligence community than the DCI had previously possessed.¹³⁶ This organizational change not only removed some of DCI's burdens, but it also allocated a DDNI to the Defense Intelligence Agency so as to streamline intelligence reporting between Deputy Directors for Foreign, Defense, and Homeland Intelligence.

F. USSOF AND CIA INTEROPERABILITY AND CHALLENGES SINCE 2001

The organizational changes that resulted from the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the formation of multiple new agencies upon completion of the Aspin-Brown Commission, IC21, and the 9/11 Commission all increased USSOF's integration into the IC hierarchy. While DoD and the intelligence community did not adapt all of the proposed recommendations, many assimilated recommendations continue to influence how USSOF and the CIA operate and integrate while fighting international terrorism. Today's U.S. strategy against countering international terrorism often leverages USSOF and the CIA, although through different authorities and approval chains. The organizations' similarities and functions, therefore, often significantly overlap operationally.

At the onset of military operations in Afghanistan and, later, in Iraq, many policymakers recommended that USSOCOM assume the responsibilities of paramilitary operations from the CIA due to the view that the two organizations maintained redundant capabilities. President George Bush's administration rejected the recommendation, allowing the CIA to maintain their paramilitary capabilities.¹³⁷ However, the

¹³⁵ Jeffery T. Richelson, "From Director of Central Intelligence to Director of National Intelligence." The National Security Archive, August 12, 2005, 17 December 2004, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB144/index.htm>.

¹³⁶ Richelson. "From Director of Central Intelligence to Director of National Intelligence."

¹³⁷ Oakley, "Partners or Competitors?" 35–36.

recommendations to transfer paramilitary operations to USSOF symbolized that the blurring of lines between the CIA and USSOF operations. “In past administrations, there was a clear effort to distinguish between the combat activities conducted by USSOF and missions handled by the CIA. But the line has gradually blurred as the campaign against terrorism required greater cooperation among United States law enforcement, intelligence, and military officials.”¹³⁸

A contemporary example, from the last 17 years of conflict, occurred when the CIA found potential utilization for the Predator drone: aerial surveillance that they believed would fall within their mandates even though drones are classified as aircraft.¹³⁹ After the CIA attempted to weaponize the UAV platform by incorporating Hellfire missiles, the U.S. Air Force argued that the UAV program should be Title 10 operations instead of Title 50 due to weaponizing the aircraft.¹⁴⁰ Arguments like this exemplify how both DoD/USSOF and the CIA compete for resources under the guise of their respective authorities and mandates. Part of the problem lies within the legal authorities that grant DOD and the CIA authorization to conduct operations around the globe, as highlighted by the CIA airstrike that targeted a U.S. citizen in Yemen in 2002. The CIA was able to leverage less bureaucratic restrictions when conducting operations, thus increasing their ability to execute a more streamlined operations process.¹⁴¹

The National Security Act of 1947 established the IC and Executive Order 12333, along with Presidential Findings, Congressional Authorization Acts, Presidential Decision

¹³⁸ Thom Shanker and James Risen, “Taking the Battle Worldwide / Rumsfeld Envisions Global Covert Missions by U.S. Special Forces,” *SF Gate*, August 12, 2002, <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Taking-the-battle-worldwide-Rumsfeld-envisions-2812035.php>.

¹³⁹ J. Robert Kane, “Covert Action, Military Operations and the DoD-CIA Debate,” *Real Clear Defense*, August 9, 2018, https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/08/09/covert_action_military_operations_and_the_dodcia_debate_113701.html.

¹⁴⁰ Kane, “Covert Action, Military Operations and the DoD-CIA Debate.”

¹⁴¹ Dana Priest, “CIA Killed U.S. Citizen In Yemen Missile Strike,” *The Washington Post*, November 8, 2002, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2002/11/08/cia-killed-us-citizen-in-yemen-missile-strike/f802eff3-a58b-4e74-a34f-94715f628680/?utm_term=.094f7a528ef0.

Directives, and others that define limits for the CIA's overt and covert activities.¹⁴² Conversely, the DoD, and, more particularly, USSOF, utilize a different set of authorities and restrictions. USSOF operates under the laws of war, utilizes authorities to conduct Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE), and falls within Geneva Convention protections.¹⁴³ The differences in authorities and restrictions create fundamental differences in how each organization operates and also in organizational cultural norms, both of which challenge interoperability.

Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE), under Title 10, has also increased friction between the CIA and USSOF because USSOF activities may interfere with the Agency's general operations. Further, OPE activities co-located in the same area of operations may negatively affect CIA sources and networks.¹⁴⁴ Similar operational mandates, competition for finite resources, differing organizational cultures, and deconfliction of operational practices all warrant further study to identify potential improvement areas and also to highlight underlying reasons for the friction.

Through a series of interviews with both USSOF and CIA personnel that seek to address modern interoperability concerns and areas for future collaboration, the following chapter highlights these overarching themes.

¹⁴² Linda Williams, "Intelligence Support to Special Operations in the Global War On Terrorism," (strategy research project, U.S. Army War College, 2004), <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a424015.pdf>, 5.

¹⁴³ Williams. "Intelligence Support to Special Operations in the Global War On Terrorism," 5.

¹⁴⁴ Kane, "Covert Action, Military Operations and the DoD-CIA Debate."

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IV. USSOF AND CIA INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Where Chapter III identified issues underlying the friction and areas of collaboration between USSOF and the CIA up until now, Chapter IV examines current relationship trends through interview responses from company- and field- grade USSOF officers who have worked with CIA personnel and from CIA officers who have worked with USSOF units. The previous two chapters' historical examination was needed and valuable, for knowing the past contextualizes and deepens present understanding; crucially, however, interviewing current personnel who have recent experience working within the interagency environment reveals contemporary attitudes and observations about the interactions between USSOF and the CIA. Analyzing interview responses provides insight into current collaboration practices and into areas where friction between the two organizations arise. Following a background on interviewee selection and IRB-approved questions, this chapter highlights trends that the research team observed in three sections: the benefits of operational overlap; the potential areas for friction to include title authorities, communication and transparency, and organizational norms; and three solution-oriented interviewee themes.

A. INTERVIEWEE SELECTION AND IRB-APPROVED QUESTIONS

The research team invited over 150 participants from the Defense Analysis (DA) program at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) to participate in the study, and 15 students agreed. Participants came from various backgrounds, including Civil Affairs (CA), Special Forces (SF), and Naval Special Warfare (NSW). Each had recent operational experiences working with the CIA while serving tours in places including the Middle East, Baltics, Africa, South America, and Europe that ranged in duration from four to six months. Their missions primarily focused on conducting tactical operations including, but not limited to, foreign internal defense (FID) and building host-nation partner forces capabilities with a few USSOF interviewees serving on Joint Task Force (JTF) staffs.

The research team also identified six CIA personnel who agreed to participate in the study. CIA participants also had a variety of backgrounds including as intelligence

analysts, ground branch personnel, members of the associate directorate of military affairs (ADMA), and, one, as a former U.S. embassy chief of station (CoS). Each participant had operational experience working with USSOF either in the United States or during a foreign deployment.

The research team asked the 21 interviewees Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved questions intended to solicit their views of USSOF and CIA relationships. The questions covered individual backgrounds, deployment experiences, and relations between USSOF and the CIA with specific emphasis on areas of overlap, operational support, interaction trends, and areas of friction. The research team tailored the questions to elicit views on the quantity and quality of interactions with their counterparts and other interagency (IA) partners. Due to human-subject protection protocols, all interview outcomes are non-attributional and were restricted to unclassified responses. The questions and detailed responses can be found in the three appendices.

B. BENEFITS OF OPERATIONAL OVERLAP

Responses from interviewees reaffirm that USSOF and the CIA experience significant mission overlap while deployed due to similar strategic and operational mission objectives, and both organizations' personnel require communication and coordination efforts to ensure joint awareness of each other's capabilities, legal mandates, and mission objectives. Operational overlap provides benefits: opportunities for USSOF and CIA personnel to jointly focus mission efforts to achieve mutual goals and collaborative opportunities, which help reinforce institutional trust between USSOF and the CIA and also ensures operatives are aware of each other's limitations, saving both organizations time and effort.¹⁴⁵

1. Autonomous Missions in Non-permissive Environments

Mission overlap between USSOF and the CIA can help when both organizations' teams support missions that have similar objectives and the in-country environment is less permissive of autonomous missions. Despite not always being perfectly aligned with

¹⁴⁵ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

mission objectives, collaboration benefits both entities because of the ability to fill operational gaps with additional personnel or enablers. Enablers include close air support, medical evacuation, logistics, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms to name a few. A Special Forces officer said, “coordination occurs with regular frequency when USSOF aids the CIA by providing supplementary security for missions.”¹⁴⁶ In non-permissive environments, security is a much greater concern for all U.S. operatives, and the CIA is particularly vulnerable due to its smaller personnel numbers. USSOF is able to augment CIA operatives for missions of mutual gain. A CIA ground branch operative noted that, “the DoD, and USSOF in particular, has a wide array of assets and enablers available to assist with mission accomplishment.”¹⁴⁷ Unlike USSOF, the CIA does not have as many assets or enablers available during deployments, so operatives frequently rely on USSOF counterparts' assistance. As reported by one CIA analyst, “USSOF is a great partner to have during deployments. The capabilities USSOF has available greatly augment the ability of CIA operatives to execute missions that would otherwise be practically impossible to execute. Maintaining a relationship with USSOF counterparts is crucial for mission success.”¹⁴⁸

Operational funding is another factor of consideration in some AOs and requires special attention during times of mission overlap. Because, by law, funds are exclusively reserved for each entity and cannot be simultaneously used by both USSOF and the CIA. Provided both USSOF and CIA strictly adhere to their respective authorities, sharing assets, including funds and enablers in areas where missions overlap can benefit both organizations.

2. When CIA Can Better Gain Access to Mission-Essential Locations

Similar to the use of USSOF assets and enablers, the CIA can benefit from a relationship with their USSOF counterparts by gaining access to mission-essential locations previously inaccessible due to operational security. While deployed, USSOF can

¹⁴⁶ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁴⁷ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁴⁸ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

develop expansive operational networks that provide access and placement to various locations of interest, host-nation partners, and indigenous people to assist with accomplishing mission objectives. By incorporating CIA personnel into mission planning, USSOF can facilitate the movement of the CIA within an AO to aid with intelligence collection or similar missions. A CIA analyst said, “USSOF is capable of getting to areas the CIA does not have access to, and by syncing in with their operations, CIA operatives can potentially fill information gaps or meet key people by participating in USSOF operations.”¹⁴⁹ The results of combined operations usually benefit both organizations for planning purposes or higher operational goals.

C. POTENTIAL AREAS OF FRICTION

Although the relationship between USSOF and the CIA has many areas of operational overlap that can benefit both organizations, research and interviewee responses indicate that there are also many potential friction points that impede mission success and hamper interoperability. Both USSOF and CIA personnel identify fundamental organizational differences as well as different methods of executing tasks or operations. Bluntly, one CIA interviewee, when asked about potential friction areas, laughed before going on to question whether the areas could actually be counted.¹⁵⁰ Significant friction points include confusion over working with host-nation partners, Title 10 and Title 50 authorities, lack of transparency with operational mandates, communication platforms, and misunderstandings about organizational design and terminology. Based on interviewee responses, these friction points occur on a regular basis during interactions between USSOF and the CIA.

¹⁴⁹ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁵⁰ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

1. When Both Organizations Work with Host-Nation Forces for Different Purposes

Both USSOF and the CIA frequently work through host-nation forces, which sometimes leads to conflicting goals, underscoring need for coordination to avoid both teams tasking and, therefore, confusing partner forces. Depending on mission goals, interviewee responses suggest the responsibility of coordinating host nation forces falls on the entity executing the mission. One Special Forces officer said, “credibility and rapport are important variables for planning joint operations with host-nation forces, and organizing human resources and recruiting networks are necessary procedures for USSOF and CIA operatives.”¹⁵¹ Another USSOF officer described a poorly coordinated situation where the CIA, for a different mission, simultaneously recruited indigenous personnel whom SOCOM had tasked to counter Islamic States efforts,¹⁵² illustrating a coordination failure that negatively impacted the USSOF team's efforts. Working with partnered forces also requires special attention to prevent misattribution of authority between USSOF and CIA entities. Failure to coordinate between USSOF and CIA personnel can result in embarrassing situations when dealing with host nations. As one CIA interviewee put it, “information sharing can alleviate issues when conducting joint operations with partnered units, because in some cases the CIA will not share their host nation partners due to mission restraints, or concern of confusing partnered forces.”¹⁵³

2. When Confusion Results from Title 10 and Title 50 Authorities

Nearly all interviewees mentioned that substantial confusion arises when lines between Title 10 and Title 50 authorities are blurred, affecting both USSOF and the CIA during joint operations due to the sensitivities of authorities and the separate funding. One Special Forces officer commented that, “as a deployed team leader, the separation of authorities was not very clear until I planned and tried to execute a mission only to have it shut down because it was not under our authorities. It was extremely frustrating because if

¹⁵¹ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁵² See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁵³ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

I had known better I would have avoided the mission altogether.”¹⁵⁴ Further complicating the issue, USSOF may have the Title 10 authorities to conduct an activity, but they might still require CoM or CoS permissions to conduct it. As described by one NSW officer, when permissions are granted to jointly conduct a Title 10 operation that also has Title 50 elements (overlapping military and intelligence operations in a single operation), the legalities of the operation become increasingly complex.¹⁵⁵ The law of war is designed to protect the military when they are conducting traditional military activities under a military chain of command; however, Title 50 intelligence activities fall under executive authorities and provide no such protections.¹⁵⁶

Interviewee responses imply that, in joint operations between USSOF and CIA where both Title 50 and Title 10 authorities are leveraged, Title 50 authorities ultimately take precedence because they are deemed as the higher authority and have greater sensitivities. This occurs both because Title 50 activities fall under executive authorities and because the CIA has a much shorter approval process for operations. Regarding the limitations of authorities, the primary issue that USSOF interviewees raised revolved around the use of DoD assets or resources to support operations under Title 50 authorities. One Special Forces officer commented that “my team could not obtain approval to help with a CIA operation through our chain of command because it reportedly was not under our authorities, and there was not funding to support our involvement.”¹⁵⁷

Interviewees also mentioned that operating under different authorities further complicates the potential friction area of supporting the other organization’s indigenous partners. Title 10, Section 1208, was initially established due to a deficit in authorities for USSOF to support indigenous partners within Afghanistan.¹⁵⁸ In 2001, USSOF led in the training, equipping, and advising of the Northern Alliance against Al-Qaeda, but they

¹⁵⁴ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁵⁵ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁵⁶ Joseph B. Berger III, “Covert Action: Title 10, Title 50, and the Chain of Command.” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 67 (4th Quarter 2012): 32–39, <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a618714.pdf>.

¹⁵⁷ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁵⁸ Robinson, *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, 112.

lacked the authority to directly pay individuals to support ongoing U.S. kinetic operations; instead, they had to rely on the CIA for funding.¹⁵⁹ One Special Forces officer highlighted that, as his team was conducting train and equip missions in Syria, they ran into legal and funding issues with the CIA. USSOF teams were training, advising, and assisting a Syrian indigenous force focused on countering the IS threat under Title 10 authorities while the CIA executed a similar train and equip program, under Title 50 authorities, that focused on a separate partner force with differing objectives. Due to the separate authorities and funding streams, both USSOF and CIA personnel could not utilize their resources or equipment to support the other organization's program, leading to friction.

3. When Organizational Norms Differ without Awareness

Reponses from both USSOF and CIA interviewees signify that, at an institutional level, a fair amount of USSOF and CIA personnel lack in-depth knowledge of the other organization. Institutional and organizational differences between USSOF and the CIA significantly impact relationships between the two organizations and have the ability to hinder interactions between personnel. One CIA analyst commented that “the organizations in USSOF and the DoD on a larger scale are complex establishments and, to a CIA operative with no previous military experience, understanding the unit and rank structure seems like an overwhelming task.”¹⁶⁰ Some of the CIA interviewees from the ground branch had previous military experience and were better equipped to navigate the intricacies of USSOF units and personnel but nonetheless noted that most CIA personnel “don’t know the difference between Rangers, Special Forces, or other SOF units which poses a serious problem of credibility when interacting or briefing DoD counterparts.”¹⁶¹ Another CIA operative noted that USSOF and the CIA both use nuanced lingo and terminology, which can complicate communication and discourage operational collaboration. USSOF, as all of the DoD, is well-known for using acronyms, sometimes to a level that can deter interaction even among their own members let alone with interagency

¹⁵⁹ Robinson, *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, 112.

¹⁶⁰ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁶¹ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

personnel. Despite having a long, interrelated history, USSOF and the CIA both suffer from apparent cultural differences that can impede interoperability.

4. When Individuals Lack Transparency

Another overarching trend identified through interviewee responses indicates that USSOF and CIA personnel encounter interoperability issues when individuals fail to be transparent about their operational objectives and capabilities and otherwise neglect coordination efforts. Friction points occur when either organization attempts to operate in isolation and makes no attempt to share their mission intents or goals; this behavior creates a secretive atmosphere within interagency environments and causes frustration amongst operational counterparts who believe they are being deprived of useful planning information. Interviewee responses indicate that this trend emerges due to USSOF and CIA operating under different authorities and due to a lack of consideration of each other's mission goals. One CIA analyst suggested, "certain personnel, who usually don't have much experience with interagency dealings, keep information to themselves because they feel overprotective of their mission and don't want to risk outside interference."¹⁶² Additionally, another CIA analyst mentioned the CIA frequently compartmentalizes information internally within the agency based on mission involvement and need-to-know requirements.¹⁶³ As described by a former CIA chief of station, personnel can avoid lack of transparency by "being candid about mandates and intended missions[,which] helps personnel better understand capabilities and encourages interoperability between the two organizations."¹⁶⁴ Several Special Forces and NSW officers highlight that demonstrating a willingness to integrate into the interagency environment and demonstrating a thorough understanding of current operations upon arrival into theater allows USSOF teams to build trust among counterparts. In turn, an atmosphere of individual and team willingness encourages interagency organizations to share information more readily and evokes confidence in DoD's ability to safeguard and enhance their equities.

¹⁶² See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁶³ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁶⁴ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

5. When Military and Non-military Communications Platforms Fail to Allow Teams to Communicate

Interviewees said incompatible communications platforms are a friction point between USSOF and CIA personnel while deployed because they can obstruct communications while planning and executing missions. While USSOF primarily utilizes military communications networks, the CIA utilizes a different system that is not compatible with USSOF networks, resulting in problems with information sharing. Additionally, CIA personnel do not always consider USSOF personnel to “need-to-know” when it comes to sharing operational intelligence. Although USSOF does not need to know all pieces of intelligence that is compartmentalized by the agency, the act of safeguarding too much operational intelligence from USSOF often negatively affects operations and prevents institutional trust between the two organizations.

D. THREE SOLUTION-ORIENTED INTERVIEWEE THEMES

1. Furthering Opportunities for Effective Communication

USSOF and CIA respondents both highlighted open communication as a critical aspect of successful joint collaboration; communication helps to ensure both organizations coordinate and deconflict ongoing efforts through transparent information sharing. Establishing routine engagements through weekly meetings, CONOP reviews, and USCT meetings allows USSOF to provide open feedback on ongoing efforts and ensures that they do not cross-operational boundaries if the CIA has ongoing efforts in a specific geographical area or interfere with a CIA asset who is located near a USSOF operation.

Several USSOF interviewees also indicated that using Liaison Officers (LNO) to establish effective communication and deconfliction platforms with the Agency provided effective mechanisms to coordinate efforts with the CIA and the USCT. Placing senior and more capable team members within LNO positions also enhances USSOF's ability to shape ongoing TSOC efforts while providing feedback on USCT and CIA equities to USSOF within the country. LNO's unique position, co-located with the Agency or the USCT, also provides a means to bypass issues with differential communications platforms that often otherwise restrict or delay communication efforts, ensuring intelligence and information

sharing remains consistent throughout the deployment. LNOs also provide a conduit to interface with host nation and coalition SOF to enhance intelligence sharing and to build stronger networks within the targeted AO.

Effective communication builds personal and institutional trust between USSOF and the CIA and prevents the stovepiping of information, which can hinder collaborative efforts. Persistent engagement and communication between USSOF and the CIA reduces duplication of efforts and assists in synergizing Title 10 and Title 50 authorities and capabilities to achieve common U.S. government objectives.

2. Furthering Opportunities for USSOF and CIA Interactions

In addition to being a critical component for combined operational success, interactions between USSOF and CIA personnel are at the core of relationship building between the two organizations. USSOF and CIA interactions occur prior to deployment, during deployments, or through an LNO. The vast majority of interviewees interacted with their respective counterparts multiple times a week while deployed, whether in-person, through telecommunications, or by attending meetings of mutual requirement or interest. In two unique cases, interactions occurred on a daily basis due to proximate living facilities or co-located work offices. A small number of interviewees interacted with their counterparts on a limited basis either once or twice a month or experienced no contact at all, which allowed the researchers to assess the effects of no interaction between USSOF and CIA personnel.

USSOF and CIA interactions vary substantially depending on AOs and operational objectives with joint USSOF and CIA missions in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) AO occurring more frequently due to the setting and closer alignment of operational objectives.¹⁶⁵ Within the CENTCOM AO, the less permissive in-country environment also prevents USSOF and CIA entities from operating autonomously due to the presence of violent extremist organizations (VEOs), which dictates increased security while conducting missions. One Special Forces officer commented that “the CIA often

¹⁶⁵ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

relies on USSOF to fill additional security positions to meet mission requirements, and, conversely, the CIA supports USSOF mission objectives with intelligence.”¹⁶⁶ Under these circumstances, numerous USSOF officers and CIA operatives stated that daily interactions are most beneficial because they provide ample opportunity for USSOF teams and CIA operatives to communicate, share information, and collaborate on operations.¹⁶⁷ Additionally, USSOF personnel are able to vet missions through CIA counterparts to prevent interference with their initiatives. That said, although frequent interactions have obvious benefits, according to interviewees, they are not mandatory for USSOF mission success.

By contrast, personnel deployed on USSOF and CIA missions in other AOs, including U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) and U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), do not have as many daily interactions, or such interactions are not feasible due to operational locations. In permissive environments, USSOF and CIA personnel often operate autonomously away from the U.S. Country Teams (USCT), which limits interagency interactions and often leads to poor communication and friction. The CIA is less reliant on USSOF for security augmentation, and USSOF teams can conduct their missions with less potential for interference with CIA operations.¹⁶⁸ Ultimately, it seems that daily interaction and coordination between USSOF and the CIA depends on the nature of the missions and the AO. Areas with more kinetic operations and less permissive environments require a higher level of coordination and cooperation for security purposes.

Moreover, the timing of initial interactions between USSOF and CIA personnel is a critical factor for helping establish the groundwork for future working relationships and for easing the transition into a deployment environment. A minority of respondents reported having opportunities to meet with their future counterparts prior to deployment, usually during an in-country pre-deployment site survey (PDSS) or through an LNO co-

¹⁶⁶ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁶⁷ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁶⁸ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

located near the CIA in Washington D.C.¹⁶⁹ Several USSOF officers reported that meeting CIA counterparts prior to a deployment helps establish preliminary rapport and provides opportunities to discuss personal and professional matters in a less stressful setting.

A majority of USSOF and CIA personnel, however, do not have opportunities to interact prior to deployment, and, for this demographic, first interactions occur during the relief-in-place (RIP) process upon arriving in country, which rushes the rapport building process. The RIP process is designed to transition ongoing missions or efforts from outgoing USSOF teams to incoming teams and “hand-off” relationships with interagency partners. Typically, the RIP includes introductions to key USCT members with priority given to personnel who share USSOF mission objectives. CIA and USSOF frequently share similar objectives, making initial interactions an important cornerstone for USSOF teams assuming an ongoing mission. Establishing trust between both organizations is an essential step for new personnel when they enter a deployment country, and it needs to occur quickly due to short deployment timeframes.¹⁷⁰

In rare cases, interactions between USSOF and the CIA may not arise until several months of a deployment have passed. Such lack of interaction is reportedly detrimental due to an absence of available information and knowledge relevant for mission planning. This issue could potentially be avoided if the USSOF and the CIA were to require personnel interactions during the early stages of a deployment.¹⁷¹

3. The Ideal Scenario: Relationship Building over Several Missions

A few USSOF interviewees worked with the same CIA partners through multiple deployments and reported the ideal scenario for both organizations occurs when the same personnel are able to work together over the course of multiple deployments. As indicated by one Naval Special Warfare (NSW) officer, “repeated interactions between USSOF and CIA operatives lead to better working relationships based on familiarity and consistency

¹⁶⁹ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁷⁰ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

¹⁷¹ See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

of operational focus.”¹⁷² CIA deployments, usually lasting up to two years, are much longer than USSOF deployments, which typically only last six to eight months. The discrepancy in deployment length can limit USSOF teams' interactions with CIA operatives. Although mission objectives can still be aligned, the amount of time the CIA invests in an operation can extend beyond the length of an USSOF deployment.

¹⁷² See Appendix B, NPS IRB Protocol

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V. CONCLUSION

A. SYNTHESIS

This thesis sought to answer one primary research question. How can USSOCOM and the CIA integrate best practices to maximize interoperability in achieving U.S. policy objectives? The thesis intended to identify key lessons learned and to highlight overarching trends that potentially hinder the two organizations from achieving U.S. policy goals are to generate best practices that would enhance interoperability. This chapter describes best practices for USSOF and CIA personnel when working in a joint, inter-governmental, and interagency environment, which will also hopefully inform future USSOF personnel and CIA officers of common pitfalls that these two organizations' personnel routinely encounter so as to improve future joint collaborations and operations. In addition to the historical analyses, the interviews highlighted several themes that provided a baseline understanding of common areas where both organizations can improve coordination, and deconfliction, to reduce friction points. The research team found that increased understanding of organizational missions and authorities before and during joint operations, enhanced communication efforts through institutional liaisons and intelligence sharing, and resolved mission overlap issues through deconfliction and transparent mission planning efforts all aid USSOF and CIA mission success.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Further Identify Mission Overlap and Share Resources to Achieve Common Objectives

The primary finding from both USSOF and CIA interviewees was the importance of coordination and deconfliction to address mission overlap concerns between the two organizations and to ensure that neither entity unwittingly impedes each other's operations. In locations where both USSOF and the CIA are co-located, the research team highly recommends daily to weekly engagements, including Concept of the Operations (CONOPS) reviews and deconfliction meetings. In areas where face-to-face engagements are not feasible, respondents strongly suggested embedding LNOs with the Agency as well

as frequent virtual/telephonic meetings to ensure each organization addresses their equities and highlights operational boundaries. Regardless of location, USSOF personnel need to proactively reach out to their respective CoS, explain their mission and value to the CIA.

Over the last two decades, CIA's increased role in kinetic operations and USSOF's increased role in HUMINT operations have created an environment of mission overlap between the two organizations that, while also providing benefits, often generates primacy questions over operations when both Title 10 and Title 50 authorities are present. As an example, in June 2016, President Barack Obama resolved a dispute between the two organizations regarding who maintained primacy over the use of drone strikes. The president compromised, giving USSOCOM more responsibility but allowing both agencies some oversight over kinetic drone strikes.¹⁷³ This issue demonstrates how similar capabilities between the organization often leads to friction points, primacy concerns when working abroad, and the importance of clear and defined operational boundaries.

Many of the CIA interviewees also noted that a best practice for USSOF during joint operations is to highlight enabler Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) available to USSOF, unique unit capabilities, and reach-back support that can enhance ongoing and future operations.¹⁷⁴ USSOF resources such as medical support, airlift capabilities, ISR, logistics assets, and veterinarian support provide opportunities for greater collaboration and support building trust and confidence between the two organizations. Additionally, USSOF may also have specific permissions such as detention authorities or permissions to conduct tactical questioning that the CIA might not have. These unique capabilities further highlight the importance of USSOF integrating early with CIA counterparts to inform the Agency on USSOF capabilities and mandates and to advise on unique assets that they can leverage to support U.S. mission goals. In cases of mission overlap, USSOF can also leverage their resources to alleviate shared operational burdens. USSOF maintains many niche capabilities from which the CIA can garner assistance to support current operations

¹⁷³ Adam Entous and Gordon Lubold, "Obama's Drone Revamp Gives Military Bigger Responsibility, Keeps CIA Role," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 16, 2016. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/barack-obamas-long-awaited-drone-program-revamp-preserves-a-cia-role-1466088122>.

¹⁷⁴ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

and future contingencies. By demonstrating relevance and support to CIA objectives, USSOF are more likely to enhance working relationships with Agency counterparts and are less likely to experience friction points. Sharing resources also provides an opportunity to extend the Agency's access and placement to locations that were previously restricted to them due to security concerns, lack of available personnel, or conflicting priorities.

2. Increase Understanding of Missions and Authorities

USSOF increasing collaborative efforts before deployment, to include routine interactions with the Agency and incorporating various Agency members into USSOF training programs, will help clarify cultural and operational organizational differences and facilitate cross-pollination of ideas to enhance both USSOF and CIA operations. Many USSOF interviewees indicated that little effort is currently given to integrating with the CIA during their pre-mission training (PMT) cycles, which causes USSOF to lack clear understanding of CIA's ongoing efforts within their future Areas of Operations (AO) while also negatively affecting USSOF's ability to demonstrate how their capabilities, authorities, and networks can support the CIA's tactical, operational, and strategic objectives. They also noted friction areas that arise from lack of understanding the other organization.

Interaction between USSOF personnel and the CIA deployed to the same areas should occur as soon as possible, when feasible during the PMT cycle, to establish early relationships and to coordinate future mission objectives. Before deploying to an interagency AO, USSOF personnel also need to integrate with ADMA, whose primary role within the Agency is to "coordinate, plan, execute, and sustain worldwide activities that support CIA and DoD interaction based on priorities established by the Director of CIA to achieve National Security objectives."¹⁷⁵ Integration efforts with ADMA will enhance USSOF's ability to demonstrate their value to CIA's Foreign Intelligence (FI) collection capabilities, will provide insight on USSOF's assets that are available during joint operations, and will inform both organizations on the bureaucratic realities of USSOF and

¹⁷⁵ "Office of the CIA: Military Affairs," June 6, 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/offices-of-cia/military-affairs>.

the CIA hierarchy. Additionally, building rapport with CIA personnel, as well as other USCT interagency entities, is crucial for USSOF operational success, especially when objectives align with all vested parties. Amicable working relationships assist with instituting clear lines of communication and facilitate efforts to ensure that individuals' priorities nest into mutual objectives. Interaction also informs personnel on the differences in Title 10 and Title 50 Authorities, which establish both organizations' operational boundaries.

Ongoing operational interactions between USSOF and the CIA support collaborative efforts for mission accomplishment and help solidify trust between the two organizations. Following a deployment, USSOF must make efforts to facilitate Relief-In-Place/Transfer of Authority (RIP/TOA) activities to follow-on units to ensure they also maintain relationships with the CIA and prevent a loss in previous relationship gains due to personality differences. All interviewees from USSOF and the CIA highlighted the importance of collaboration, noting that personality clashes often undermine collaborative efforts. Many respondents also stated that USSOF's high turnover rates and extended dwell times hamper USSOF's ability to align its missions with CIA objectives. The CIA is a small, personality driven organization, and USSOF's lack of continuity can impede CIA personnel's trust and willingness to share information and intelligence. Although mission objectives can still align, the amount of time invested by the CIA in ongoing operations can extend beyond the length of a USSOF deployment. Without extending USSOF deployment times, mission continuity is achievable by deploying the same personnel to an AO where they have previously worked and have already established working relationships with their CIA counterparts, eliminating the need to re-establish rapport or prove their competency.

However, USSOF must also identify methods to circumvent officer management issues to ensure capable and competent personnel receive important joint interagency, inter-governmental, and multi-national positions. The current Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA), which drives DoD officer management policies and

regulations,¹⁷⁶ presents a challenge to implementing the recommendation to enhance USSOF and the CIA integration efforts by deploying the same personnel to the same AOs. DOPMA focuses on a uniform practice to advance officer career cycles, but limits the opportunities for capable USSOF officers to conduct multiple rotations to a particular location even if they are the best choice for the position and have previously established relationships. Nonetheless, it is possible that the importance of joint operations to mission success may merit USSOF revising or otherwise adapting DOPMA requirements.

3. Increase Communication and Joint Training to Enhance Transparency and Build Trust

Allocating additional positions like Liaison Officers (LNO) embedded with the CIA through joint assignments can provide increased communication and enhanced transparency between the organizations. According to most CIA personnel responses, USSOF over-utilizes confusing military terms that can confuse USSOF's intentions.¹⁷⁷ Not all CIA personnel have a military background and, without a common understanding of terms and acronyms, unnecessary barriers can exist between the two organizations. USSOF should understand that not all personnel in the interagency have experience working with military counterparts and should strive to use commonsense terminology to ensure that they clearly define and describe shared information, intelligence, and military operations. Providing additional joint assignments between the two organizations helps personnel learn about each other's organizational construct and common terminology, demonstrates value to mutually supporting objectives, builds trust, and establishes multiagency networks that support current and future interoperability efforts. USSOF must also understand that there are subcultures within the Agency due to their complex mandates. While USSOF are selected and trained based on similar ideal attributes, the CIA selects and trains personnel on different set of traits based on their operational roles within the organization. Someone working within the CIA's mission centers has different skill

¹⁷⁶ Peter Schirmer, Harry J. Thie, Margaret C. Harrell, and Michael S. Tseng, *Challenging Time in DOPMA: Flexible and Contemporary Military Officer Management* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG451.html>.

¹⁷⁷ See Appendix C, NPS IRB Protocol

sets and personality traits than a CIA paramilitary officer; USSOF personnel must understand these differences to more fully comprehend CIA cultures and sub-cultures.

Additional joint training, incorporating both CIA and USSOF personnel during PMT periods, will also support educating both organizations on commonly used terminology associated with each organization. Jointly conducted exercises, mission planning, working groups, and capability briefings all provide opportunities to increase dialogue, enhance organizational understanding, and build institutional and personal trust between the CIA and USSOF. Additional joint training would also inform both USSOF and the CIA on communication platforms commonly used by both organizations to prevent future information and intelligence sharing issues. By identifying common information and intelligence sharing practices, USSOF can develop mechanisms such as LNO positions or establish compatible communication platforms to enhance information flow between the two organizations and, thus, improve transparency of operations.

C. AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Since 2001, USSOF and the CIA have enhanced joint operational capabilities against asymmetric threats throughout the globe and met with many successes; however, this thesis also identified interoperability improvement areas. While current joint operations between USSOF and the CIA primarily focus against non-state actors, future research could identify methods for USSOF and the CIA to operate jointly against both state and non-state actors that seek to challenge the international status quo. USASOC 2035 establishes the U.S. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) narrative and focus “for the further development of ARSOF institutional and operational capabilities to counter future threats across the spectrum of conflict,”¹⁷⁸ but it is limited to only the ARSOF approach. While ARSOF 2035 provides the architecture through an ends, ways, means

¹⁷⁸ Duane Mosier and Kenneth Tovo, “USASOC 2035: Communicating the ARSOF Narrative and Setting the Course for 2035,” *Special Warfare* 30, no.3 (July-September 2017) <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=804710>, 16–17.

approach to future hybrid conflicts, it lacks a clear description of how USSOF and the CIA could jointly address peer and near-peer competitors.¹⁷⁹

The last 17 years of campaigns against VEOs provided our peer and near-peer adversaries including Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea insight on U.S. military strengths and weaknesses and afforded them opportunities to modernize their force against U.S. capabilities. As highlighted in the December 2017 National Security Strategy, “China and Russia began to reassert their influence regionally and globally. Today, they are fielding military capabilities designed to deny America access in times of crisis and to contest our ability to operate freely in critical commercial zones during peacetime.”¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, the U.S. military must prepare to operate across the full spectrum of operations and multiple domains at once and to identify USSOF’s future strategic utility against both asymmetric and conventional threats. According to David Tucker and Christopher Lamb, USSOF must understand three primary factors that interact and change over time to establish these changes: “the intrinsic and distinguishing capabilities of the forces; the nature of the most important security challenges facing the nation; and the military requirements that emanate from the nation’s strategy for dealing with those challenges.”¹⁸¹ Therefore, future research could address how USSOF and the interagency, to include the CIA, can operate jointly to counter peer and near-peer adversaries and to enhance joint capabilities for the force of tomorrow.

¹⁷⁹ Mosier and Tovo, “USASOC 2035,” 1–2.

¹⁸⁰ “National Security Strategy,” 27.

¹⁸¹ Christopher Lamb and David Tucker. *United States Special Operations Forces*. Columbia University Press, 2007. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ebook-nps/reader.action?docID=895086>, 144.

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APPENDIX A. THESIS QUESTIONNAIRE

A. PURPOSE: OPTIMIZE INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN SOF AND CIA ENTITIES AT USCTS WORLDWIDE

1. Identify SOF and CIA friction points and challenges at USCTs.
2. Analyze SOF and CIA best practices and provide recommendations to optimize interoperability.

B. TARGET DEMOGRAPHICS

Section I: Naval Postgraduate School Defense Analysis students and USSOCOM personnel interview questions.

1. What was your job and scope of responsibility while assigned to a USCT?
2. When deployed to a USCT, did collaborations or relationships exist among SOF and CIA? Were you required to initiate contact with the CIA element?
3. When and where did you first interact with your CIA counterparts?
4. How frequently did your job require interaction with the CIA?
5. Did your job or mission overlap with CIA objectives in the USCT?
6. Did you work through the SOF Liaison Element to share information with the CIA?
7. What challenges or friction points does SOF encounter when interacting with the CIA?
8. What interactions or collaborations were successful, and what contributed to success?
9. How do Title 10/50 Authorities affect operations between SOF and the CIA?
10. What other organizations did you primarily interact with at the USCT, and how did they support or hinder your mission?

11. What recommendations would you provide to SOF personnel deploying to USCTs, and what advice would you give them about the CIA?

Section II: CIA personal interview questions.

1. What was your job and scope of responsibility while assigned to a USCT?
2. When deployed to a USCT, did collaborations or relationships exist among SOF and CIA? Were you required to interact with the SOF element?
3. Did your job or mission overlap with SOF objectives in the USCT? If so in what capacity?
4. Did you leverage SOF capabilities or SOF access and placement to support your operations?
5. What challenges did you face that SOF was able to alleviate?
6. What challenges or friction points does the CIA face while interacting with SOF personnel?
7. What interactions or collaborations were successful, and what contributed to success?
8. How do Title 10/50 Authorities affect operations between SOF and the CIA?
9. What future missions do you foresee SOF and CIA being able to collaborate on?
10. What recommendations would you provide to CIA personnel deploying to USCTs, and what advice would you give them about working with SOF?

C. END STATE: OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhanced dissemination of information between SOF and CIA.
2. Fortify SOF and CIA interoperability to address national objectives.
3. Maximize SOF and CIA collaboration throughout all GCCs.

APPENDIX B. NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL DEFENSE ANALYSIS STUDENTS' INTERVIEW RESPONSES

1. Describe your job and scope of responsibility while forward deployed?

School House, Pilot Team during Robin Sage and Alpha Course

- Tactical Commander:
 - ODA Commander
 - 6-month rotation to S. America to train PNFs.
 - Up to 3-month JCETs.
 - Jedburgh Team Commander
 - OIC for Train and Equip Mission
 - SEAL Assistant Platoon Commander
- Operational:
 - Aid-de-Camp to Operational Commander
 - JTF Commander with seat inside station space
 - SOJTF-OIR J3X Coordinator
 - Multinational Joint Task Force J3
- a. How often did you interact with embassy personnel?**
- Daily interactions and at times 3-4 times a week.
 - Roughly eighty percent of the time; mission approval and support from embassy personnel.
 - Multiple times a week ranging from VTCs, teleconferences for coordination and meetings for intelligence collection.
- Weekly interaction ranging from multiple times a week to one.
 - Formalized meetings once or twice a week.
 - About thirty percent of the time; mission approval and support from embassy personnel.
 - Weekly interactions to ensure open LOCs for operation clarity and de-confliction.
 - Twice through LNO w/DOD elements in the Middle East.
 - Once a week to brief the SOLO, DEA and INL.
- Every two weeks and down to no interactions.

2. When and where did you first interact with your CIA counterparts?

- Prior to Deployment during PDSS.
 - Interagency week
 - Start of 2015 as a liaison to 4th BN
 - January 2015, tasking that supported CIA (pretty good working relationship)
- Through a theater LNO in the Middle East.
- In-country (right away):
 - Day-to-day early on in the deployment.
 - During RIP process at a Forward Operating Base (FOB).
 - Met COS through existing relationship with SOF officers (all in country). Prior to this, the only other time was at the Q course.
 - At a Synchronization meeting.
- In-country (later on deployment):
 - During deployment following the cancelation of a planned exercise between blue and brown water operation. (First meeting was on bad terms)
 - Led to meetings that are more frequent to coordinate between blue and brown water operations.
- None:
 - Not for missions, it was a very informal relationship and more in passing.

3. How frequently did your job require interaction with the CIA?

- Daily and very frequently.
 - Daily and operational periods as much as possible.
 - Co-location allowed for more interactions and mission overlap.
- Weekly:
 - Multiple times a week to ensure SOF and CIA ongoing initiatives aligned and the commander was tracking complementary lines of efforts between both organizations.
 - To synchronize, prioritize, and de-conflict operations.
 - Debrief CIA or cross-level information sharing.
 - Once per week or every other week for de-confliction of assets and coordination for operations.

- Monthly:
 - First time less frequent and mostly to de-conflict battlespace, 2nd time more often. Throughout both tours, cleared DOD operations with CIA prior to execution, also warned each other of imminent threats in AO.
- Seldom/Never:
 - Minimal interaction with the CIA during all deployments.
 - Did not require interactions but it was a collaborative team effort to accomplish the mission.
 - Did not interact with CIA (SEALS partner), because ODA was partnered with DEA and INL.
 - No direct interactions.

4. When deployed, to what extent did collaborations or relationships exist among SOF and CIA?

- Intelligence and information sharing collected during SOF operations.
 - Actionable information for joint operations.
- Deconfliction of CT targets and coordination with Partner Force.
 - Coordination of assets was good and DOD shared ISR platforms.
 - In Syria, deconfliction was not, good because of multiple CIA stations covered it from different countries.
 - Each station had its own goals and often times were conflicting.
 - Title 10/50 limited interoperability.
 - Through established working relationship but each entity had different missions.
 - Out of necessity to be effective.
 - Good area atmospherics led to bigger reach and better mechanism.
- Communication:
 - “Are you engaging high enough” regarding CIA partnership
 - CIA was very clear on their missions, established boundaries for SOF to work around and maintain interoperability.
 - CIA former military/SOF personnel, however they would not tell them their level of DOD understanding (led to friction points).
- SOF openness with the CIA, allowed them to see behind the curtain and build trust.

- JSOC well integrated with the CIA based on previous operations. Regular SOF personnel had a more difficult time fostering relationships with the CIA.
- JEDs and RSE are better integrated. Individuals worked in CIA offices.
- Force mechanism: both entities did not fully trust each other due to compartmentalization and size of battlespace.
- Battlefield CDR, respected personally and professionally by COS and Chief of Base.
 - Purposely visit interagency partners during battlefield circulations to ensure that they were well supported by subordinate components.
- One-way transparency had to figure out how to work around it.
- Nothing official, informal and cordial relationship at the embassy.
- None.
- a. How did SOF coordinate and de-conflict operations with the CIA?**
- Through LNOs:
 - Higher headquarters or via face-to-face conversations.
 - Representative at the CJIATF level ensured the CIA was not recruiting the same recruits.
 - CIA had a better method of finding personnel that wanted to fight the regime.
 - SOF was taking anyone (no standards, just numbers).
- Operation Synchronization Meetings:
 - Face-to-face because of proximity of each other and ensure transparency on both ends.
 - Face-to-face with CIA representatives and Chief of Base.
 - Continued over phone calls/emails until resolved.
 - Point-to-point VTCs.
 - For concurrence and situation awareness not for approval.
 - Made CIA part of notification process.
 - Staff CONOPs through the COM and COS for concurrence prior to mission execution.
 - JSOC/CIA operated in the same area and want SOF to go to lower threat areas because of fear of interference with their operations.
 - Physical security:
 - Access and placement to places that CIA could not access.

- Communications systems not compatible, however sitting side-by-side they were able to overcome these challenges.
 - Senior level engagements to discuss operations.
 - Most issues were resolved at the tactical level.
 - Keeping LOCs open.
 - Facilitated MEDEVAC for CIA personnel, which brought both sides closer together.
- Mutual intelligence Sharing and individuals sat side by side during deployments.
 - At the Fusion Cell.

5. To what extent did your job or mission overlap with CIA objectives?

- Overlap in mission and deconfliction of sources was necessary to avoid mistakes.
- Funding
- Developing a common operational picture for tactical and operational commanders.
- Counter-terrorism missions and recruiting from the same pool.
- Mission – in AO went to SEALs, however the Danish were better suited to work in Middle East.
 - Mission overlapped approximately ninety percent of the time.
 - Through Title 10-1209: SOF offered air support, however it conflicts with UAV support to Title 50 missions.
 - (Same as above) JSOC/CIA operated in the same area and want SOF to go to lower threat areas because of fear of interference with their operations.
 - CIA facilitated initial introductions to host nation partner forces.
 - Blue and brown water interdictions missions with two different authorities.
 - Information sharing, both entities conducting the same mission.
 - Countering different adversaries both had different objectives.
 - CIA collection focused on a national level.
 - SOF focused more on a tactical or operational level intel collection.
 - Sometime intel requirements overlapped.
- Communications aided good relationships help mission accomplish/building rapport.

- Very little at the tactical level.
- a. **How did the CIA support your mission?**
 - Utilizing the CIA liaison at the CJSOTF, to bless off on recruits.
 - Corroborating on how to define organizational terms.
 - Provide initial read-on for information sharing for the CIA to action.
 - For their analysis of the situation.
 - Mandates/Authorities:
 - Levering different authorities to accomplish the mission.
 - Operations with PN force
 - Provided action arms and ISR platforms not readily available due to force gap in AFG.
 - Iraq: professional, open, cooperative and assisted a great deal in furthering intergovernmental goals.
 - Long standing relationship
 - Syria: CIA personalities in decision-making positions were the opposite of that in Iraq, at times divisive.
 - They stopped operations with certain assets.
 - Would not provide a reason and sometimes stopped platforms all together.
 - CIA promotions depended on production of intel products.
 - Tarnished the likelihood of working together in the future.
 - Communication equipment: technical support with bandwidth and data, as well as space to work.
 - Through mentorship; dos and don'ts, having someone to bounce ideas off.
 - Not at all, SOF did not support their mission; CIA used SOF as the face for the Media.

6. Describe how SOF shared operational information with the CIA?

- LNOs disseminated information to HQs at the embassy and they would disseminate it to the IA.
 - Through the CIA had liaison at the CJSOTF.
 - Goal was to inform the Ambassador.
- De-confliction happened levels above tactical SOF, through meetings, especial battle rhythm meeting.
 - Described authorities and mandates Communications:
 - Face-to-face engagements with CIA and British S.A.S.

- SITREP information only
- Systems:
 - Targeting officer with staff access CIA systems.
 - SIPR and JWICS e-mails.
 - ISR assets.
 - Data mining and browsing through Databases.
- Operational concurrence and approval by different USCT sections.
 - Intelligence released through normal channels.
 - Shared CONOPs and post-mission reports (to ensure there were no issues with report prior to publishing it)
 - Indigenous people and forces
 - Knowing SOF priorities and sharing information with agency.
- a. **To what degree did the SOF Liaison Element facilitate this process?**
 - The SOLO/SOFLE typically had a much better relationship with members of the IA and could facilitate interactions.
 - Through the BN S2
 - No degree of continuity and lack of establishment led to unestablished and not trusted relationships.
 - A lot because he had more continuity in country and had better relationships with USCTs personnel.
 - Connected rotating SOF members.
 - Coordination:
 - Greatly, because the battlefield commander had a liaison officer embedded with his unit.
 - Source Sharing
 - Embassy targeting officer was the conduit between both entities through personal connections.
 - Main liaison element, however he was not part of the CONOP approval process.
 - Took DATT objectives and goals to ensure SOF team was in line with goals.
 - Synchronization:
 - There was none until he had Delta fill that role, until a SOSLO filled that persistent position.

- Communication:
 - Transparency
 - Not needed, had direct access to the CIA
 - Jedburgh act as SOFLE
- None

7. What challenges or friction points does SOF encounter when interacting with the CIA?

- Source sharing
- Information sharing
- Communications transparency:
 - Need-to-know, read-on, etc.
 - Single sided communications, CIA is not as clear with boundaries.
 - You do not know what you do not know until you have crossed that line.
 - One hundred percent dependent on personality and was one of the biggest hurdle with the CIA.
 - This effected ties into interoperability.
 - Good relationship but not at all levels.
 - No sense of urgency with response and slow rolled things that need fast action.
 - CIA likes to highlight DOD mistakes (CIA gets away with more mistakes)
 - SOF not engaging CIA individuals at a high enough level.
 - Higher level conflicts but affected tactical team. Intelligence clash.
- Operations:
 - 180-day rotations were a limiting factor, as oppose to the CIA who had persistent engagement with longer rotation periods.
 - Did not nest missions and had different objectives. If SOF missions did not support CIA missions, they were not incline to support it.
 - More patience with missions because they have more time in country.
 - AO overlap caused CIA/JSOC to direct TSOC to other areas where there was not as much demand or desire to conduct missions.
 - Managing mission execution.

- Not able to report findings for DOD based on CIA information requirements or restrictions. (CIA compartmentalized information)
- Available resources to commit to the team effort.
- Indirectly through recruitment operations, (SOF vetted their own training sites, if they identified anyone questionable, the CIA would still take them.).
- CIA recruited individuals just showed up without prior notice and tried to rally up people to quit.
 - DOS memo signed by recruits but the document was classified “secret”.
 - CIA tried to push their recruits through SOF training without prior coordination.
- Sometimes goals do not match up and can lead to competing interest between both organizations.
- CIA strategic focused, SOF tactically focused.
- Communication Systems:
 - Stove piped CIA systems made it hard for SOF to get access to their reports. Correspondence limited due systems availability. (getting read-on slots were an issue for SOF)
- Trust:
 - Most of the encounters wither worked or failed due to trust, timing and/or over stepping boundaries.
 - Lack of interagency perspectives for both sides.
 - SOF focused more on tactical and kinetic operations
 - CIA focused on strategic and intelligence collection.

8. What were the best practices when collaborating with the CIA?

- ICD 304 to de-conflict sources and ensure you are not running the same ones.
- Communications transparency:
 - With all operations and willingness to share information with the CIA.
 - Mutual understanding of expectations.
 - No one was holding the CIA accountable to support SOF.
 - Believed that SOF was going to hamper CIA progress and/or operations.
 - Can help with better interoperability.
 - Communication is key for understanding mission objectives and knowing limits.

- Good for reciprocity
 - Will allow entities to work at a higher level... “I can’t divulge that information” will not work.
 - Say, it do not hide it.
- Routine meetings to build relationships to set the conditions for later missions or operations.
 - Schedule initial visit with CIA to discuss Mandates and objectives.
 - Understanding what your missions and authorities (what they allow or not allow you to do)
 - Do not overstep bounds.
 - Introduction and let them know that you are “open to collaborating with them”
- Senior Operatives and hierarchy of duties and responsibilities, how they match between both organizations.
- Personalities:
 - Ignored CIA, leading them to seek SOF out. However, once summoned SOF was running too fast and did not know what was going on.
 - Building rapport and fostering long-term relationships.
 - It is not about work but building trust and confidence between the two organizations.
 - Not to be intrusive.
 - Mutual relationships (not one way)
 - Find common grounds and being a team player.
 - Experiences may hinder future operations.
- Joint training exercises
 - ODG training more in line with Ground Branch (Small footprint), additional training gives them more credibility with the CIA.
- Having same personnel going back to the same AO.
 - CIA rotations allowed for better continuity both in longevity and sending the same individuals back to the same AO.

9. **How do Title 10/50 Authorities affect operations between SOF and the CIA?**

- Clearly define authorities and permissions
- There was a distinct line between the two
- Title 10 is easy for CIA to non-concur, however title 50 is more complex.

- Permissions make title 10/50 more nebulous.
- Fell under CT EXORD authority
- Greatly, especially when who has control when objectives are “too” aligned?
 - It came down to available resources at the time.
- Typically no direct impacts.
- In SOUTHCOM AOR, title 50 procured items that SOF will later train PNF.
- Affected SOF with property and ammo procurement (1209 ammo was not allowed for use). (Train and equip)
- Confusion on resources purchased by Title 10/50.
- SOF in support of CIA because they have primacy of intelligence collection.
 - Not force each other, give it time.
- Restrictive direct support but had to be very cautious.
 - Information sharing and mutual interests and benefits.

10. What recommendations would you provide to SOF personnel operating in an interagency environment?

- PDSS to know USCT personnel, especially the Ambassador and COS not just the HN partners that the team on ground is working with.
 - Understanding the operational environment and understand the CIA’s surface level of hierarchy in AO.
- Communications (Personality based) Have open dialogues with the CIA.
 - Initial sit down at start of deployment.
 - Build relationships and rapport early on and find gaps to work within.
 - Build professional reciprocity, beyond beer friends.
 - Build a working and trusting relationship to optimize interoperability, by understanding individual motivation.
 - Do not assign young and immature individuals to those positions (they will become the face of DOD in the eyes of CIA).
 - Be transparent and share information, whether you want to or not. Know that it has second and third orders of effect.
 - Be clear about mission and manage expectations on what the CIA is willing to share.
 - Ask the CIA how can be mutually supportive of their missions.

- Share a meal and know your interagency partners on a personal level.
 - Manage expectation and inform the CIA “This is what we are here to do, what you are trying to do? How can we help each other?”
 - Written memo authored by both parties and sign by GCC CDR (a binding contract).
- Understand acronyms and terminology
- Perspective matters “check ego at the door”.
- Do not act as if you bring a lot to the table, be humble.
- Continuity between SOF teams is important because of high turnover ratio compared to CIA’s longer rotations.
 - CIA long game vs SOF short game.
- Know what your mandates allow you to do as well as your left and right limits.
 - Determine what access you need to work with the CIA (higher levels need to manage more appropriately).
 - CIA potentially stiff-armed SOF missions because their mandate was more important.
 - Understand that CIA has a different culture, personalities, and ways to work.
 - Task organization and who they work for....
- RIP:
 - Understand your job and equities and ensure you have a good RIP, know and understand what they were doing.
 - Conduct an introductory meeting with CIA representatives in embassy.
 - Get feedback from current team on personnel personalities.
- Training:
 - Embassy 101 course and an interagency week
 - More professional development training regarding CIA activities and mission requirements.
 - More in-depth brief during interagency briefs during the SFQC.
 - Learn biographies of personnel if possible.
- SOF Command guidance was vague
 - Provide subordinate leadership with left/right limits based off interagency goals and missions.
 - Individuals selected for deployment out to be mature, professional and a team player.

- a. What advice would you give them about the CIA?**
- Start contact with CIA/IA personnel prior to deployment and start those relationships.
 - Make early connections with the CIA and continue to make frequent visits throughout your deployment.
 - Communication:
 - Be a professional; do not ask questions that you can answer on your own.
 - Speak the same language.
 - Understand that who they work for (President).
 - If your operations overlap, the CIA does not have to share or cooperate.
 - It's okay to make mistakes if you do not know what your boundaries are.
 - Take advantage of the mentorship piece available for the CIA.
 - Learn from the good and bad experiences.
 - Do not oversell capabilities to the CIA; be clear about what you are there to do and your mandates for the mission.
 - Conduct back-briefs to ensure transparency on mission accomplishments and ensure SOF team did not overstep boundaries.
 - Develops trust and shows that you are professionals.
 - Take a long-term vision approach to the relationship (not just for your short rotation).
 - Understand where they are coming from
 - Acknowledge cultural differences.
 - Mandates are different from SOF and are mission focused.
 - Embassy 101 course – familiarizing them with CoS, CoM, LEGAT, etc. (Pitfalls, redline, and good practices)
 - Do your country study (demonstrates knowledge and mission), will help to break down barriers.
 - CIA expected SOF to know everything they do.
 - Keep your egos in check.
 - They are a military group who is less rigid.
 - They will withhold information.
 - ADMA JSOC billets, influence SOF presence by getting more billets.
 - Continue to run things through the SOLO/SOFLE.

11. How familiar were you with the CIA's role and activities prior to deploying to your respective AOR?

- Very familiar with their work ethics because CDR was an LNO to the CIA
 - Spent 1.5 years preparing for CP mission, built personal trust, and identified areas where both organizations' can support other agencies/ departments.
 - Had read-on prior to deployment, which was helpful because he could discuss the mission with the CIA right away.
 - Met with ADMA, explained the different mission centers, however they have more connections with JSOC then with SOF (SOF does not have many positions within ADMA).
 - Second deployment, CIA integration was part of mission preparations and understood their mission in the AOR.
 - Attend Strategic Appreciation Seminars and Senior Leader Conferences prior to deploying.
 - Exposure to CIA activities and current initiatives made things clear.
 - Especially with their roles and missions in the AO.
- Somewhat with a limited capacity
- None and this was an issue because he was not aware of CIA activities. It's a must for a PDSS checklist.
 - Relationship was handed-off during RIP process and doing battlefield circulation.
 - First, time no clue and was a steep learning curve.
 - Did not conduct PDSS and was not too familiar, given how much they worked together.
 - Not at all!

APPENDIX C. CIA INTERVIEW RESPONSES

1. What was your job and scope of responsibility while stationed overseas?

- Senior Intelligence Service (SIS) officer
- 3x COS at various locations to include a major European country.
- DA Analyst – Section Chief and reported directly to the COS.
- DO Officer – Mission command working on ground detailed.
- JSOC LNOs to educate the force about Agency distinctions.
- Responsive Bridge between titles 10/50, capabilities, resources, etc.
- How they use the information for their ops. Scope was broad and all encompassing. In addition overseas- conus to see integration between both entities.
- Nope; liaison between the two organizations.
- Paramilitary Ground Branch Detachment Deputy and Chief supported programs for foreign intelligence.

2. When station overseas, how frequently did you collaborate or have interactions with SOF?

- While in the District of Columbia, 5 days a week over the phone calls, emails, LNOs. While overseas pretty much daily.
- Every day with SOLO, however the DATT wanted more CIA interaction than the SOF representative because he was higher ranked.
- Weekly engagements as needed.
- Daily interactions in some capacity with USSOF and JSOC.
- Daily basis with both USSOF and Foreign SOF.
- Weekly to daily depending on location.

3. In what capacity did your job or mission overlap with SOF objectives?

- SOF went out to the world with speed, precision, minimal risk... There has to be a give and take relationship. There is an inherent expectation of SOF activities paying off....
- As it has been since 9/11, the CIA are more kinetic and SOF are conducting more intel activity (operations).

- Overlap will remain, and everyone needs to keep up those activities. Opportunity complement each other still exist and must be done to amplify and effect.
- Any given ORA, after GWOT we have third country monitoring responsibilities. Fifty percent was GWOT related, twenty percent was with SOFLE and SOLO for deconfliction and coordination, which required massive coordination with HN and SOLO/SOFLE.
- There was some overlap; their organization oversaw all elements, and if there was conflict, the CIA would always win out the argument; this sometimes created friction points for SOF. Their objective was to work with them to support a project, and try to get to a yes.
- Biggest barrier is that they say no automatically because they look at problems in a different, and have different acronyms.
- Overuse of military jargon that is not familiar to the CIA. That negatively effects the CIA because many agency personnel do not have the time to try to understand the jargon. Wasted time trying to figure out what SOF was trying to say and understand.
- Also they did not have a strong understanding of the rank structure and who was important that they needed to deal with (J codes). It all comes down to personalities.
- Titles and authorities were an issue too.
- Some benefits is that most people in this generation have come in after 9/11 and all have had to work with SOF. Agency is learning to and they need to learn how to best integrate with the military and training must be a high focus for personnel with the embassy.
- Often objectives were mutually supportive.
- Overlap was both negative and positive with respect to the target was.
- Consequence management in battlespace that could disrupt their target.
- Overlap was at both the front and back end because of mission, he could not tell SOF all pertinent information.

4. How often did you leverage SOF capabilities to support your operations?

- Weekly, not necessarily her but others in the office as well and going into the future the expectation and leveraging SOF capabilities will increase. Both SOF and CIA do certain things well and it should not be viewed as a competition, but rather a marriage.
- Volume of resources will increase.

- Reach and mobility because USSOF had presence in certain places of interest to the CIA.
- Depends on the location and mission set. The countries with GWOT missions are more prevalent, other missions such as Baltics, South China Sea, etc. CI missions are more isolated to CIA.
- In reference to liaison, current amount of coordination is fine, we don't need concentric circles, no need for further overlap.
- CIA has a good understanding of what SOF does, but it needs to continue because people rotate frequently. Capabilities and limitations are crucial to inform CIA at initial meeting.
- Integrating early helps, and understanding the process of how approvals work, it needs to jive with what agency is doing. Many times the bureaucracy with the military approval process takes too long and the window might get missed. If you establish a good working relationship early on, you can negate the long bureaucratic process.
- Yes; equipment- however, the blurring between the titles 10/50 lines determined what the equipment could be used for. Pot of money bureaucracies have a negative relationship.
- Working under CT authorities to protect the homeland.
- Very often, because SOF enablers support their missions (Airlift, ISR, CAS, and MEDEVAC).
- Needed enablers for operations to lower the risk and they did not have the resources.
- Retention authorities and tactical questioning authorities.
- Technical capabilities that may not be readily available in the F3EAD cycle.
- Title 10 may be pre-approved to do technical means that would take CIA too long to get approval.
- Military would have better access to certain areas.

5. What challenges did you face that SOF was able to alleviate?

- The biggest factor that I saw was how things changed and how they supported each. Seeing that come to fruition was a bonus.
- Physical things, reach, mobility, presence, Access challenges, which SOF can help, alleviate...
- Creativity: we must get rid of biases such as the CIA is more creative than SOF and vice versa or, sayings such as "We always done it a certain way"... Finding out how to solve the problem. Nothing tangible, thinking

about problem solving. Whether its authority based... Long-standing reoccurring challenges....More to offer than people may realize. Both entities leverage each other capabilities. Dependency without the negative stigma.

Personality based... type-a personality, go-getter, may be a detriment to getting things done with both entities. Identifying how CEOs treat each other is as important as figuring out how people interact at the lower levels.

- Our whole world is in a resource constraint environment and we do not have time to waste, especially with petty differences...
- Access to remote areas with level 3, can't do it on their own. Cannot get to those locations without SOF, do not have the protection available to operate autonomously.
- Physical security, not just with 18s, but also with joint operations and indigenous personnel. Plus, the addition of logistics and CAS. Building partnering capacity to facilitate or improve physical security concerns.
- CA, MISO, and Level 3 in areas unreachable by CIA due to logistics.
- No, there could have been though if they would have been transparent with their activities.
- In general, Agency has a light footprint in any given AOR and do not have many aircraft capability, DOD has more resources to apply to the problem set.
- Ability to communicate between both organizations because of acronyms and jargon.
- Logistics – air resupply, plus rotary wing support for movement and HN transport.
- Match right capability with right authority. Just because we can, does not mean we are authorize to do it.
- Vetting intelligence and passing leads to SOF if applicable. Being able to talk to one another to corroborate reporting.

6. What challenges or friction points does the CIA face while interacting with SOF personnel?

- “Not enough fingers and toes to count them”
- Both requirements and friction, points are the mean the same thing.
- Communications issue: when it came to style, personality, and trust between both entities... but two different cultures may be surmounted...

How? Share the information and show that you are capable....Drop the “I am better at then you are” attitude.

- Different perspective of what is feasible, where is the threshold of different ideas... Huge different in perspective of acceptable risk for CONOPs, etc... Especially with the DCIA and the CJCS, and it affects how we operate. This perspective of acceptable risk, trickles down to the lower levels and leads to individuals saying, “I am not the decision maker, my hands are tied behind my back, etc.”
- There is a sweet spot between risk takings that both entities must operate within – always recognizing that there is still a level of risk when conducting operations. People are too risk adverse.
- Individuals at the higher echelons, have a certain level of care when it comes to preserving American lives. However, they are especially conscious of the Consequences and Blowback.
- CIA does not have enough people to conduct all missions and they have to execute them with what you have... For example, a mission needs 10 personnel to execute it safely, but they only have seven personnel, they must make due and execute the mission with what they have on hand.
- Fiction: Who gets recognition for the success of the operation? Which leads to that entity getting more money and resources?
- Different perspective on **timing** of activity... short term or long term effects. Payoff – putting 10 individuals in harm’s way to accomplish the mission, may not be worth it... CIA and SOF different perspective.
- Each claims that one side is moving too fast or too slow. Communication at not synchronized various levels.
- Redefine that partnership into the future.
- Authorities’ issue: who is the battlespace owner? Whom to inform, and where to operate as a professional courtesy.
- Just now, are SOPs truly involved in the interagency, after 18 years of joint operations.
- ****Not knowing how to articulate their authorities their capabilities and mandates.****
- SOF is not picked on but the short duration of tours, makes SOF stand out as somewhat second-class citizens. The level of responsibility is not the same compared to someone there for multiple years.
- Greatly exaggerated that SOF has a bad reputation based off one or two incidents (hookers and blow), Wildman cowboy reputation is not as prevalent. Repeat offenders can hurt reputations.

- SOF in country prioritizes mission, even though the mission may not be as important as one of the levers of national power. Fit in where you can and do not push an agenda that is not as important.
- Titles, personalities, and training.
- Friction occurred because each organization had different objectives.
- Cultural differences between SOF and CIA... Relationships matter.
- Coordination is key.
- Misunderstanding of one another's goals and operating from ignorance.
- The CIA frequently compartmentalizes information internally within the agency based on mission involvement and need-to-know requirements.
- Language/Lingo, not every officer is the same. Language constantly needs to be overcome speed at which operations happen.
- Lexicon misunderstanding, different cultures and subcultures, especially with DO's Mission Centers.
- Blowback for ISR platforms used by SOF.
- SOF wants to work with the same people as the CIA. Lack of process knowledge.
- Classification, cover for CIA DOD not so much.

7. What best practices contributed to successful collaboration with SOF?

- First – fostering relationships between two leaders, really matter... understanding that personalities are personalities. Breaking the ice not just at the tactical level at the higher levels. This includes addressing issues in the same manner, from tactical to operational, strategic.
- Second – Personality – both sides need to know each other. Ultimate goal is to get the job done. Take the opportunity to lay out what you have done (be humble).
- Cultures between both entities... need to care about not only your people but also SOF, and vice versa. Cultivate those relationships and continue to work at it. Through Training together, it really matters, whether it is classrooms, FTXs, etc.
- Extend yourself to meet the other person halfway in the relationship. Apply your emotional intelligence.
- Third – Being able to articulate your mission, mandates, and authorities. Thinking about your partner before yourself (your unit). Early on engagement can lead to more success, telling your partners things such as, “I want to make you shine”, really matter and may pay major dividends

later.... Partnership building.... Communication styles – learning each other’s quirks, etc. Humbling yourself...

- Fourth – Building out relationships with Partner Nation.
- **The more inform people are regarding title 10/50, the better they can nest their activities. You must know your own authorities; I cannot emphasize this enough....
- “Here’s what were mandated to do the following...” “Here to coordinate and work with you to meet our mandates and what can we do to help.” “PSYOPs coordinates with PAO” “CA has to be careful because they ask questions, which could be dangerous.” “Every insurgent is an intel agent, they ask what you ask about.”
- Coordinate and deconflict with ORA.
- Positive introduction and laying out what can be done to help. Check ego at the door.
- Painful communication. Must force it even if it is painful.
- Relationships were easier because of military background. Individual relationships, easier at the tactical level because of less ego, early and often engagements, start with friendship.
- Don’t start by asking for something... Lack of relationship creates hostility.
- Mission alignment makes things easier, especially mutually supported objectives.
- COS in charge of all intelligence operations, so not always forthcoming but COS has to know all intelligence going on in a given country. Coordination, notifications of training, and contingencies in place.
- Staying involved with daily operations, use separate nets for communications clarity of mission ahead of time (isolation in communication infrastructure).
- Not to be close-minded/ play stump the chomp or withhold information.
- Create a cultural of oversharing; when possible update your counterparts on all information available.
- Understanding culture at station/space within your assigned AOR. Different events on demeanor break the ice and build a relationship with counterparts.

8. How do Title 10/50 Authorities affect operations between SOF and the CIA?

- Who the battlespace owner...
- SecDef tells the SOF community to problem solve and fill the gap, SOF analyses the problem and identifies that at some point down the road, only individuals with Title 50 authority will be able to action it.
- You execute your mission to the last possible moment your authorities allow you to, before you need turn it over to title 50, as much as you don't like it, it must be done to accomplish the mission. Knowing when to hand it off is crucial to the mission.
- Pride plays a big role, and knowing when to set it aside and let others take credit for missions and accomplishments. You must exploit every opportunity to amplify authorities 10/50, not fight it.
- Title 50 affects operations, especially regarding who has permissions to execute missions. As well, as SOPs and what information can be shared. Having relevant information to mission.
- Connectivity impact operations, especially when not co-located.
- Greatly exaggerated, does not affect day-to-day activities.
- In sovereign nations, title 10 should not be utilized.
- Constant and daily; what we can do versus what we can not do. When working with SOF he could not do what he need to do.

9. How does the CIA foresee SOF capabilities supporting future operations?

- Not for CIA... More of the same of how we are doing things right now... physically and electronically connectedness.
- Innovation and technological solutions. Both entities have in house technology solutions. How both entities will support and complement each other? Technology and innovation moves faster than DOD (SOF) and CIA, and we must try to keep pace. It may come down to who has a better relationship with Silicon Valley. In addition, how do we leverage that relationship?
- Wherever ODA goes CIA will be there, provide access and capabilities. Ground Branch is too small to handle such missions.
- Ground branch is similar to ODAs, more focused on CI. Consensus among people he works with. Growing pains with any new missions where SOF and CIA are working together. Dormant in 90s and reinvigorated with the GWOT, by 2010 growing pains had subsided.
- They can be an enhancing element but they must be on the same page. Communication is the biggest hurdle that you must get over. Jargon

makes them want to tell you no. In addition, because they can do it, they will. Use common language, if you do so they would be more receptive to working with SOF. Sometimes it makes more sense for SOF to go after a target rather than the agency.

- Working closely with one another. JSOC and Agency are more closely aligned.
- Finding a niche and having those honest conversations.
- Prepare for peer and near-peer for hostile state actors – technology.
- Share capabilities, requirements (trusting one another), Phase zero activity support, and educate on SOF capabilities and limitations.
- Post 9/11 mystique of dismissing, 18 years of warfare, share support and requirements.
- Risk forcing personnel, getting in to places that are not permissive.
- Expeditionary strategy – more risk planning, capacity and capability.

10. What recommendations would you provide to CIA personnel working with SOF while stationed overseas?

- Most salient points: it is a responsibility, not an option. Agency being respectful of SOF culture and environment entities and vice versa.
- Build that relationship and establish trust. Figure out, what makes that individual tick? What are their buttons to push or not push? Likes or dislikes, etc.
- Tell them your capabilities. Do not be afraid to put yourself out there... let them get to know you.
- Figure out the stigma and if it is good live up to it or if it is bad dissolve it.
- Be very clear and communicate up front.
- Being Respectful and know how to navigate your battlespace.
- Being Self-aware – there are different perspectives and everyone should be self-aware. What you can pay for, etc. (when procuring resources).
- CIA SAC (special activities center) use the SOF LNOs, go to the different locations to meet with SOF first hand at FBNC, Little Creek, VA, Dam Neck, VA. Gain understanding of what SOF mandates, capabilities, limitations. Understanding the Level 3 people because there is potential for overlap.
- ****Closer to SOF than to FBI, Tier 1 units do not have much interaction, they break glass and leave (operations).****

- CIA and SOF work with indigenous and deal with the same issues for national security.
- Communicate, patience, because they are coming from two different agencies and two different way at approaching similar problems. Find a way to yes.
- Get to know your partner in your AOR, make as many relationships as possible both personal and professional, and know what they bring to the table.
- Majority of the Agency does not have military experience; speak in language and vernacular that your counterpart will understand, especially relating to tradecraft.
- Understanding military culture and lingo, share what you can and don't hide it.
- SOF/Military 101 courses to understand structure, because SOF can be misunderstood and at times overestimated.
- Know what collection capabilities are available and get smart on SOF equipment and enablers.

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