

Running head: COMMUNICATION BETWEEN U.S. AND COALITION FORCES

Communication between U.S. and Coalition Forces

MSG Geoffery A. Jackson

United States Sergeants Major Academy

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Mr. Michael Artis

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Outline

Thesis: The previous and current technology used on today's battlefields has proven insufficient in systems, to enable effective communication between U.S. and Coalition forces.

I. Challenges

A. Training Strategy

1. Urban

2. Techniques

B. Unity of Command / Command & Control

C. Compatibility of Systems

1. Communications

2. Weapons

Throughout history, interoperability has been a challenge for U.S. and Coalition forces. If we as U.S. and coalition are going to effectively work side by side on the battlefield; communications systems will be the key element. As communications systems become more complicated, the problem will worsen by the inability of systems to work together, especially between U.S and coalition nations. If the U.S. is determined to be a team player, then we need to make every effort to ensure that we can communicate and coordinate with the other members of our team. The U.S. is not entirely at fault in this matter. In order for us to accomplish this task, our allied/coalition members must keep pace.

Challenges

Some initiatives that the United States and coalition forces have accomplished working together in the past, present, and strive to improve in the future, are joint effects. There does not appear to be a current solution, but there are five possible courses of action to narrow or eliminate this gap. The United States could go it alone, provide coalition alliance members with the essential communications systems, provide members with screened information, standardize all future coalition and allied acquisitions, or use coalition and allied forces in centralized but only low-tech situations. Unfortunately, all current efforts have their drawbacks for the benefits attained. Although there currently is not a magic solution, now is the time to commit ourselves to the effort. Given the right framework, outlook, and commitment of resources, these challenges can be overcome.

The training environment for United States forces must include the operational setting, threat perceptions, current and emerging technologies and capabilities, and conventional operations as well as emerging strategic, operational, and tactical asymmetries. During the war in Afghanistan, this philosophy helped shape the military campaign. Instead of sending a massive invasion force, the coalition footprint remained modest and adopted a strategy of teaming with local Afghan forces that opposed the Taliban. The use of precision-guided weapons and the immediate delivery of humanitarian relief sent the message that we were coming as a force of liberation. After the major fighting ended, the United States did not flood Afghanistan with Americans but rather worked with Afghans to establish an interim government and an Afghan national army. (Rumsfeld 2003)

There has been, and still are challenges in Iraq, but they are considerably different. On the other hand, the Saddam regime was much too powerful for Iraqi freedom fighters to remove from power without an overwhelming number of coalition forces. The only Iraqi

fighting force that was capable of fighting alongside special operations forces in the north were the Kurdish fighters. They effectively tied down Saddam's northern units and liberated the city of Mosul. We were able to liberate the Iraq people with as little as 100,000 plus warriors on the ground and with the use of precision weapons. Once combat operations ended, we worked hand in hand with the Iraqis, training them to take responsibility for their government and security over their own country (Vines 2006 43, 44).

In only two months, the united States accomplish what took three years in postwar Germany. Within a new Iraqi police force, we were conducting joint patrols with coalition forces. Within three months, we began training a new Iraqi army with the assistance of our coalition brothers.

Despite the Department of Defenses' increasing emphasis on the importance of training for joint urban operations before deployment, few opportunities currently exist for joint urban operations training that place troops from different services on the ground working under a joint headquarters. Various factors account for the lack of joint urban operations training, such as the services' focus on training service-specific skills, and the lack of an overall strategy requiring joint urban operations training, specific joint urban operations training requirements, and a formal mechanism for scheduling joint urban operations training at service-owned facilities. Without a training strategy, defined requirements, and a joint scheduling mechanism, the Department of Defense cannot guaranty that joint urban operations training will occur or that the Department of Defense will maximize the joint usage of urban operations training facilities. Although there is often some level of synchronization incorporated into the Marine Corps and Army urban operations training events, these efforts fall short of the Department of Defenses'

definition of a joint training event because they do not include a joint headquarters and focus on service, rather than joint, training objectives (Leaf, 2003).

Although currently, the issue for operating as a joint team relies on all forces under one umbrella or joint, headquarter. This will be something that we need to work through if we are going to expect coalition forces to collectively train and fight together in an urban environment.

Despite all its advanced technology and extraordinary firepower, the United States military is ill prepared to wage an urban war. As it happens, though, the likelihood of urban warfare will only grow in the coming years. Accordingly, the United States military, and to a lesser extent its counterparts in Israel, Australia, and several NATO countries, have been taking a hard look at how to win the next urban war. That entails developing new technologies to aid the urban warrior, revamping training programs, and rethinking the guiding doctrine within military operations.

Command and control relationships in multinational operations involving United States military forces have ranged from loose overall unity of command structures, marked by parallel command structures, to strong central command and control of coalition operations. (Robertson 296-297).

These are just some of the examples, there is no standard command and control arrangement for multinational operations; the command structure is influenced by too many dynamic factors that must be considered on a case-by-case basis. In addition, every participating state in a coalition has its own domestic law(s), policy, and cultural predisposition that influence how much, or how little, it allows foreign command of its participating armed forces. (Robertson 296-297).

The Navy is currently working on coordination efforts with new technology for coalition capabilities and assessment of priorities. The goal of this project is to analyze the application of techniques for performing quantitative analysis, and the benefits of a network-centric coalition force. The Navy suggests that this concept can occur with its operational construct and architectural framework called FORCEnet. FORCEnet Warfare in the Information Age, integrating warriors, sensors, command and control, platforms, and weapons into a shared and distributed combat force. Coalition forces can share this strategic definition (Poirier, J. 2003).

During Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), The United States Department of Defense demonstrated great strides by investing in a system that enables the forces to communicate effectively across the electromagnetic spectrum. United States and coalition forces have made great strides to communicate effectively and come online with system procedures to enable them to work together and allow their forces to work together as one team. As stated earlier, research has shown that insufficient systems, training, and possibly no established command and control headquarters element were great challenges in conducting combined force operations. During OIF the technology was present for both United States and coalition forces to effectively communicate together, but coalition assets reportedly operated as separate entities, and were often locked out of United States planning and execution because of the sensitivity of the mission. Missions that involved United States aircraft were not accessible to coalition forces. Therefore, systems were not the main struggle as other barriers prevented this collaboration from taking place.

The United States and each coalition partner had separate contract agreements for sharing classified information. Because of these policies, operations planning information to coalition forces allowing only minimal classified information became a huge challenge (Schrage 2003).

In closing, we have shown how past and even current technology used on today's battlefields has proven insufficient in systems and how new equipment coming into theater has enabled effective communication between United States and coalition forces, however, this technical solution may not affect the differences in the individual policies that restrict information sharing among coalition partners. The United States will continue to take the lead on being more effective with our coalition partners. The point to remember is that American and coalition forces are fighting as a close team with Iraq's security forces. There are over 190 embedded transition teams operating as a vital part in supporting the Iraqi forces. The United States and coalition forces have, and will continue to have challenges as we make great strides to enable Iraqi battalions to receive new training, logistical and combined arms support from United States and coalition forces. (Schrage 2003).

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