

RAF and Mission Command

Lieutenant Colonel Mark B. Parker and John A. Bonin, Ph.D.

Use Command and Control to deal with the known and Mission Command to deal with the unknown.

—Lieutenant General David Perkins¹

A vast number of unknowns characterize the global environment. Mission command, however, provides a framework for handling unknowns. Mission command is concerned with how commanders, with staff, combine the art of command and the science of control to understand situations, make decisions, direct action, and accomplish missions.² Although counter intuitive, RAF missions are more complex than conventional operations and tactics. RAF is harder, not because of the volume or rapidity of data or decisions, but because of the complexity of relationships and the need to understand the operating environment.

Initially, this report examines changes in national policy, strategy and the global environment that drove the creation of RAF. The second section examines RAF through the lens of the art of command, i.e., the mission command philosophy, by examining six guiding principles. The third section analyzes RAF through the application of the science of control, the Army Warfighting functions (WfF), and the systems that enable command and control. Finally, a DOTMLPF analysis serves to articulate challenges and opportunities for RAF in the areas of doctrine, organization, training, and material.

The United States has always counted on its Armed Forces to win the nation's wars with the Army playing a key role. After a decade of conflict, however, the national strategy has begun to shift to war and conflict prevention. Driven by the desire to defeat violent extremism, the 2008 National Defense Strategy (NDS) began to stress the importance of building partner capacity to enable regional allies to defeat terrorism:

The struggle against violent extremists will not end with a single battle or campaign. Rather, we will defeat them through the patient accumulation of quiet successes and the orchestration of all elements of national and international power. We will succeed by eliminating the ability of extremists to strike globally and catastrophically while also building the capacity and resolve of local governments to defeat them regionally.³

After the 2008 Presidential elections, the new administration continued this policy shift with the 2010 National Security Strategy (NSS). Which directed the military to further “strengthen its capacity to partner with foreign counterparts, train and assist security forces, and pursue military-to-military ties with a broad range of governments.”⁴ The following year the 2011 National Military Strategy (NMS) reinforced and expanded the theme:

We will strengthen and expand our network of partnerships to enable partner capacity to enhance security. This will help reduce potential safe-havens before violent extremism can take root. We will nest our efforts to build partner capacity with broader national security priorities, consolidate our institutional processes, and improve coordination across agencies. Military-to military relationships must be reliable to be effective, and persevere through political upheavals or even disruption.⁵

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In 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) strengthened the theme, stating “support” for:

political and economic reform and deepening partnerships to ensure regional security. In contrast to the murderous vision of violent extremists, we are joining with allies and partners around the world to build their capacity to promote security, prosperity, and human dignity.⁶

This shift impacts Department of Defense (DoD) and Army foci for both efforts and missions.

At the DoD level, the activities identified in the published guidance, such as building partner capacity, military-to-military engagements, and enhanced security cooperation are described as steady-state activities.⁷ Prevention and shaping activities include deterrence and are critical components of this policy shift. These activities are linked to strategic DoD end states through both global and theater campaign plans.⁸ For certain events, the DoD develops specific campaign or contingency plans. For such plans, Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, defines six phases.⁹ The phases are: Phase 0 – Shape, Phase I – Deter, Phase II – Seize the Initiative, Phase III – Dominate, Phase IV – Stabilize, and Phase V – Enable Civil Authority.¹⁰ The preponderance of military effort occurs in the middle phases of Seize Initiative, Dominate, and Stabilize. Emphasis on building partner capacity to enhance security shifts importance to shaping and deterring, so that II, III, and IV may not become necessary. The goal of steady-state activities and Phase 0 (Shape) is to dissuade and deter potential adversaries while strengthening relationships with friends and allies.¹¹

To achieve desired theater end states, combatant commands conduct security cooperation activities aligned with national and strategic military objectives. Security cooperation formally refers to:

All Department of Defense interactions with foreign defense establishments to build defense relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests, develop allied and friendly military capabilities for self-defense and multinational operations, and provide U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access to a host nation.¹²

If security cooperation and shaping activities are not successful and a crisis looms, Phase I (Deter) activities seek to dissuade undesirable adversary actions.¹³ Dissuading activities can include demonstrating the resolve and capabilities of the joint force to act. If deterrence fails, Phase II (Seize Initiative) activities occur with the application of force. Increasing steady state or Phase 0 (Shape) activities has the greatest likelihood of preventing conflict. As the nation’s premier land force, the Army’s ability to operate within the land domain makes it the most appropriate service branch to shape and deter potential conflict.

The world’s population lives on land and the land domain provides abundant opportunities for building partner capacity designated to enhance security. People utilize the air, sea, space and cyber domains but their time within each is transitory. Humanity lives on land and there lies the greatest opportunities for interaction, relationship building, and mature understanding. Understanding occurs when all human needs, values, and differences, including culture, language, ideology, and religion are aptly recognized and appropriately accommodated. The Army Chief of Staff, General Raymond Odierno, recently stated, “Preventing conflict is better than reacting to it, and to prevent it we must understand its causes. That understanding is only gained through human contact.”¹⁴

Conflict inherently involves people, whether over territory, resources, or ideology. As military theorist Carl von Clausewitz noted, people and government represent two thirds of the trinity of war.¹⁵ To gain understanding and prevent conflict, the Army must successfully operate within the human domain, i.e., where the people reside. The U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) defines the human domain as:

The totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior to the extent that success of any military strategy, operation, or tactical action depends on the application of unique capabilities . . . designed to fight and win population-centric conflicts.¹⁶

As recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrate, building partner capacity requires understanding. With experience in building partner capacity, the Army is uniquely positioned to conduct capacity building initiatives during steady-state and Phase 0 activities. The Army's ability to operate in close proximity to the people is key to the potential effectiveness of Regionally Aligned Forces.

The CSA's vision for the Army is to "Prevent, Shape, and Win."¹⁷ Due to the scale of the land domain and its intimate ties to the human activity, the Army provides the most direct and persistent opportunities to shape and deter conflict. People-to-people relationships within the human domain "operationalize" the Prevent, Shape, Win strategy.¹⁸ The RAF concept helps accomplish this strategy by providing trained, ready, and responsive forces to the combatant commands.

Regionally Aligned Forces "provide the combatant commander with up to a joint task force capable headquarters with scalable, tailorable capabilities to enable him to shape the environment."¹⁹ These forces include Army units assigned and allocated to combatant commands and those capabilities distributed and prepared for regional missions. The scope of RAF includes Army Reserve and National Guard forces. Forces can be stationed or operating within the combatant command or providing support from outside the command.²⁰

The RAF concept entails increasing the quantity and quality of Army forces available to the combatant commands so they can shape the environment and prevent conflict.²¹ The Army seeks to become more proactive in preventing conflict, rather than simply reacting once it occurs. Sun Tzu notes: "the supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting."²² Instead of a significant portion of the Army remaining forward deployed or garrisoned at home station, the RAF concept seeks to prevent conflict while remaining prepared to fight and win if needed. Army forces can provide stabilizing influences by building partner capacity and strengthening allies around the world. The Army's ability to provide sustained engagement makes it the appropriate force for executing security cooperation initiatives. When preparing for or executing missions, Regionally Aligned Forces can fall under several different authorities.

The command relationships for Regionally Aligned Forces begin with the Unified Campaign Plan (UCP), wherein forces are assigned to the combatant commands.²³ Guidance for the use of those forces comes from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), through the Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF). Developed from several strategic documents, the GEF identifies the combatant commands strategic priorities for operational activities.²⁴ To meet the requirements in the GEF, the Joint Staff uses the Global Force Management (GFM) framework to resource the combatant commands in accord with requirements. Joint Publication 5-0 explains three related GFM processes: assignment, allocation, and apportionment.²⁵

The Secretaries of the Military Departments *assign* forces to combatant commands. When forces are assigned, the command relationship is referred to as combatant command (COCOM). The Secretary of Defense directs and approves the assignments through the GEF process.²⁶ When forces are not assigned to combatant commanders, they are referred to as "service retained" or "unassigned" by the Secretary of the Military Department.²⁷ Forces are *allocated* when transfer of forces between combatant commands or employment of unassigned forces is necessary. The Secretary of Defense allocates the forces and specifies the new command relationships.²⁸ These relationships will likely be operational control (OPCON) or tactical control (TACON). After force assignment and allocation, combatant commands will still have more requirements than forces available. Many requirements are planning initiatives directed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) through the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP). Through the JSCP, the CJCS directs the preparation

of various joint plans to include operational plans and contingency plans. As a planning starting point, the CJCS *apportions* combat and related support forces to the combatant commands based on guidance in the GEF.²⁹ Forces apportioned for planning may not be the same forces allocated for execution.

Within command relationships, the Army created a unique definition called Service Retained, Combatant Command Aligned (SRCA). The working concept for SRCA is “those Army forces and capabilities in the available period that are under the administrative control of the Secretary of the Army and not assigned to combatant commanders but provide support to combatant commanders.”³⁰ The Army Service Component Command (ASCC) assigned to each combatant command provides theater specific training requirements that aligned forces used to drive training and readiness reporting. Combatant commands are informed of the force capabilities aligned to their theater, but lack authority over these forces. If a combatant command wishes to employ these capabilities, it does so through the Global Force Management Implementation Guidance (GFMIG) process. Even though the combatant command knows the forces and capabilities aligned, no guarantee exists that those forces are actually available upon request. Additionally, forces currently aligned to one combatant command may be aligned differently on the next rotation. Such alignment changes ostensibly decrease the value of training, minimize understanding, and complicate relationship development for that combatant command. Such turmoil is inconsistent with the CSA’s intent.

Based on and derived from several documents including the JSCP and GEF, the GFMIG is the critical document for force planning and execution.³¹ Published every two years, the GFMIG includes the Forces for Unified Commands Memorandum, referenced as the “Forces For” memorandum. This “provides SecDef’s direction to the Secretaries of the Military Departments for assigning forces to CCMDs and serves as the record of force assignments.”³² The GFMIG describes the forces a combatant command has to accomplish missions including security cooperation. When requirements exceed the available forces, combatant commands request additional forces through the Joint Staff using the Request for Forces (RFF) or a Request for Capabilities process.

For several years, CENTCOM’s Area of Responsibility (AOR) requirements resulted in few Army forces being available to other combatant commands.³³ The CSA’s vision anticipates increased Army force availability as CENTCOM’s requirements decrease. In a time of declining resources, available forces must be appropriately managed to help offset reductions. RAF provides essential and needed forces by better supporting combatant commands. With the allocation of 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division to AFRICOM, the RAF concept was initially tested.³⁴

Mission Command

ADP 6-0 describes mission command as a “philosophy and a warfighting function;” it is also the framework for the Army’s execution of military operations in support of Unified Land Operations (ULO).³⁵ The mission command philosophy is described as “the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.”³⁶ The mission command philosophy incorporates six guiding principles that commanders must balance while executing “related tasks and mission command systems that support the exercise of authority and direction.”³⁷ Working together, the philosophy and warfighting function guide, integrate, and synchronize Army forces throughout the conduct of Unified Land Operations (ULO).³⁸

Mission command may be new in doctrine, but it remains old in practice. In 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant ordered LTG William T. Sherman to initiate the Atlanta campaign. In but a few sentences, Grant clearly laid out his intent and demonstrated trust in Sherman.³⁹ In April 2012, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

General Martin Dempsey, published an eight-page white paper to pursue, instill, and foster the philosophy of mission command within the Joint Force of 2020.⁴⁰ A month later, the Army published ADP 6-0, *Mission Command*, and Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-0, *Mission Command*.⁴¹ Although envisioned primarily for the Army's execution of its core competencies of combined arms maneuver and wide area security, mission command is especially apt for Regionally Aligned Forces. The timing of these publications coincides with the RAF taskings to execute global security cooperation activities. A globally engaged Army requires greater application of a mission command philosophy that will challenge many leaders.

The Art of Command

Unified Land Operations (ULO) refers to “to seiz[ing], retain[ing], and exploit[ing] the initiative to gain a position of relative advantage in sustained land operations” in order to “create the conditions for favorable conflict resolution.”⁴² ULO is executed through decisive actions of offense, defense, stability and defense support of civil authorities (DSCA).⁴³ The Army core competencies of combined arms maneuver and wide area security constitute the means of execution in accord with mission command.⁴⁴

Principles of Mission Command

The six mission command principles are: build cohesive teams through mutual trust, create shared understanding, provide a clear commander's intent, exercise disciplined initiative, use mission orders, and accept prudent risk.⁴⁵ These principles assist commanders as well as staff in balancing the art of command with the science of control.

Building Cohesive Teams through Mutual Trust

With all but two of the Army Service Component Command (ASCC) Headquarters forward stationed within each combatant command theater, distance and time can hinder team building, establishing and maintaining trust with RAF. According to ADP 6-0:

Commanders build cohesive teams in an environment of mutual trust. There are few shortcuts to gaining the trust of others. Trust takes time and must be earned... Trust is gained or lost through everyday actions more than grand or occasional gestures. It comes from successful shared experiences and training, usually gained incidental to operations but also deliberately developed by the commander.⁴⁶

Most RAF units can expect a separation of several thousand miles and several time zones. For example, the headquarters for United States Army Africa (USARAF) in Vicenza, Italy is 5,100 miles and seven time zones from the headquarters of its allocated RAF unit, 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.⁴⁷ The brigade has Soldiers located at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, approximately 8,100 miles and nine time zones away.⁴⁸

The envisioned rules to request and employ RAF forces project short-duration missions of less than 90 days with an available waiver of up to 179 days.⁴⁹ The element executing the security cooperation activity receives notification of the mission 90 days prior to execution and a deployment order 60 days out.⁵⁰ This short timeline provides little opportunity to build a cohesive team among the major players: the ASCC, the country team, and the RAF unit.

Time and distance challenges are not new, however. The Forces Command (FORSCOM) system of Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) in support of Central Command (CENTCOM) operations generated the same challenges to units deploying into and out of theater. The difference with RAF is that units are not typically deploying *en masse*, but instead are moving as small teams where needed while headquarters usually

remain at home station. The expectation is for unit alignment 15 months prior to its available phase. FORSCOM would issue a Mission Alignment Order (MAO), which formally aligns a brigade to a combatant command for security cooperation activities during the final quarter of the unit's current available phase. If maintained, 15 months is sufficient time to begin building trust, but the nature of RAF requires a tremendous level of trust. Isolated, small teams separated by great distance and time from higher headquarters require unusually high levels of trust. Commanders who do not trust their subordinates will be tempted to create a second command channel back to them. Commanders and staff must trust their subordinates to execute with little supervision. Subordinates must trust that their commanders and staff will properly train and prepare them for RAF missions.

Creating shared understanding for RAF missions is perhaps the greatest challenge. The global environment is increasingly complex and the Army lacks mission command systems below the battalion level to enable the creation of shared understanding before, during, and after missions. Yet, creating this shared understanding has the potential to be one of RAF's greatest benefits.

The further away a person is from a problem in time and distance, the greater the difficulty in understanding the problem. The second challenge that ADRP 6-0 identifies as critical is creating a shared understanding both prior to and during operations. "Shared understanding and purpose form the basis for unity of effort and trust."⁵¹ Common understanding enables commanders to use intent to accomplish objectives. Since everyone understands the environment and the problem, presumably everyone can understand the commander's intent. The commander does not have to issue directive orders, but instead can enable subordinates to execute disciplined initiative. The sheer complexity and size of some areas of operations, however, constitute significant challenges to shared understanding.

Allocated to AFRICOM, the size and complexity of the African continent presents significant challenges for 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. With one seventh of the world population, Africa is second only to Asia in population.⁵² Ethiopia alone is the size of Iraq and Afghanistan combined.⁵³ Yet, Ethiopia is only the tenth largest of 54 African countries.⁵⁴ Over the course of one year, the brigade is projected to execute close to 100 security cooperation events in 34 African countries.⁵⁵

The RAF concept calls for the Army to be regionally aligned and globally engaged. The challenge is for the Army to "globally enable" below the battalion level. The mission command systems utilized to execute mission command are issued to battalion-level headquarters and above. Under RAF, most missions are to be executed below the battalion level by small teams. The task of creating shared understanding, while daunting, is vital because it has potential to yield the greatest benefit of RAF.

With RAF units executing missions globally, the Army's need for understanding will increase significantly. The human-to-human interactions RAF forces generate while conducting security cooperation activities will create relationships as they learn the complex environment of their areas. Ideally, host nations want to help create understanding of their countries, people, and values. If called upon to operate within a particular area, an enhanced understanding should prevent a delay or "cold start" associated with a lack of familiarity with the culture, language, ideology, or religious considerations. RAF units should be able start with "momentum," utilizing existing relationships and a fundamental understanding of the environment. As RAF units gain local/cultural knowledge, that understanding should aid their superiors by helping to develop better informed and better designed plans consistent with the commander's intent.

Provide Clear Commander's Intent

Bound by higher authority's guidance, a commander's intent conveys a clear image of the mission's purpose, key task, and desired outcome.⁵⁶ The "why" articulated in the intent is what ensures unity of effort among subordinates. Commander's intent is defined as:

A clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander's desired results without further orders, even when the operation does not unfold as planned.⁵⁷

When 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division Soldiers deploy to execute RAF missions, they are under the operational control (OPCON) of AFRICOM.⁵⁸ AFRICOM has delegated OPCON of Army forces in Africa to United States Army Africa (USARAF).⁵⁹ These RAF forces operate at the end of very-austere and long communication lines. For example, the 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division Soldiers supporting operations in Mali are 2,000 miles from USARAF headquarters. The dispersed nature of RAF missions and relatively few communications enablers necessitate an exceedingly clear understanding of commander's intent. When facing unforeseen circumstances far from authority with little supervision, Soldiers must successfully exercise initiative to complete the mission in accord with the commander's intent.

The Army thrives on initiative and RAF forces will need it. Based on today's volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment, exercising disciplined initiative is vital if RAF forces are to be successful. The Army executes Unified Land Operations (ULO) to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative.⁶⁰ In joint operational planning, "Seize the Initiative" is the third phase. The Army does not expect leaders and Soldiers to act thoughtlessly. Rather, the Army expects action in the absence of orders, especially when orders no longer apply or when unforeseen opportunities arise.⁶¹ Security cooperation missions are opportunities for small-unit leaders to exercise disciplined initiative and help improve the security environment. Guided by the commander's intent, informed by shared understanding, and functioning as part of a cohesive team, subordinates negotiate the situation and accomplish the mission.

Commanders set priorities, allocate resources, and influence the situation through mission orders. Mission orders "are directives that emphasize to subordinates the results to be attained, not how they are to achieve them."⁶² The intent of mission orders is to maximize initiative by providing subordinates maximum freedom of action. Mission orders ensure vertical and lateral coordination while focusing on the main objective. Doctrine urges commanders to not micromanage subordinates, but supervise and direct changes when necessary. The nature of most RAF missions, however, limits the commander's ability to closely supervise.

Accept Prudent Risk

No mission comes without risk. RAF missions by their very nature expose Soldiers to a host of risks where some are both unfamiliar and difficult to mitigate. In fact, "making reasonable estimates and intentionally accepting prudent risk are fundamental to mission command."⁶³ Prudent risk is "a deliberate exposure to potential injury or loss when the commander judges the outcome in terms of mission accomplishment as worth the cost."⁶⁴ When making decisions, commanders accept this risk because of uncertainty. When assembling the team to conduct security cooperation activities, the commander must account for risk inherent in the activities. Mistakes will occur with or without a senior supervisor's availability. Soldiers must respect the host nation's laws and customs if they are to minimize incidents with the potential to damage partner relationships.

The Science of Control

The current Army command-and-control systems were designed to win wars on battlefields and now must adapt and transition to preventing conflict and maintaining the peace. Yet, the Army has not modified its process for testing and evaluating communication systems nor adjusted requirements and documents to adapt to RAF. Commanders and staffs utilize mission command systems to understand the capabilities and limitations of not only enemy forces, but also friendly forces. The right staff with the right understanding enables a commander to exercise control. To meet the CSA's intent to be regionally-aligned and globally-engaged, the Army must devise and exert authority that goes well beyond a conventional battlefield mentality.

The Globally Enabled Challenge

The recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have created an expectation of communications infrastructure that is not feasible for supporting RAF. Leaders and Soldiers with recent combat experience have grown accustomed to high-bandwidth, low-latency internet connections down to the lowest levels and developed over years of occupying the same battlefield. In 1991 during Operation Desert Storm, 542,000 service members required millions of bits of data per second.⁶⁵ Twelve years later during beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the data requirements had increased by over a factor of 30, even though the number of service members decreased by a factor of four. By 2004 in OIF, approximately 123,000 service members required billion bits of data per second.⁶⁶ Seven years later during the conclusion of Operation New Dawn, a much smaller force was using the same amount of data.⁶⁷ With the increase in cloud services and computing, the Army's requirements for bandwidth are continuing to increase. The RAF concept of numerous, short-term global missions has exposed a requirements gap in the Army's command and control systems.

This gap exists because Army fielded communications equipment only enables battalion-level headquarters and higher to be digitally enabled. The preponderance of RAF missions are of relatively short duration executed by small teams. The Army lacks a standardized, fielded, and trained system to meet the requirements of most RAF missions. Recently, the CSA highlighted this challenge when he compared his smart phone to battlefield communications gear. He said, "I can sit here in my chair and pull out my smart phone and talk to every continent in the world with one little smart phone."⁶⁸ When referring to battlefield communications gear, however, he stated: "I have to bring 50 trucks and 300 Soldiers. Why is that? We cannot do that anymore. Our command and control systems are too heavy today."⁶⁹ The CSA wants the Army to invest in leap-ahead technology, but to do so wisely. The challenge is "to determine how we leverage the technologies that are out there. How do we leverage our ability to reduce our footprint to have better communications to secure data?"⁷⁰ The CSA wants to "be able to deploy very quickly, get there in small packages and then potentially build on them, and we have to get there with the least amount of support necessary."⁷¹

When advantageous and safe to do so, the Army can and does use commercial infrastructure to support operations but cannot completely rely on commercial networks. Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/D2) also applies to the cyber domain. As recent events demonstrate, adversaries can disable both fixed and wireless commercial networks. When called upon to execute Phase II or Phase III operations, RAF units' organic tactical communication systems meet their requirements. Regionally Aligned Forces, however, primarily execute security cooperation activities during steady state and Phase 0 when their access to tactical systems is limited.

The Commercial Challenge

Mission command system development and testing continues to focus on Phases II, III and IV of operations. The Army's Nett Warrior program is designed to provide situational awareness and mission command to the individual, dismounted Soldier. The program utilizes a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) mobile phone that links to the AN/PRC 154A Rifleman Radio to communicate with other Rifleman Radios.⁷² The Army modified the mobile phone to work exclusively with the Rifleman Radio. Future Army systems must function in all operational phases, almost exclusively in Phases II, III and Phase IV.

The Network Integration Evaluation (NIE) program at Fort Bliss conducts a semiannual field exercise to assess network and non-network capabilities in order to integrate Army tactical networks. The intent is to help mature Army networks by determining which capabilities require rapid acquisition. NIE has three goals: "(1) reduce/eliminate integration burden on operational formations, (2) develop/integrate mission command capability sets, and (3) provide a forum for leveraging promising industrial capabilities that solve operational gaps."⁷³ If modified, the third goal provides an opportunity to leverage commercial capabilities for Phase 0 and Phase I operations in support of RAF.

The NIE has successfully produced some capabilities that can be utilized to support RAF missions, but those capabilities were not fielded to RAF units. In late 2012 as part of NIE 13.1, the Signal Center of Excellence worked with a commercial vendor to develop, test, and field a small, command-post node package. The package specifically addresses an Army identified capability gap to provide three networks for 10 to 40 users. The required networks are unclassified, secret, and a combination network option of interagency, coalition, or Top Secret.⁷⁴ The resulting package was 50 percent smaller, significantly lighter, and capable of transport on commercial aircraft as checked baggage.⁷⁵ According to the G6 of the 1st Infantry Division, this type of package would greatly benefit the brigade currently performing RAF missions in Africa.⁷⁶ The packages, somewhat surprisingly, were fielded to a unit that supports echelons above corps rather than to a regionally-aligned division headquarters.

JTF Enabled Challenge

The Regionally Aligned Forces concept promises the combatant commanders that RAF can provide "up to joint task force capable headquarters."⁷⁷ Yet, all Army corps and division headquarters lack a key capability to become a JTF Headquarters. They lack a joint presence in cyber space and joint internet protocol addresses (IPs) to enable joint mission command systems. A JTF HQs mission command system should occupy IP space at the DoD/joint level to enable subordinate service networks to establish trusted network connections. DoD networks utilize a trust architecture that makes it difficult for service networks to function as JTF networks. For example, any Army HQs utilizing Army IP addresses will have great difficulty "trusting" a Navy HQs utilizing Navy IP addresses due to network trust problems.

From a network administration perspective, joint networks also require joint network certified technicians. The Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) controls the certification procedures and testing for joint networks. Each service has its own procedures and policies for certifying network technicians. Unless a technician previously worked on joint networks, that technician is not certified on joint networks. Once certified by the Army, a warrant officer working on a division G6 staff, is granted permissions to administer that division's .army.mil networks but no others. If a Navy-certified network technician joined the division headquarters as part of a JTF staff, he or she would require certification and permissions with that division's network. Certification and testing procedures can take weeks or months depending on the skill level of the technician. Additionally, all network certifications expire over time and require renewal. Ensuring that the right

technicians with the right skills and certifications are at the right place at the right time to enable joint networks remains a significant challenge.

DOTMLPF for Mission Command

Regarding the RAF concept, two areas of Army doctrine require refinement. The first is additional analysis of the primary RAF mission (security cooperation) to ensure appropriate alignment with the CSA's vision: "prevent, shape, win." The second is further analysis of the RAF capability to provide a JTF headquarters in light of the growing complexity of the joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environment (JIIM) complicated by a 25 percent reduction in staff manpower.

The SRCA relationship should be discontinued to the extent possible. All forces should continue to be assigned, allocated, or apportioned to combatant commands. To fully gain the benefits of building relationships and understanding within a combatant command, more forces should be assigned to combatant commands. By retaining a majority of forces at the Department level, the Army is not fully committing to RAF. Actions are not yet aligned with words.

Consequently, the Army would lose flexibility in reacting to emerging or unforeseen requirements and risk some degree of control over the training, readiness, and oversight (TRO) of its forces. Additionally, if all forces are assigned to combatant commands, the challenge of setting and managing force priorities becomes difficult. New procedures and policies would have to be created to handle competing combatant command priorities for resource allocation. Concerns about flexibility and TRO of Army forces can be worked out through the use of Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) between the Army, FORSCOM, and the combatant commands. Procedures already exist for allocating forces as necessary among combatant commands. Assigning all but institutional forces to combatant commands sends a very strong signal to the combatant commands and Congress that the Army intends to Prevent, Shape, and when necessary, Win.

At a minimum, each ASCC should have an assigned division headquarters. The ASCC commander and staff can build trust between their headquarters through daily activities and interactions. Daily interactions will foster team building and result in greater cohesion. ASCCs with assigned division headquarters bring stability from the strategic level through the operational level to the tactical level for each theater. The division headquarters can then act as a stabilizing influence that will reduce turmoil and confusion as brigades rotate in and out of their available phase. The assigned division can act as a permanent entry point for all RAF and Army forces working in that theater. Additionally, with a 25 percent manpower reduction in both ASCC and division headquarters staffs, efficiencies created by long term relationships will become increasingly vital. A consistent team working security cooperation activities yields better understanding, likely to result in more effective planning and mission execution.

If division headquarters were assigned to combatant commands, the Army would lose flexibility to respond to emerging requirements. The Army would also lose the ability to mitigate the impact of the same brigades of a division responding to differing combatant command requirements. Furthermore, the Army would lose the ability to reset and train a division headquarters. However, the benefits to team building and creating shared understanding, combined with stability from the strategic to tactical levels, far outweigh the risk of assigning division headquarters to combatant commands. Additionally, assignment consistency better enables relationship building. Each assigned division can act as the focal point of tactical knowledge for each combatant commander's AOR.

A deliberate exercise program between the ASCC, the assigned division headquarters, and the allocated RAF brigades using scenarios from the specific theater is necessary. A well-executed exercise program builds cohesive teams, develops trust and relationships, and creates shared understanding. The combat training centers

utilize the Leader Training Program (LTP) to achieve this result, which could also work for RAF. Additionally, exercises enable each unit to test its communications systems prior to execution, reinforce reporting requirements and develop battle rhythms, ensuring better command and control.

Although the allocated brigade is in the training phase, both the ASCC and the division headquarters are conducting operations. Participating in an exercise would place an additional burden on their respective staffs. Additionally, any exercise program costs money. Since this exercise is between Army elements, the Army can be expected to fund it. Although it would cost resources, the potential benefits of an integrated Army team outweigh the cost. During the exercise program, team building will occur and environmental understanding will be improved. The team can learn the nuances of culture and language while building relationships and promoting trust. Better understanding leads to better unity of effort and unity of action.

ASCCs must develop a training program that ensures RAF units can execute the required network administration for joint communications when called upon to function as a JTF HQ. A program focusing on joint network certifications, policies, and procedures will greatly enhance a unit's ability to execute a JTF mission. Army units currently struggle to maintain technician certifications on Army networks. An additional level of network certifications is likely to overly tax some units, while diminishing focus on maintaining Army required certifications. In a time of constrained resources, appropriate funding presents a challenge. Again, the benefits far outweigh the cost. Joint communications are extremely difficult due to the complex nature of joint networks. The operation of joint networks requires training and certifications that cannot be acquired quickly. This training must be funded and become a dedicated training objective.

A theater specific Mission Essential Equipment List (MEEL) and any unfulfilled requirements should be created by each ASCC. These specific requirements and capability gaps should drive combatant command's Integrated Priority List (IPL) and Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) submissions. Validated requirements would enable the acquisition system to develop solutions to satisfy RAF requirements.

The unique requirements of each combatant command could drag requirements vetting in various directions, preventing any comprehensive solutions from being developed. The acquisition system also needs to prevent non-standard equipment purchases for each theater. Equipment incompatibility must be avoided. As the Army embraces RAF, capability gaps will be identified at all levels. ASCCs should serve as the Army's injection point to each combatant command for these requirements from each RAF brigade. As each brigade analyzes its RAF requirements, the ASCC should be able to provide a toolkit of solutions in the form of a MEEL.

When solutions for RAF capability gaps are developed, they should be fielded to each combatant command's assigned division headquarters. The division is then enabled to train and employ them as necessary to ensure each RAF Brigade has an appropriate toolkit to handle the scale and scope of security cooperation activities. As brigades rotate into and out of each combatant command, the permanently assigned division headquarters can maintain the required expertise to install, operate, and maintain these systems.

Division headquarters are not designed as supply depots for brigades. Placing RAF unique equipment within division headquarters places additional burdens on logistics personnel. Division headquarters, however, are the most logical unit for central management of theater-specific equipment. With brigades rotating between combatant commands, only an assigned division headquarters can provide the stability necessary for building the needed training and maintenance base.

The Army should expand the scope of the NIE to include steady-state activities and all phases of operations. With the potential for leveraging commercial solutions, the NIE should be modified to specifically incorporate RAF communications requirements. The NIE is executed semi-annually and provides a unique opportunity to rapidly inject COTS solutions into the Defense Acquisition System (DAS).

Including communication requirements from other than major combat operations has the potential to dilute the Army's focus on battlefield communication challenges. This shift in focus to commercial systems can have an adverse impact on the next generation of tactical communications systems. Yet, the Army's emphasis on communications in support of major combat operations should continue so long as a concerted effort to leverage commercial communications is initiated. Most Army activities occur outside of major combat operations and the Army's communications systems should support these activities. To ensure that the Army stays current and leverages new technologies quickly, NIE must be modified.

Conclusion

The best wars, of course, are the ones not fought. Due to the effects of globalism, even low-level conflicts in remote regions have the ability to escalate into global crises. The Army can and should have the preeminent role in preventing conflict and building partner capacity through security cooperation activities that deter aggression. The Army's ability to provide sustained presence enables enhanced understanding of the people, issues, and options. The creation of shared understanding under mission command may be the most powerful and useful consequent of RAF. Furthermore, the Army's ability to operate within the land domain and to influence the human domain will require tailored mission command systems, specifically below the brigade level.

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