

CHAPTER VII

BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The initial Arabian Gulf Environmental Security Conference conducted in Muscat, Oman in April 2000 identified major concerns and actions perceived as likely to impact military activities in the Arabian Gulf region. Using these identified concerns as focus points, it was the goal of this Armed Forces of Qatar-hosted Environmental Security conference to design a framework for a regional approach to environmental disaster prevention and response and put in place a long-term, sustainable process for achieving a regional capability.

To accomplish this task the conference employed a series of moderated panels that addressed the following areas:

- Prior work in the gulf region on Environmental Security
- Potential risk scenarios for the gulf
- Regional monitoring, warning and information exchange
- Interagency and multilateral approaches to security cooperation on environmental issues

Armed with the valuable information provided by these panels, five workshops were convened to identify the specific actions required to implement the six recommendations that came out of the April 2000 conference, and, using the expertise in attendance, to look in detail at managing the health and disease consequences of intentional and accidental environmental events.

Workshop 1, “Defining Environmental Security And Setting Regional Approach Objectives” was developed to address the recommendation from the Oman conference for “the need to arrive at consensus on a

unified definition of the concept of Environmental Security and its relevant aspects in order to avoid any misunderstanding in the future.”

The need to identify GCC organizational mechanisms to provide required Environmental Security information was the focus of Workshop 2: Environmental Security Intelligence/Detection/Information Sharing.

Workshop 3 addressed the Oman conference’s recommendation to “Establish A Regional Monitoring And Warning Center To Notify The National Centers In Order To Help Coordinate Relief Efforts.”

Environmental events that may require a military response or military support fit into the growing area of “non-traditional” operations. While many skills learned in traditional military individual and unit-level training are applicable to these “new” missions, there are also specialized skills involved that require additional training. Workshop 4 looked at the “Development Of A Process To Achieve Regional Training And Exercises In Prevention And Response.”

The nature of both man-made and naturally occurring health and disease crises is that they do not “respect” national borders. National and regional security can be significantly affected by consequences of intentional or accidental health crises. Workgroup 5 focused on “Identifying Multilateral Processes To Address The Health And Disease Consequences Of Intentional And Accidental Environmental Events.”

The Executive Committee, the keystone workshop, had the responsibility for developing a process to review these recommendations, integrate them and present them to their respective governments for concept approval.

Work Group Presentations

Professor Bernard F. Griffard, Center for Strategic Leadership, U.S. Army War College, chaired this session. Each group representative presented the results of his workgroup deliberation.

I. Defining Environmental Security and Setting Regional Objectives

The goal was to secure, preserve, protect and restore the environment consisting of the air, land, water, people, and biodiversity.

The objectives were to ensure a healthy and productive environment by minimizing the adverse effects of human activities mitigating the effects of environmental change on the well-being of individuals and society, preventing and mitigating natural and man-made disasters, and building or enhancing institutions at the regional level to better define and coordinate the roles of the military and civilian agencies to respond to environmental threats and incidents. The workshop also looked at maintaining a high level of Environmental Security awareness/training/education, and the prevention of environmental issues from generating conflict and war.

Noting that there was not a single definition provided for “Environmental Security” which met the needs of all parties, the group developed a working definition of Environmental Security as, “an integrated proactive approach that ensures the protection, preservation, and restoration of the environment, including air, land, water, biodiversity, natural resources, and people, from natural and man-made disaster that might contribute to instability and conflict.”

Recommendations

The workgroup developed the following recommendations:

- a. Continue to implement the recommendations from Oman 2000 ESC.
- b. Encourage broad participation from civilian ministries and non-governmental agencies in ES initiatives.

- c. Use the ES Committee of GCC as the focal point for coordinating regional approaches to ES.
- d. Establish a Regional Coordination Center.
- e. Define ES threats at the regional level and develop and exercise contingency plans.
- f. Maintain continuity and build capacity/expertise by keeping core ES attendees.
- g. Hold 3rd Conference on Environmental Security within 1-2 years.
- h. Convene GCC-US working group to set objectives and agenda of conference.

Discussion

The participants emphasized there is not a single definition for “Environmental Security.” The United Nations definition of Environmental Security differs from the U.S. Department of Energy’s definition. They agreed the working definition must include: protection of land, sea, and people; saving natural resources; preventing pollution of land, sea, and water; restoration of the resource, and cover both natural and man-made disasters. A participant noted, “so far there is no one ES definition. Why do we need one?” A definition is needed to identify objectives, provide focus, and the process, otherwise this leads to unguided efforts.

The primary concern is to provide a healthy environment for the people living in the region. An effective Environmental Security program improves quality of life through the enactment of legislation limiting industrial emissions, contamination, and enforcing environmental protection compliance.

The participants concluded that Environmental Security issues should be included in both existing and new GCC exercises to develop and refine contingency plans. National exercises should identify the environmental threats at the regional level and result in the development of contingency plans that focus on regional response options. The objective of both national and regional exercises should be to develop standardized procedures for response to an Environmental Security issue.

Environmental Security planning, prevention, and response involves military, civilian, government, and non-government agencies. Due to the close proximity of all Arabian Gulf nations, it is highly probable a natural or man-made disaster will affect all countries.

Disaster response is an interagency effort, not a singular military responsibility. Non-military sources have unique technical expertise required in the planning and response phases that complements the military's abundant supply of equipment and manpower. The involvement of all agencies in the planning process ensures the response is timely, a necessary prerequisite in mitigating the overall impact of the disaster. Most countries have military and civilian agreements but few involve formal coordination with adjacent countries.

The group decided its most important recommendation was the requirement to establish a regional coordination center. The Regional Coordination Center (RCC) provides a clearing house to facilitate the sharing of critical information throughout the region. The RCC provides a mechanism for the countries to respond adequately to an event. Focusing on regional planning, prevention, and response, the RCC provides the coordination for an event within one country that requires international response due to saturation of its organic capability. Such a center to coordinate and synchronize disaster response assets does not currently exist within the GCC.

A main concern was the use of current national coordination centers. What processes and protocols are necessary to tie national assets into an RCC? The RCC through the national centers would coordinate the response to a disaster. National centers are essential in that all countries will not or may not agree to focus on the regional level due to legislative restrictions.

The follow-on sessions and meetings need to focus on the organization, manning, and location of the RCC if approved by the individual countries.

The participants recommended using the GCC Environmental Security Committee, established three years earlier, as the focal point for coordinating regional approaches to ES. Since the GCC's approval is needed to ensure the recommendations are implemented, the GCC ESC

is a key player. The recommendations from the Oman Conference were not approved at the GCC therefore the recommendations were not acted upon and funded.

The third Environmental Security Conference, conducted in the next one to two years, should build upon this conference and include scenarios to move from conceptual to practical exercise. The group recommended using a Bushwehr reactor accident scenario or a scenario from EXERCISE EAGLE RESOLVE. During the next conference, a small group from this working group would attend to provide the background for the GCC, military, and civilian organizations.

II. Environmental Security Intelligence, Detection, and Information Sharing

The goal was to reach a consensus on Environmental Security requirements, and to identify GCC organizational mechanisms to provided the required information

The workgroup objectives included the identification of specific requirements for detection, and information sharing within the GCC, the identification of the means for collecting, processing, and disseminating this information, and the identification of the multiple agencies that require this information.

The workshop developed the following recommendations:

- a. Establish a GCC Environmental Center for sharing operational and data-type information.
- b. GCC Countries Conduct Studies to Prioritize Environmental Threats.
- c. Establish a Network Between Countries to Share Information.
- d. Conduct Regional Joint Environmental Exercises, Participants to include; military, civilian, and industry experts.

Discussion

The establishment of a GCC Environmental Center is needed for sharing operational, data, and capabilities for each country. The Center

would verify and provide timely information, to all regional countries and release information to other countries on a need-to-know basis. It would be a centralized source for data and analysis, and would develop a standardized information-sharing format. As the clearing house for out of region environmental intelligence support, it would manage a resource database containing information on regional disaster response equipment and personnel assets.

The Center would collect, process and distribute information over a computer network accessible through the internet database.

Initial action must be taken to achieve the necessary consensus and identify existing and required organizational mechanisms for sharing information. GCC countries must conduct studies to refine and prioritize environmental threats and then establish the required network between nations to share this vital information.

III. Regional Center/Command and Control Center

The goal was to develop recommendations to establish a regional center and procedures for preventing and responding to Environmental Security issues.

The workshop discussed the various alternatives available for developing a GCC Environmental Security Center, and the doctrinal issues related to identifying the best methods of preventing and responding to environmental crises. It also attempted to select the most technically and politically feasible alternatives and identified the next steps in making the Center and associated doctrine a reality.

The workshop developed the following recommendations:

- a. Establish a regional interagency response coordination center for preventing and responding to natural and man-made disasters.
- b. Empower the center to create contingency plans and procedures and conduct risk assessments and emergency action drills.
- c. Create a permanent facility with partial staffing by interagency delegations from each country with a rotating Chair.

d. Obtain approval of funding for establishment of the regional center at the 2003 GCC Summit.

The Way Ahead

a. Phase 1 – (3 months) Get GCC Secretariat approval for establishment of steering committees to identify existing resources (requires transparency), establish responsibilities (monitoring capability, data collection, risk assessment), and establish interface between countries. Steering committee report due March 2003.

b. Phase 2 – (6 months) Determine needed capabilities and infrastructure and establish procedures. Develop recommendation of organizational structure and training plan. Report due September 2003.

c. Phase 3 – (2 months) Development and submission of budget proposal to GCC Secretariat at GCC Summit 2003.

Discussion

A participant stated, “environmental disasters in such a compact region as the Arabian Gulf impact more than one nation.” The participants agreed the GCC countries alone could not provide all the resources to one or more emergencies at a time. A natural or man-made disaster, such as oil spills and toxic waste would cross national boundaries and a coordination center makes sense to provide a regional response to the event.

A Regional Coordination Center should direct the resources and provide the coordination between countries to mitigate the effects. There are so many accidents from oil tanker spills that there already exists a regional organization for marine emergencies, MEMAC. Due to legal and domestic issues, the individual companies and countries operate independently. A regional center would prepare and exercise contingency plans, authority to release support to other countries, and conduct drills to identify shortfalls.

Currently, there are no regional agreements for the movement of assets from two or three outside countries to respond to a disaster or event in another country. The center could facilitate movement. The center does not command and control, but coordinates the response. The upsides

would extend the benefits of help. Using the September 11 New York City response as an example, the State of New York was always in charge and FEMA coordinated outside assistance and it gave the governor one point of contact.

The participants suggested forming a steering group to determine the organization and functions of the Regional Coordination Center. The steering group would develop the Center's purpose, functions, and roles. The Center's major role is the interface and coordination between military and civilian organizations. The group would develop a database of existing resources within each country and augment existing resources and develop thresholds for response when an emergency is beyond a country's ability to respond. A common set of standards and communication channels between the countries would also be required. Review the structure of the national command centers to ensure they can communicate with the regional center. Currently, countries have different systems that inhibit facilitation. Lastly, the group would determine the level of authority the regional center would possess. In the United States, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has no authority, but the capability to identify, request, and provide additional support to include military assets.

There was disagreement on whether to construct a regional center or use an existing national center to perform the regional functions on a rotating basis. Each country has a national operations center that can be connected together with a regional center. One point of agreement was that regional centers never work if established only in an emergency. The regional center must be permanent. The personnel in the center would consist of military and civilian experts. The civilian and industry sectors have the technical expertise the military does not possess.

The countries need to obtain the GCC's approval and support for the development of the regional coordination center. The GCC provides the authority and official recognition for the center to perform its mission dependent on buy in of all countries. The need for a regional center should be added to the next GCC conference agenda.

IV. Regional Training and Exercises

The goal was to identify the requirement for training and exercises in the prevention of and response to Environmental Security related events and crisis.

The workshop sought to identify requirements for training and exercises, develop initial concepts for training and exercises at the National and Regional levels, and identify the next steps required to develop a detailed planning process

The workshop recommendations included:

- a. Refine a list of threats.
- b. Hold GCC contingency planning training.
- c. Identify existing contingency and exercise plans.
- d. Develop compatible interagency national plans; include NGOs, private organizations, and international organizations.
- e. Develop GCC regional plans.
- f. Identify existing capabilities, training and exercises.
- g. Based on plans, identify additional resources, training and exercises required in the GCC.
- h. Develop a notional timeline for the above activities.

In order to achieve the goal and objectives, there are challenges to developing, regional training exercises. The first step is to have a solid plan to train and exercise. There is no regional plan upon which to develop a solid exercise program. The plan must include military, government, and civilian sectors (private and industry). Each GCC country has conducted internal or bi-lateral exercises for responding to different threats in the area. There is no regional exercise to conduct environmental disaster response.

In this light the workshop identified threats crucial to the security of the environment in the region. The current threat may be the oil spill, chemical weapon of mass destruction, environmental terrorism, or water

shortage depending on your situation. In order to prepare a good plan for training, the GCC should train and equip its responders to face the potential types of threat.

Environmental events that may require a military response or military support fit into the growing area of “nontraditional” operations. While many skills learned in traditional military individual and unit-level training are applicable to these “new” missions, there are also specialized skills involved that require additional training. To meet these requirements the GCC must develop regional Environmental Security contingency plans. With such plans in place it will be possible to identify existing capabilities and shortfalls, and then to program the additional resources, training and exercises required.

V. Managing Health and Disease Consequences

The goal was to identify multilateral processes to address the health and disease consequences of intentional and accidental environmental events.

The workshop reviewed the lessons learned from the anthrax and West Nile virus issues, particularly in the context of environmental management in the Arabian Gulf Region, identified civilian and military First Responders issues, priorities, and training initiatives, along with the opportunities for interagency and multilateral partnerships and information sharing.

The workshop recommendations included:

- a. Conduct a focus workshop to be held in Spring 2003 in Jordan. This workshop will promote multilateral information exchanges, and the reinforcement of the existing network of experts.
- b. Address the areas of incidents that span beyond the scope of just localized events to those that are transnational, and make recommendations in the area of policy and improved opportunities, prevention and prediction.
- c. Expand on the civil-military ties and actually develop a virtual network of experts that can be used in a reach-back scenario, in a crisis, and to mitigate the outcome and to leverage existing training exercises and

opportunities, not only to exercise skill sets specific to this area, but also to validate our concepts in a real world environment.

Discussion

The workgroup analyzed specific cases of the West Nile outbreaks, of the anthrax cases that we have recently dealt with and learned from, and tried to project our understanding into potential events within the Gulf region.

The group identified first responder issues, with a specific interest in military, civilian and partnering with the private sector, and specifically identifying opportunities that may exist for interagency and multilateral opportunities.

The U.S. Central Command provided a generalized understanding of its Cooperative Defense Initiative (CDI), and where we could fit our activities into the existing process.

The representatives described the various mechanisms for tracking infectious diseases in their countries. Going beyond the planning processes that already exist, to understand differences and cultural interests that reflected thresholds for reporting commonalities and shortfalls in this process.

The delegates are interested in developing a country-specific and a region specific database and leveraging what already exists in the community for tracking infectious diseases.

The potential use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), primarily dual-use pathogens led a discussion focusing beyond the traditional understanding of chemical, biological, and toxicological industrial accidents, but to the understanding the very complex area of weapons of mass destruction and effects which may exist, and specifically in the area of dual-use pathogens and emerging diseases. This is of great interest to us all, because it is of global significance.

Lastly, the group looked for opportunities in which new interfaces may exist, or older interfaces may be expanded, in the military, civilian, and private sectors. Workgroup members concurred with the comprehensive

span of threats that may exist, and specifically looked through the lens of medical implications and opportunities in which these implications could be used for prevention and prediction of an event, to the standpoint that we could actually use our knowledge base and network of experts to expand operational capability.

VI. Executive Committee: The Next Steps and Way Ahead

The goal was to develop recommendations to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Armed Forces and United States Central Command for methods to enhance Environmental Security planning, prevention, and disaster response in the Arabian Gulf. The objectives of the Executive Committee (EXCOM) were to agree on a process for addressing the conference recommendations and establish a timeline and schedule follow-on activities.

The group consensus was that the Executive Committee needed to meet periodically to determine the focus of the upcoming conferences, work group issues, and the conduct of follow-on workshops. In addition, the EXCOM would determine the mission, function, responsibilities, etc. of the coordination center so we can brief our government officials at home.

The EXCOM recommended meeting in 3-4 months to consider the following:

- a. Civil authorities that play a role, interaction during a response.
- b. Recommendations to decision makers to review and approve and determine roles and missions of the center for response and training.
- c. The concept of locating the Center in Qatar, which would not be a problem if no other country were willing to establish the center in their country.
- d. The concept for an ideal center, which would be a joint center consisting of interagency staff from crisis management, ES, civilian, and military authorities.
- e. The Qatar Armed Forces plan that would establish a unit that addresses issues concerning the environment.

Discussion

Gulf Cooperation Council. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) provides the overarching regional focus for the Arabian Gulf States. The Executive Committee (EXCOM) needs to present its recommendations to the GCC Military Council to gain official approval. There were no tangible results and actions from the Oman Conference since the GCC did not provide official approval. The EXCOM needs to coordinate and involve the GCC ministries and agencies in planning and conducting training. The GCC can provide training assets, coordination, equipment, and funding to conduct training to improve coordination. The EXCOM can present its proposals and recommendations at their regularly scheduled meetings.

Increase Interagency Cooperation Between Military and Civilian Agencies. Environmental Crisis planning and response must include military, civilian, government, and NGO organizations to ensure cooperation between these groups prior to a crisis. Their involvement in the planning process is essential.

Each country has civilian agencies, government ministries, and enacted legislation to cooperate during a disaster and does well on disaster response because the agencies involved know the processes. However, the challenge to assist another country and the ability to respond quickly loses synergy if the focus is within our country. The region needs processes, plans, coordination exercises, and training prior to a disaster, if not, then the response will not occur rapidly and will be hampered because we must depend on other ministries to assist in the coordination and liaison.

The military has specialized equipment that makes it unique for assisting during a disaster. The Armed Forces play a large role in disaster response but the countries need to recommend and develop actions to improve the standards and quality of training and equipment.

Each country already conducts training exercises. However, training programs and exercises are needed to increase cooperation and coordination between military and civilian agencies is needed to ensure cooperation. The countries need to identify existing training exercises without adding exercises to an already full calendar. Each of the countries can add

Environmental Security issues to existing training exercises at a low cost without adding new exercises. Lastly, each country needs to have similar training programs, plans, and equipment to facilitate disaster response efforts.

Effectively Activate the Armed Forces of the GCC Environmental Committee resulting from Oman Conference. As stated earlier, the military has specialized equipment that makes it unique for assisting during a disaster and the Armed Forces play a large role in disaster. There is a need for programs that raise Environmental Security awareness within the Armed Forces. These programs must address the role of the armed forces in cooperation with civilian authorities.

The region needs to conduct training exercises on Environmental Security. The United States has the ability to train and educate the GCC on crisis response. The GCC must support and provide assistance during the training. CENTCOM can provide expertise on the level of response and equipment required for various types and levels of disaster.

Establish Regional Environmental Coordination Center. The EXCOM recommended the establishment of a regional environmental coordination center. Currently, the region lacks an effective fully manned and regional coordination center, including both military and civilian representatives, from each GCC country with Iran and Iraq. In addition, the establishment of a regional center supports an Operation EAGLE RESOLVE recommendation for a regional operations center to provide a link between national and regional consequence management activities.

A regional coordination center is needed to protect the environment, provide early warning, facilitate coordination across national boundaries, and provides specialized assistance and expertise in response to natural and man-made disasters. The Coordination Center must be active in preventing, planning, and educating for disaster response not just responding.

The Center can conduct studies to increase cooperation and provide education programs at all levels to protect the environment. A regional center provides a mechanism to coordinate activities and a means to facilitate information exchange to coordinate the regions efforts. The

center would provide the platform to develop public education courses in schools, communities, and use of the media to mitigate the affects of a man-made or natural disaster. The Center's focus would be on those areas affecting two or more countries, such as oil spills and dual use pathogens.

A start point for a regional center is the need for each country to inventory its capacity, military and civilian, and disaster/civil defense plans. This information is required to ensure the proper cooperation and response during a crisis (joint and multilateral). Implement processes to assist other countries. This will determine what the regional coordination center will look like.

Lastly, the location of the center would not be finalized without approval from the countries.