

# Strategy Research Project

## Stability Operations Challenges

by

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## Stability Operations Challenges

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### Abstract

This paper identifies six challenges facing U.S. stability operations. These include issues of policy, leadership, civil affairs force structure, assessment, joint coalition operations and resource scarcity. The identified challenges stem from both the findings of the Special Investigator for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and from personal observations from deployments as a civil affairs operator and planner. These challenges are framed against current U.S. policy, and department of defense, department of state and interagency capabilities. Potential remedies for each of the six challenges is provided, as well as suggestions for the way ahead for U.S. stability operations.

## Stability Operations Challenges

This study identifies six challenges as they relate to the U.S. Government's recent experience with stability operations.<sup>1</sup> These challenges coalesce around issues of policy, leadership, civil affairs force structure, assessment, joint coalition operations and resource scarcity. Challenges were gleaned both from official evaluations of stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and from personal experiences. The intent is to provide planners, operators and policy makers with considerations to assist with decision making in future stability operations.

Stability operations are defined similarly across the spectrum of doctrinal manuals and policy directives, but for the purposes of this study the Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 3000.05 specifies it "as an overarching term encompassing various military missions, tasks, and activities conducted outside the United States in coordination with other instruments of national power to maintain or reestablish a safe and secure environment, provide essential governmental services, emergency infrastructure reconstruction, and humanitarian relief."<sup>2</sup> Stability operations involve many players, both military and civilian, and require as much coordination as any combat operation. They are also conducted during all phases of a military campaign, but are not performed to the same degree during each phase. The footprint of stability operations is most visible after combat operations cease.

There are five phases to any military operation, depicted below on Figure One. *Phase Zero*, also called the shaping phase, consists of those things the U.S. does continually through engagement using all the elements of national power.<sup>3</sup> When not

## Notional Operation Plan Phases

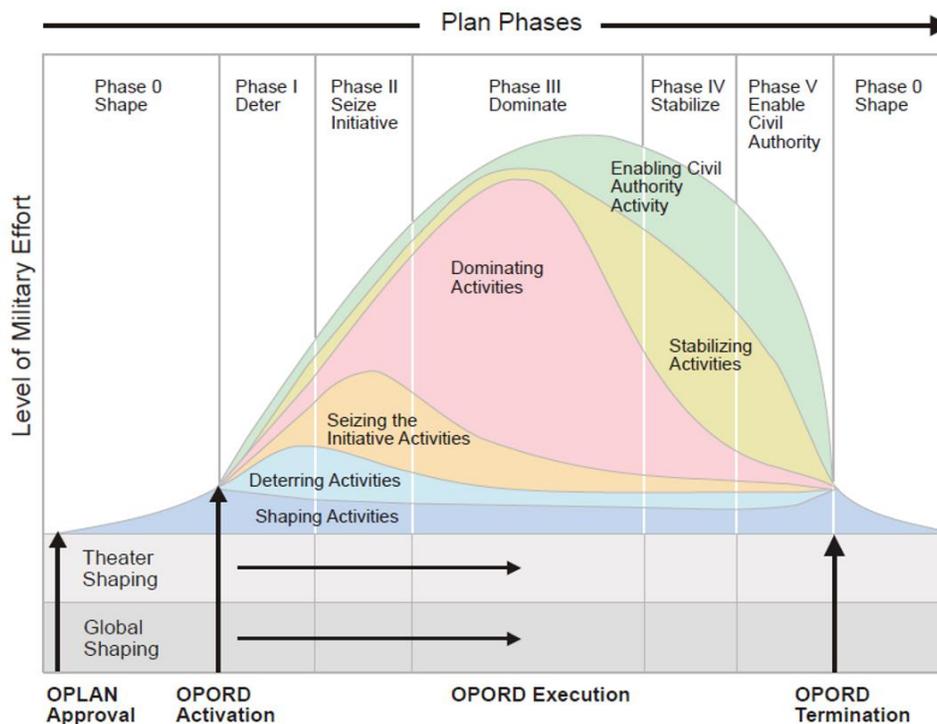


Figure 1. Notional Operation Plan Phases<sup>4</sup>

part of a combat operation, these same actions are performed in what are coined Steady-State activities.<sup>5</sup> *Phase Zero* bookends any combat operation, and signals either the beginning of an operation, or a return to Steady-State activities.<sup>6</sup> In *Phase One*, operations aim to deter, deny and or dissuade behaviors not in the interests of the U.S. The goal of *Phase One* is to prevent escalation of tensions between the U.S. and other actors or nation states so that hostilities are not required. If combat operations are needed, the goal then switches to seizing the initiative (*Phase Two*), which includes deployment, forcible entry, defense and offense. Combat operations proceed in *Phase Three* with actions to dominate the adversary. During *Phase Four* combat operations are significantly reduced as the focus switches to stabilization. Finally, in *Phase Five*, the operation culminates after civil authorities are enabled. *Phase Four* and *Phase Five* were the focal points for stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Due to the security

environment, it is questionable whether a post-combat phase was ever achieved. While *Phase Four* and *Phase Five* are commonly referred to as the major stability phases, stability operations run the gamut of phases, depicted in Figure 1 as either shaping, enabling of civil authorities or stabilizing activities. Specifically for Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. and Coalition made extensive efforts to stabilize, with an emphasis on reconstruction. Reconstruction is time and cost intensive, and can be more expensive than combat operations.

While recent research on stability operations has focused on combat operations conducted in Iraq and Afghanistan, stability operations extend far beyond the phases of an operation, to include:

“...a wide range of stability tasks performed under the umbrella of various operational environments---to support a partner nation during peacetime military engagement, after a natural or man-made disaster as part of a humanitarian-based limited intervention, during peace operations to enforce international peace agreements, to support a legitimate host-nation government during irregular warfare, during major combat operations to establish conditions that facilitate post-conflict activities, and in a post-conflict environment following the general cessation of organized hostilities.”<sup>7</sup>

Although the range of stability operations is vast, they can be collapsed into several major lines of operation, with each tied to specific objectives and desired outcomes as depicted in Figure 2. The lines of operation are tailored to the venture and resources allocated depending on the degree of instability and on the gap existing between present conditions and desired outcomes. Unstable security environments make it difficult to ensure progress when conducting these lines of operation. Because stability operations are dominated by support forces typically not concerned with combat roles (i.e. Civil Affairs and civilian agencies like DOS and USAID), an unstable security

environment can frustrate and retard reconstruction efforts. This was the case during operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, where security was only maintained through the persistent presence of U.S., coalition or host nation forces. As the Special Investigator for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) and the Special Investigator for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) noted, unless the security environment can be ensured, stability operations will continue to be challenged.<sup>8</sup>

The SIGIR and SIGAR produced the two largest reviews to date of our recent stability operations, and catalog the problems faced during the 14 years the U.S.

### Operational Approach—Example

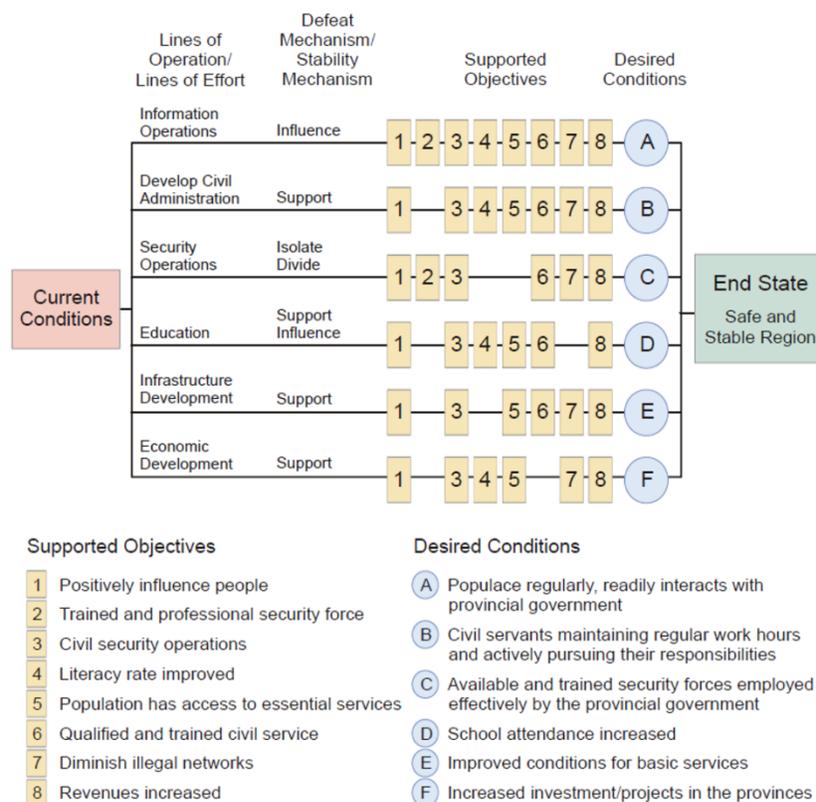


Figure 2. An Example of an Operational Approach<sup>9</sup>

conducted operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom Afghanistan (OEF-A). These two compendiums, as well as personal experiences during recent stability operations, are used to highlight challenges facing stability operations. These challenges are grouped into six areas, policy, leadership, force structure, assessment, joint coalition efforts and resource scarcity. Taken in total, they represent significant hurdles for future stability operations.

### Challenges

In the last fourteen years, the United States has conducted stability operations unparalleled since the reconstruction following World War II. In terms of scope, the cost of operations during OIF and OEF-A far surpassed that of the Marshall Plan.<sup>10</sup> Both operations taxed the capabilities of the U.S. and its allies. Due, in part, to the length, complexity and cost of these operations, the U.S. Department of Defense's (DOD) 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) asserted that "...our forces will no longer be sized to conduct large-scale prolonged stability operations..."<sup>11</sup> Whether this policy initiative will remain in place should we face another large stability effort remains to be seen.

In the 2014 QDR, policy-makers did not provide definitions to specify what is considered a "large-scale operation", nor the exact amount of time needed for an operation to be considered "prolonged". This is not surprising given that policy-makers prefer some wiggle room, but it violates the concrete lines of distinction so coveted by military planners. Yet without clear guidance, there will be confusion caused by the incongruence of the requirement that the DOD must have the capabilities to conduct stability operations across all phases within a policy that we will only undertake

operations (particularly during *Phase Four*) of a certain size and for an unspecified period of time.

While it is natural for the U.S. to be reluctant to undertake large-scale enduring stability operations given the experiences from 2002-2016, the U.S.'s current stance ignores the world we live in. Natural disasters can and will involve stability operations. In cases like the earthquake in Haiti, these can be large, long-term and extend in scope beyond a humanitarian response. Similarly, should a country's government implode, the resulting chaos could be unacceptable to the U.S. and the world community.<sup>12</sup> In this light, it would be better to emphasize that we, together with our allies and partners, will share the planning and financial burden of future stability operations.<sup>13</sup> This recognizes the liberal view of nation states and the interdependencies we have in times of crisis.<sup>14</sup>

As a potential solution, given the current reluctance to become involved in additional combat operations using ground forces, current policy should continue to emphasize steady-state or *Phase Zero* operations as a preventative means to head off larger and longer-term involvement.<sup>15</sup> This would allow us to focus efforts to ameliorate the need for additional commitments. At the very least, it would behoove the U.S. to identify the potential costs of *Phase Four* operations so policy makers can factor them into their deliberations before the use of force is recommended. Although calculating these costs is difficult in advance of a potential combat operation, any estimated dollar amount would be superior to hoping stability operations wouldn't be necessary. Lastly, the U.S. can work with its allies to build their stability operations capabilities, to include both civilian and military capacities. The U.S. relationship with the East African Union is an example of working with and through a Coalition to enable security and stability in a

region.<sup>16</sup> Concomitantly, the U.S. should continue to work through the United Nations to bolster its humanitarian and disaster response capabilities as a means to further reduce any reliance on the U.S. as a primary provider of assistance.

### Leadership

Irrespective of our intentions to not delve into “large-scale prolonged” stability operations, the requirements to conduct such operations still exist. Stability operations are mandated by the DOD as a key military mission<sup>17</sup>. Guidance for who is responsible for the conduct of stability operations is specified in the same DODI. It asserts that stability operations are the purview of the DOS, with DOD agencies and subordinate commands as enactors.<sup>18</sup> This guidance was revised in 2007 due to the realization that the DOS had limited means to be the lead agency during the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan. Although technically the lead in stability operations, the DOS does not have the manning nor security assets and training to conduct stability operations of any significant size, nor does it have the personnel to coordinate large humanitarian assistance requirements.<sup>19</sup> Instead, the DOS works with and through the interagency to leverage capabilities and coordinate efforts. This fact is borne out by simply looking at the numbers. Edward Marks wrote that “With approximately a \$600 billion defense budget plus war costs compared to a significantly less than a \$50 billion diplomatic and foreign aid budget<sup>20</sup>, we are dramatically under-resourced on the non-military side of the equation”.<sup>21</sup>

Unfortunately for U.S. stability operations efforts, misconceptions about the capabilities of DOS staffing challenge our overseas efforts. An example will bear this out. In 2013, the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan resulted in closure of many of the

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT). At the operational headquarters in Afghanistan, the International Stabilization Assistance Force Joint Command (IJC) relied on the PRTs for the status of efforts in the provinces. When the issue of our loss of “eyes” in the provinces was reported to IJC in Kabul, the assumption was made that DOS personnel would remain after the PRT closed. It was then discovered that DOS personnel were departing the theater as soon as the PRTs closed. The reason was simple. There were only a few DOS personnel at each PRT and they relied on the PRT for sustainment and security.

Given current and anticipated fiscal climates, it is unlikely that the DOS will receive additional personnel to assist in future stability operations. One possible solution to fill the void during spikes in personnel requirements is to use a response force. The Civilian Response Corps is a partnership of nine federal agencies providing deployable expertise in international conflict prevention and stabilization. Created by Congress in 2008, it was utilized in Afghanistan, South Sudan, and the Kyrgyz Republic. The CRC includes personnel detailed from the Interagency. Unfortunately, the CRC has not received the funding to provide the force envisioned.<sup>22</sup> Without a ready-reserve of qualified personnel, the DOS will continue to “flex” limited personnel from more stable areas to less stable ones.

One way the DOS could expand its influence to fulfill its role is having it work more closely with the U.S. military. The DOS could participate in Capstone exercises with military forces such as those at the Joint Readiness Training Center and the National Training Center. By participating in these exercises with rotational military units, the U.S. could improve working relationships between the lead agency and the

military enablers of stability operations. The resulting synergy between DOS and DOD interaction would enhance the reach and effectiveness of DOS efforts. At present, role players fulfill the roles of state department personnel at Capstone exercises. This simulates interactions between the DOS and DOD, but is less than optimal.

Additionally, members from the interagency should participate with DOD units in large training venues to improve crosstalk and to build relationships. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has a cooperation policy for working with DOD personnel.<sup>23</sup> The rest of the interagency could adopt similar plans to work with the DOD. Furthermore, the DOD should have both policies for working with the interagency and training plans to involve them in stability operations planning. Finally, the Civil Affairs (CA) community should consider building liaisons with the DOS at the Civil Affairs Command level.<sup>24</sup> This would build working relationships and reach-back capabilities for CA forces once in country. Recent efforts by the CA community to embed planning teams at the GCCs are notable, but similar outreach with the interagency would foster relationships that would pay off in times of need.

### Force Structure

The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review specified that “although our forces will no longer be sized to conduct large-scale prolonged stability operations, we will preserve the expertise gained during the past ten years of counterinsurgency and stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We will also protect the ability to regenerate capabilities that might be needed to meet future demands.”<sup>25</sup> While the ideals of this statement are lofty, it does not mesh with reality. We have captured the lessons learned from stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but the only way to preserve the

expertise is with appropriate force structure and training, both of which are feeling the pressures of cuts to both budgets and force structure.<sup>26</sup>

Although it takes a wide range of enablers to conduct stability operations across the lines of operation, the specialty of U.S. Army CA is in the vanguard for coordinating and overseeing DOD efforts. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan revealed, the U.S.'s CA forces were incapable of meeting the demands dealt by successive rotations. In terms of force generation capabilities, battle rosters were only filled over the course of OIF and OEF-A due to the significant use of accelerated CA courses to train Civil Affairs soldiers.<sup>27</sup> The Army and its sister-services were scoured for personnel to go through short Civil Affairs mobilization-specific courses to anoint them as CA operators. These forces were then battle-rostered, used for deployment and then returned to their service to resume their careers outside of CA. This stopgap measure to create bodies met with some success, but such forces were often not of the same quality as CA operators with years of experience, and it did nothing to build long-term force structure.

Due to the shortfall of CA soldiers, the U.S. Army's single Special Operations Forces (SOF) CA battalion was expanded to a brigade-sized element during the course of OIF and OEF-A. Additionally, an active-duty conventionally oriented CA brigade was planned and stood up, but it was never fully fielded. Several additional reserve CA battalions were also added to the force structure during OIF and OEF-A, but most of these came online too late to help in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, the current CA force structure suffers from the same manning challenges that has plagued the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (USACAPOC) since 2002; namely, a critical shortage of officers

and subject-matter experts.<sup>28</sup> The pipeline to create additional qualified CA officers remains too narrow to offer any resolution, and any enduring requirement above a brigade-sized CA force would again require mobilization-type qualification courses.<sup>29</sup> One of the tenets of the Special Operations Command (SOC) is that you cannot quickly generate Special Operations Forces. It takes years to train and field an effective Special Operator. While most of the CA forces no longer reside in the SOC, the required skillsets are just as difficult to generate.

Partially as a result of the QDR mandate that we will no longer perform large long-term stability operations, the U.S. Army Structure (ARSTRUC) directive 18-22 deletes two battalions from the reserve CA force by fiscal year 2018.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, each of the remaining 30 battalions will lose a Company. This will cut some of the “slack” existing in many battalions, and eliminate several battalions with chronic manning shortfalls, but it will not correct the problem of vacancies for qualified officers and non-commissioned officers. Reserve CA is not the only force to be impacted by the ARSTRUC. The active army non-SOF CA brigade is being scaled back to one battalion due to less need for steady-state stability operation rotations.

USACAPOC either needs to find a way of increasing the rate at which officers and NCOs become qualified in the CA branch, or it should consider changing the Military Table of Organization and Equipment to accommodate different rank structures.<sup>31</sup> At present it is a challenged Command incapable of building capacity, and it has too many vacancies at critical positions in the force.<sup>32</sup> In 2015, an initiative was begun to create a new military occupational skill – the 38G. The 38G focuses on the shortage of functional experts, and will partially fill the many vacant slots at CA brigades

and Commands. While some 38Gs are being added to the mix, recruiting was expanded from the already-qualified 38A, thus cannibalizing qualified officers. Moreover, the requirements to receive a 38G are only slightly less daunting than passing the CA qualification course. The solution here would be to reduce the hurdles placed on civilians in joining the ranks of 38G CA officers, and incentivizing the program. Expertise exists in the civilian realm but, to date, USACAPOC has not been energized sufficiently to capture it.

In addition to U.S. Army CA, there are limited sister-service CA capabilities. The U.S. Marine Corps CA consists of over 900 active and reserve Marines, the Marine Civil Affairs Groups (CAG) support Marine units during deployments. Unfortunately, they too face manning challenges, with 80 percent of the CAGs being made up by reservists.<sup>33</sup>

One way to bridge the gap in addressing future stability operation forces needs is to work with allies and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Civil Military Information Center (CIMIC) to build partner capacity to assist in stability operations. Because coalition efforts often involve nation caveats, it is important for partner nations to have their own civil-military trained personnel.<sup>34</sup> One issue related to this came up during OIF. United Nations and other coalition civil-military subject matter experts (SMEs) could not enter during hostilities unless U.S. forces transported and provided security for them. Because Iraq was always considered a combat zone, these SMEs could not be utilized.

### Assessment

The U.S. and its NATO allies have been involved in Afghanistan since 2002. While the U.S. contingent has shrunk to below 10,000 troops, there is no apparent end

to our presence in that country. Although stability operations have achieved some modicum of success, and enhanced the capability of the Afghan forces to provide for their own security, Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) are still too small to provide coverage for the entire country, and recent signals from that area of operations are not promising.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, ANDSF forces that have been created are sustained by donor nations. As the U.S. Army General John Campbell found, “I remain concerned about the long-term viability of the ANDSF. Succinctly, Afghanistan cannot afford its security forces – particularly at their present size. Yet their current numbers are needed to contend with the scale of the threat.”<sup>36</sup> As a primary line of operation in stability operations, security assistance sets the stage for the other lines of operation. Security assistance is like the rest of stability operations in that results are often slow to materialize. As MG Semonite stated “No one can argue with ‘the nay-sayer’ that feels progress should be faster, but we need to reinforce those with a long-term vision, to champion those who know that successes come with challenges and to embrace those with strategic patience to support steady progress.”<sup>37</sup> One of the lessons-learned in Afghanistan is that there was no specified time required for stability operations to achieve success and that mandating deadlines can create a reality gap between the way we want it to be and the actual conditions.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, that realization does not always meet the expectations of Commanders. A case in point will illustrate this.

In 2013, LTG Milley (since promoted to Army Chief of Staff) assumed Command of IJC from LTG Terry. LTG Terry was comfortable with the progress of stability operations and reporting by the stability operations division was tailored to meet the level of clarity he expected. The quarterly reporting system to inform him of the progress

across the four lines of operation (governance, rule of law, strategic infrastructure and provincial reconstruction teams) was well established and linked to what subordinate commands were reporting. Unfortunately, once LTG Milley assumed command it quickly became evident that the stability operations division was not able to provide the clarity in progress across the lines of operation that he expected. While staffs began finger-pointing and planners shifted gears to try to gather the metrics that LTG Milley wanted, dissatisfaction with the stability operations division at IJC grew. Before long, the SES2 (Major General equivalent civil-service representative) heading the stability operations division was sent home, the division was down-graded to an O-6 Colonel billet, and stability operations were henceforth marginalized at IJC. The lesson-learned was that without expectation management and support from the operational maneuver commander, stability operations could not reach fruition. At the same time, stability operations must be able to articulate how they define and measure the rate of progress.

A problem in assessing our recent experiences with stability operations is our perspective. One cannot discuss recent stability efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan without comparing them to the Marshall Plan after World War II. Irrespective of differences in historical context, geography, demographics and economics, the tendency is to use the Marshall plan as a lens through which we view modern stability operations.<sup>39</sup> Using that comparison, Iraq and Afghanistan fall far short of the success achieved in Europe or Japan. Nevertheless, analogies as mental models are as tempting as they are inappropriate for comparison purposes.<sup>40</sup>

In LTG (ret) Dan Bolger's book *Why We Lost*, he attributes a lack of proper information given by the Generals to policy-makers as a cause of problems faced in Iraq

and Afghanistan.<sup>41</sup> According to Bolger, it is the duty of senior military officers to offer sage counsel to policy makers. In this regard, if policy-makers had known the extent and time required to conduct stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan they would have supposedly made different decisions. While hindsight is illuminating, it is a leap of faith to assume different decisions would have been made. Ironically, advice was given to the Bush administration of the possible long-term commitments required in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>42</sup> But for every naysayer to the merits of a policy decision there are proponents with a can-do attitude. What we can surmise is that we will carefully consider the long-term ramifications of decisions to conduct combat operations for the foreseeable future. Just as our successes and failures in Vietnam affected policy decisions in the Gulf War, it is likely that the length and cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will impact the willingness to commit forces to other hotspots.

There were also inconsistencies and gaps in how stability operations were assessed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Part of the problem was the nature of stability operations, which covers a range of lines of operation, efforts towards which often take years to effect. Moreover, in both Iraq and Afghanistan there was no model for what “right” looked like. Both countries faced challenges in the rule of law, governance and infrastructure development before U.S. and Coalition forces began operations. In order to fill the void in assessing stability operations the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) developed Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments (MPICE).<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, it was developed in 2010 shortly after their Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction was published, and as a result was of limited utility in recent stability operation efforts.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, while PKSOI is the joint proponent for

stability operations in the DOD, it does not have the whole of government lead in stability operations, and as such efforts to measure progress at the DOD level might not mesh with USAID and DOS vision.

Both the DOS and USAID have conflict assessment frameworks. Unfortunately, neither identifies specific metrics that warfighters commonly use to track progress. The MPICE is much more specific in this regard, and leans on survey findings to reveal attitudes from the populace concerning governance, the rule of law etc. Regrettably, while PKSOI is the Joint Proponent for Peacekeeping and Stability Operations, it does not have the responsibility to train CA operators. That task falls on the John F Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS), which trains CA and Military Information Support Operations specialists. Furthermore, while CA doctrine includes the concepts of measures of effectiveness (MOE) and measures of performance (MOP), it does not include the taxonomy used in the MPICE. Nor is MPICE included in the development of joint doctrine on stability operations.

In order to coordinate theory and practice, both the CA field manual and the joint manual for stability operations should be updated to include the MPICE framework. Unless CA operators and the larger joint community involved in stability operations have a common structure for measuring progress in stability operations there will continue to be a disconnect between “schoolhouses” such as PKSOI and USJFKSWCS and those implementing stability operations in the field. Additionally, the DOS must take the lead to specify what “right looks like” for the operation. Without guidance on the goal of the efforts, stability operations have no realistic aim point. The goals specified by the DOS should also be socialized among the Interagency. Outside of the Continental U.S., the

USAID is very active to promote our interests, and often takes the lead in coordinating the stability operations. This creates a dilemma for stability operations forces. Because the USAID often has the money to create immediate impact, they sometimes can be viewed as the lead for the operation. Stability Operations forces must be trained to know who the lead is on stability operations. During steady-state activities, this is less problematic because the embassies ensure interagency coordination within each target country.

### Joint Coalition Efforts

Although the U.S. has joint doctrine on the conduct of stability operations, we are likely to be involved with other nations and partners in any future stability operation. Each actor in a stability operation has its own set of interests, policies and guidelines. This is further complicated by the host of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), government organizations (GOs) and independent organizations (IOs) typically participating in a stability operation.

During complex stability operations, the range of actors involved can be daunting. While in Afghanistan at the IJC, a rule of law subject matter expert identified 47 different organizations involved with the rule of law in the theater. There was no single clearinghouse for coordinating rule of law efforts in theater across all actors, nor was there a harmonizing mechanism for synchronizing across the other stability operations lines of operation. CA forces use the Civil Military Operation Center (CMOC) to synchronize activities in a particular area, and NATO stands up Civil Military Information Centers (CIMIC) wherever and whenever appropriate. However, synchronization remains a challenge. In Afghanistan, each Regional Command (RC)

would coordinate with the PRTs to determine major efforts and report on activities. In reality, the PRTs were decentralized and conducted operations to suit the needs of the province, based on the national priorities of the PRT's funding source. While it is important to be responsive to local needs, stability operations strategy must be a top-down approach. All too often, operational level RCs merely gathered reports from what transpired at local levels. Although it was essential that ISAF and IJC knew what was going on in each province (in order to assess overall progress), without a directive strategy stability operations devolved into a series of uncoordinated activities.

One way to synchronize activities across disparate partners and levels of command is to create a shared view of stability operations. This can be accomplished by using Civil Information Management (CIM) to create a common operating picture of the environment. CIM is a relational database that can visually depict leaders, organizations, infrastructure and any other civilian-centric information about a given area. It can paint a picture at the strategic level, and offer specifics down to village-level operations. CIM has been used in CA for the last 15 years in SOF CA units to assist with the coordination of efforts. More recently, USACAPOC has begun providing CIM training for tactical units, but work remains to be able to use it as an operational and strategic capability. Nevertheless, it holds the promise of being able to coordinate stability operations at multiple echelons. This would require common software being agreed upon by all parties, and both a civilian and military understanding of what CIM can accomplish. At present, there are multiple software platforms being used, with varying levels of understanding of what CIM entails.

Mechanisms should also be established to assign clear lines of demarcation between partners involved in stability operations efforts, such as assigning police training to a specific country, or assigning governance capacity building to identifiable agencies/coalition partners. These lines of demarcation would exist within stability operations lines of operation and would prevent the sort of tasking fratricide present in OIF and OEF-A. A tougher task would be to de-conflict efforts across NGOs, GOs and IOs, each of whom have their own agendas and lines of effort. Again, CA can help in this regard, charting the efforts of the various organizations and finding common ground amongst organizations.

One of the best compendiums written about doctrine for stability operations and interagency coordination emphasizes the need for prior planning before conducting stabilization, security, transition and reconstruction operations.<sup>45</sup> Although that study predates the QDR affirmation that long-term stability operations are no longer in vogue, it is a ready reference for identifying and resolving problems between the DOD and the interagency.

### Resource Scarcity

The U.S.'s policy to eschew long-term stability operations post Iraq and Afghanistan is based on reality and interests. The reality is that the U.S. is mired in escalating debt and saddled with unfunded long-term social program obligations that will create fiscal austerity for the foreseeable future. In 2008 William Durch stated "the next U.S. Administration will face serious questions of resource allocation regarding peace and stability operations."<sup>46</sup> This will be as true for the next U.S. administration as it was for President Obama's administrations.

Part of the cause of our distain for conducting stability operations is the nature of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, both of which bore semblances of as much nation building as stabilizing. Stability operations should not be confused with nation building. As Bullimore states, "The depth and breadth of activities involved during nation-building eclipses the activities of stability operations. Rebuilding states or nation-building is a controversial mission that because of confusion over responsibilities and our commitment to conduct these operations has limited the interagency investments needed to better perform the tasks".<sup>47</sup> Cavaleri wrote about the difficulties in transitioning between combat operations and stability operations.<sup>48</sup> That difficulty is amplified when transitioning between combat operations and reconstruction activities.

From an interest standpoint, the current administration has emphasized "burden sharing" and "shared responsibility" both in strategic documents and in speeches.<sup>49</sup> Resource scarcity is not only a U.S. problem, but an allied problem. Most of our allies are also enduring fiscal constraints. The questions that arise are what stability operations will we commit to and to what degree? Civil affairs missions are increasingly turning to steady state engagement activities consisting of embedded planning teams at the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC). They are being used to coordinate and facilitate building partner capacity in everything from law enforcement to host nation stability operations capabilities.

The U.S. will, as a matter of necessity, increasingly emphasize diplomacy, recognizing that the "M" (Military) in DIME national elements of power is but one way to create effects. Diplomacy in DIME can also be utilized largely to offset the U.S. inability to throw its economic might around, but its effects are enhanced by the other elements

of national power.<sup>50</sup> By continuing to use engagement as a means to spread influence, the U.S. can mitigate some of the risk associated with not getting involved in lengthy stability operations or reconstruction efforts. The best way to accomplish this is by continuing to deploy CA teams to amplify the effect of steady state activities. The aforementioned use of planning teams at the GCCs and Functional Commands will also facilitate engagement coordination at the theater level.

#### Additional Recommendations

In addition to the above specific recommendations, the U.S. must build the force it can afford, rather than the force it wants. This relates to both interagency staffing and military force structure. The U.S. will have to prioritize. If the NSS says the U.S. must be ready to deal with humanitarian assistance and stability operations, then it needs to have the forces trained to meet those contingencies. If the U.S. plans to continue to use train, advise and assist (TAA) missions as a means to head off or mitigate escalation of conflicts, then this repertoire must be a primary skillset of the force structure, with implications for training priorities. At present, TAA missions are an ancillary requirement for our forces.

Military forces should train as we fight. Most units in the U.S. Army are returning to a garrison mentality. Combat Training Center rotations and other regional exercises with partners must emphasize the Joint, Interagency and Coalition aspect to stability operations that is the norm today. Forces should be exposed to the challenges of coordinating with those wearing different uniforms prior to deployment.

History has taught us that stability operations involve problems that are layered, multi-ethnic and complex. The U.S. Army War College's depiction of the environment as

being violent, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) comes to mind. Looking ahead, operating in a VUCA environment will entail embracing allies and partners to help them to solve their own problems. The U.S. national interest as stated in the NSS is to have an international order favorable to the U.S. This would be best pursued using a shared-responsibility model.

It is the hope that the six challenges identified above spur further thought and research to improve the conduct of stability operations. The problems identified are by no means exhaustive, but continue to be evident in current literature and during missions in which this author participated. Future research should involve the many partners working in the realm of stability operations, namely the interagency, USACAPOC, PKSOI and NATO, to create a shared vision and a way ahead for coordinating efforts. More importantly, training to link these same partners prior to deployments will amplify the capability of the U.S. during any potential future stability operation.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Department of Defense (DOD), DOD Instruction 3000.05, "Military Support for Stability, Security Transition and Reconstruction Operations", <http://dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf> (accessed 21 December 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operations*, Joint Publication 3.0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, August 11, 2011) xxiii.

<sup>4</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Operation Planning*, Joint Publication 5.0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, August 11, 2011) III-39.

<sup>5</sup> Steady State activities are those conducted outside of a combat operation, or not within the confines of an Operational Plan.

<sup>6</sup> The concept of *Phase Zero* and the goal to "Prevent and Shape" has caused problems. Being in *Phase Zero* doesn't necessarily mean that the Operation will thus proceed to further

phases. If *Phase Zero* is successful, the condition would revert to steady-state activities. One way to eliminate the confusion would be to delete any reference to *Phase Zero*, and simply call it “steady state”.

<sup>7</sup> Department of the Army, *Stability Operations*, Field Manual 3-07 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 2008) *supra* note II, 13.

<sup>8</sup> See *The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, Learning from Iraq*, March 2013, <http://cybercemetery.unt.edu/archive/sigir/20130930184730/http://www.sigir.mil/> (accessed November 28, 2015) and *The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, Quarterly Report to the U.S. Congress*, October 30, 2015, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2015-10-30qr.pdf> (accessed November 28, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Department of the Army, *Joint Operation Planning*, Joint Publication 5.0, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, August 11, 2011) III-15.

<sup>10</sup> According to *The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction*, the cost of the Afghanistan Operation alone through 2014 was \$109 Billion. The cost of the Marshall plan adjusted for 2015 U.S. Dollars was \$103.4 billion. Sourced from *The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, Quarterly Report to the U.S. Congress*, October 30, 2015, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2015-10-30qr.pdf> (accessed November 28, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> Charles Hagel, Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, March 4, 2014) VII.

<sup>12</sup> With no plan of succession for the current regime in North Korea, it is plausible to imagine the stability operations necessary to prevent the country from sinking into anarchy post regime collapse. For more information see Scott A. Snyder and Sungtai Jacky Park, *North Korea’s Collapse is Just the Beginning*, *The National Interest*, December 21, 2015, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/north-koreas-collapse-just-the-beginning-14698> (accessed March 12, 2016).

<sup>13</sup> Recognition of joint responsibility is a necessary per-condition for there to be willingness to share financial burdens.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen W Walt, *International Relations: One World, Many Theories, Foreign Policy* (Spring 1998), [http://www.columbia.edu/itc/sipa/U6800/readings-sm/foreign\\_pol\\_walt.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/sipa/U6800/readings-sm/foreign_pol_walt.pdf) (accessed on February 12, 2016).

<sup>15</sup> *Phase Zero* sometimes receives short thrift because if it is successful nothing happens and there is no need for an operation. The concept of deterrence faces similar challenges. For more information see William J Flavin, *The Dogs That Do Not Bark: Prevention as the Path to Strategic Stability*, *Small Wars Journal*, August 2, 2013, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-dogs-that-do-not-bark-prevention-as-the-path-to-strategic-stability> (accessed March 29, 2016).

<sup>16</sup> See “Walking the Line: U.S. Security Policy in East Africa and the Horn, *World Politics Review*, February 20, 2013, <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12722/walking-the-line-u-s-security-policy-in-east-africa-and-the-horn> (accessed February 12, 2016).

<sup>17</sup> Department of Defense, *Military Support for Stability, Security Transition and Reconstruction Operations*, DOD Instruction 3000.05 <http://dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/300005p.pdf> (accessed 21 December 2015).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> USAID has the capacity for coordinating large humanitarian assistance requirements and is the lead agency for disaster response.

<sup>20</sup> Department of State, Congressional Budget Justification: Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, Fiscal Year 2016, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/252179.pdf> (accessed March 18, 2016) 17.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Marks, *Rethinking the Geographic Combatant Commands*, Col Arthur D Simons Center for the Study of Interagency Cooperation, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, <http://thesimonscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/IAJ-1-1-pg19-23.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2016) 20.

<sup>22</sup> As proposed by the G.W. Bush administration, the CRC was to have three components, the first two of which eventually received funding and authorization. The first was an “active” roster (CRC-A) of up to 250 newly hired civilian staff with specialized R&S expertise. The second was a “stand-by” force (CRC-S) of up to 2,000 existing U.S. government employees with relevant skills, who agreed to deploy as needed for periods of up to three months. The most ambitious element of the CRC proposal was a larger “reserve” component (CRC-R), intended as a civilian analogue to the military reserves. The civilian reserve would be open to qualified U.S. citizens whose skills, readiness, and availability matched capability requirements during R&S contingency operations. This component never received funding or authorization, despite being requested both by Presidents G.W. Bush and Barack Obama, due to persistent congressional wariness about R&S becoming a standing foreign policy priority of the U.S. government. For more information on the CRC see the *U.S. Civilian Response Corps: Fact Sheet*, Washington, DC, July 15, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/07/168648.htm> (accessed March 29, 2016).

<sup>23</sup> *USAID Policy on Cooperation with the Department of Defense*, <https://www.usaid.gov/policy/dod-cooperation> (accessed December 22, 2015).

<sup>24</sup> There are four Civil Affairs Commands, each regionally aligned to a geographic combatant command.

<sup>25</sup> Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, [http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2014\\_Quadrennial\\_Defense\\_Review.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2014_Quadrennial_Defense_Review.pdf) (accessed December 20, 2015) VII.

<sup>26</sup> The United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Center is drawing down forces at the end of FY 17. At present manning is similar to that at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, with shortfalls across Captains, Majors and non-commissioned officers.

<sup>27</sup> Civil affairs soldiers are able to blend civilian expertise with military requirements. During OIF and OEF repeated use was made of rapid “deployment” courses to frock members outside of USACAPOC with the Civil Affairs qualification. Other branches of the Army were scrubbed as well as sister-services to provide the forces necessary to meet battle roster requirements. As a

Civil Affairs Instructor from 2004-2007 at the John F Kennedy Special Warfare Center, I assisted in teaching these “mobilization” courses.

<sup>28</sup> In recognition of the shortfall of subject matter experts, in 2015 the USACAPOC created the 38G military occupational specialty. The 38G creates a separate pipeline for experts in the field of engineering, health care, business and industry so they can be slotted into positions at Civil Affairs Brigades and Commands. The program is still too new to determine efficacy.

<sup>29</sup> The supporting information for this assertion stems from analysis of student data from the Civil Affairs Qualification Courses from May 2012 to the present. Additionally the author has been either in SOCOM or USACAPOC as a Civil Affairs officer, instructor or force structure officer since 2002.

<sup>30</sup> Department of the Army, *Army Structure (ARSTRUC) Memorandum 18-22, Total Army Analysis 2018-2022 (TAA 18-22)*, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, October 8, 2015).

<sup>31</sup> The current configuration of 1 CA officer for each 4-person team plus additional officers for headquarters requires too many officers across a Company/Battalion. Another solution is to reduce the size of the battalions to their Desert Storm size of a Company. Shrinking the unit manning requirements yet allowing units to double and triple slot would give a better assessment of fielding capacity in time of mobilization. At present personnel levels, it would take a CA Brigade to field a full CA Battalion.

<sup>32</sup> The shortage of CA operators is not just within the CA Commands. Many Brigade Combat Team S9 (CA Planner) slots are also vacant.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Maritime CA used to consist of approximately 300 sailors who participated in *Phase Zero* activities. However, they only focused on port activities and the force was too small to offer significant support for other stability operations. Maritime CA was discontinued after OIF.

<sup>34</sup> Robert R Scott, Jeffrey D Maclay and David Sokolow, NATO and allied Civil-Military Cooperation Doctrine, Operations and Organization of Forces, Center for Strategic and International Studies, [http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/090128\\_nato\\_civil\\_military\\_doctrine\\_and\\_ops.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/isis/pubs/090128_nato_civil_military_doctrine_and_ops.pdf) (accessed December 28, 2015).

<sup>35</sup> Dan De Luce, *Afghan Forces Face a ‘Crisis’*, *Foreign Policy*, February 12, 2016, [http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/12/afghan-forces-face-a-crisis-watchdog/?utm\\_content=buffer951bb&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=facebook.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/12/afghan-forces-face-a-crisis-watchdog/?utm_content=buffer951bb&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer) (accessed February 14, 2016).

<sup>36</sup> Jim Garamone, *Campbell to SASC: Afghanistan not a Short-Term Problem*, U.S. Department of Defense News, February, 4, 2016, <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/650370/campbell-to-sasc-afghanistan-not-a-short-term-problem> (accessed March 13, 2016).

<sup>37</sup> The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the U.S. Congress*, October 30, 2015, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2015-10-30qr.pdf> (accessed November 28, 2015) 93.

<sup>38</sup> A good example of this is the Tranche system used in Afghanistan, which was designed to phase in the switch of control of areas between NATO forces and the Afghans. The tranches were time-lined based on our desire to uncouple rather than being conditions-based. See Transition to Afghan Lead: Integal, Media Backgrounder, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2013\\_02/20130221\\_130221-backgrounder-integal-en.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2013_02/20130221_130221-backgrounder-integal-en.pdf) (accessed February 10, 2016).

<sup>39</sup> The tendency is to consider only stability operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, forgetting the fact that we have ongoing stability operations in a host of other countries to include the Philippines, Haiti, the Balkans, East Africa, and Pakistan.

<sup>40</sup> For an overview of logical fallacies in decision making and logic, see *The Top 15 Logical Fallacies at the Fallacy Files*, <http://fallaciesfiles.weebly.com/> (accessed February 12, 2016).

<sup>41</sup> Dan Bolger, *Why We Lost: A General's Inside Account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014).

<sup>42</sup> David C Gompert, Hand Binnenjijk and Bonny Lin, The Iraq War: Bush's Biggest Blunder, Newsweek, December 25, 2014, <http://www.newsweek.com/iraq-war-bushs-biggest-blunder-294411> (accessed March 10, 2016).

<sup>43</sup> John Agoglia, Michael Dziedzic and Barbara Sotirin, *Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments: A Metrics Framework*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2010).

<sup>44</sup> United States Institute of Peace, *Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009).

<sup>45</sup> Thomas S. Szayna, Derek Eaton, and Amy Richardson, *Preparing the Army for Stability Operations: Doctrinal and Interagency Issues*, (Arlington, VA: The Rand Corporation, 2007).

<sup>46</sup> William J. Durch, *Peace and Stability Operations: Challenges and Opportunities for the Next U.S. Administration*, The Henry L Stimson Center, 2008, [http://www.globalproblems-globalsolutions-files.org/unf\\_website/PDF/2008\\_durch\\_peacekeeping.pdf](http://www.globalproblems-globalsolutions-files.org/unf_website/PDF/2008_durch_peacekeeping.pdf) (accessed on February 15, 2016) 2.

<sup>47</sup> Steven L. Bullimore, *The Military's Role in Nation-Building: Peace and Stability Operations Redefined*, Strategic Research Project (Carlisle, PA: The U.S. Army War College) 1.

<sup>48</sup> David P. Cavaleri, *Easier Said Than Done: Making the Transition Between Combat Operations and Stability Operations* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press).

<sup>49</sup> See *U.S. National Security Strategy*, February 2015, [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015\\_national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015_national_security_strategy.pdf) (accessed February 12, 2016), and Barack Obama, *The 2016 State of the Union Address*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sotu> (accessed February 14, 2016).

<sup>50</sup> J Boone Bartholomees Jr, *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Department of National Security and Strategy (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College Press).