

# Pacific Pathways in the United States Army

by

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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## Abstract

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Tomorrow's global uncertainties will test the capability, capacity, and innovative nature of the United States Army. The U.S. Army Operating Concept provides a set of core competencies to develop such an adept force. This force must act decisively and effectively in complex environments that are further limited by resource constraints. Secondly, innovative concepts are needed to overcome the static institution that emphasizes process over efficiency. The ability of units to sustain readiness is critical in providing the right force mix when and where needed. This paper will analyze U.S. Army Pacific's execution of an operation named "Pacific Pathways," and how it embodies those core competencies outlined in the Army Operating Concept. It will also provide recommendations that may enhance utilization of the Total Force in operationalizing the Regionally Aligned Forces initiative across the Army. These include readiness sustainment; use of pre-positioned stock; and greater integration of the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational efforts in such a dynamic environment.



## **Pacific Pathways in the United States Army**

Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity – not a threat.

—Unknown<sup>1</sup>

Tomorrow's global uncertainties will test the capability, capacity, and innovative nature of the United States Army. Therefore, the Army must invest in the readiness, training, leader development, and operational employment of its force. However, diminishing resources and force structure will require a more cost effective approach to meet these future commitments. Thus, the Army's leadership created a framework to mitigate such constraints while maintaining its relevance to the nation in the latest publication of the *Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World (AOC)*.<sup>2</sup> The Army Service Component Command (ASCC), U.S. Army, Pacific (USARPAC), has attempted to combine this framework's core competencies with its forward-thinking approach in the conduct of "Pacific Pathways." This operation provides U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) an adaptive solution that builds regional competence, while concurrently positioning forces forward to enhance security and stability. USARPAC's innovative use of the total force in operations such as "Pacific Pathways" embodies these core competencies within the Army Operating Concept.

If Pacific Pathways truly represents the AOC framework, then a comparison of this approach alongside the concept is necessary. Therefore, this paper examines the reasons for a new framework, and how the Army will attempt to mitigate future challenges. It then identifies the trials facing USARPAC's operational implementation of the framework. After presentation of both framework and challenges, the paper will evaluate Pacific Pathways to determine if it is truly an innovative method worth replicating elsewhere. Lastly, it will provide some recommendations based on this study.

## Army Operating Concept

General Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, emphasized that “our adversaries will continue to close the capability gap in the future.”<sup>3</sup> The AOC addresses this ever-changing environment and explains how the force can adapt to these challenges by emphasizing seven essential competencies. The U.S. Army Operating Concept provides a set of core competencies to ensure the Army provides such capability to meet the security needs of tomorrow. They include: 1) shape the environment, 2) set the theater, 3) project national power, 4) combined arms maneuver, 5) wide area security, 6) cyberspace operations, and 7) special operations.<sup>4</sup> These competencies do not merely focus on how to fight and win a conflict, but also on methods to shape the environment and deter aggression.

### Designing an Adaptive Force

The Army must provide an adaptive force with the capacity to meet the challenges of tomorrow. An adaptive force must shape the environment by deterring possible threats while simultaneously building partnerships that promote peaceful collaboration. National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program (SPP) provides a valuable example. It joins States and their Guard forces with a partner nation to develop long-term relationships that promote Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) goals. Of the seventy-four nations participating in the SPP, eight reside in USPACOM’s Area of Responsibility (AOR).<sup>5</sup> Next, the Army sets the theater by establishing conditions that enable a joint force to function once in the disaster or conflict zone. Providing secure infrastructure, communication nodes, logistic and command and control capabilities reduces operational risk while enabling future operations. Dependent on the threat level, this force must adapt as the environment changes. Afterwards, the Army must “deploy

and sustain itself rapidly and effectively from multiple locations.”<sup>6</sup> An adaptive force incorporates planning, reconnaissance, rehearsal, and appropriate use of forward-deployed forces and pre-positioned equipment to effectively project power. Once deployed, the force must employ combined arms maneuver to achieve an operational advantage over a threat, or in response to a disaster. Since today’s operational environment encompasses adversaries who apply asymmetric means to traverse all domains, Army capabilities must operate in a joint environment and integrate with air, sea, cyber, and space capabilities. The next competency, wide area security, facilitates stability by protecting private, business, and governmental infrastructures with that of the populace until local governance has the capacity to maintain order. Today’s advanced technology is not without its own weaknesses; as an adaptive force must provide defenses through the development of both offensive and defensive cyberspace capability. This provides the Army greater value in peacetime, conflict, and war. The last competency, special operations, performs across the full range of military operations. This highly adaptive force performs both open and clandestine missions, and has great utility in a complex environment.<sup>7</sup> In theory, accomplishment of these core competencies deters potential aggression and maintains stability in today’s operating environment.

#### Total Force Policy and Regionally Aligned Forces

AOC will seek to provide an adaptive force by leveraging the integration of the Total Force Policy (TFP) and Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF). TFP is the combination and steady participation of all three components (Active, National Guard, and Army Reserve) to meet operational requirements. RAF endeavors to align these forces with combatant commands (CCMDs) to allow these operations. Proper resourcing of the

total force will provide ASCCs with sufficient committed regional (theater) forces to achieve AOC core competencies. Conversely, budgetary constraints, emerging operational requirements and a lack of complete integration of both TFP and RAF minimize this capacity, and create gaps in consistent surge capability. Maintaining Total Force readiness will therefore prove necessary but difficult given these challenges.

### Readiness

The fundamental characteristic of any adaptive force is readiness. Readiness is the critical requirement that permits execution of AOC core competencies in support of the regional CCMDs. Equivalent standards in personnel management, equipping, training, and sustaining are also critical for the force to adapt concurrently.<sup>8</sup> To facilitate this effort, TFP and RAF leverage the capacity of both forward deployed and rotational forces to enhance readiness. This allows ASCCs to train forces while simultaneously performing core competencies, ultimately protecting national interests. For example, consistent theater security engagement using active, national guard and reserve units develops the individual and leader skills directed in the AOC, while maintaining readiness, and enabling capacity to “prevent, shape, and win,” in concert with U.S. partners.<sup>9</sup>

### ASCC Challenges

Many challenges affect the ASCCs ability to maintain readiness, and attain operational effects required in their theater. An austere fiscal environment further hinders this ability by creating gaps in unit “training and maintenance,” thus increasing the level of risk involved to protect national interests within the region.<sup>10</sup> For USARPAC, the utter magnitude of the Pacific theater, of which much includes the ocean, proves to be one of their greater challenges. This theater is comprised of “over half of the world’s

surface.”<sup>11</sup> Traversing such a vast area in a timely manner is quite difficult. This raises questions concerning forward stationing of Army personnel and equipment. Should permanent stationing continue, or can rotational force deployments provide an acceptable level of commitment and deterrence? There are substantial arguments to support either option. Finally, USARPAC’s integration and interoperability within the JIIM environment will determine its ability to support theater security cooperation.

### Fiscal Challenges

Diminishing budgets, force reductions, deferments in technological procurement and other constraints further complicate today’s operational environment. The approved 2015 Army budget shrinks by approximately \$4.5 billion from 2014, to include a reduction of 27,000 personnel. This includes a cut of another 92,000 persons (minimum) through 2019. Furthermore, modernization expenditures drop by \$6.1 million.<sup>12</sup> These reductions affect training resources not related to scheduled deployments, thus precluding units from training at the collective level. Additionally, Army personnel must become more familiar with the tasks formerly conducted by civilians released during this constrained environment. In regard to specific capabilities, Total Army Analysis cut both vertical and horizontal engineer assets from USARPAC and placed them in BCTs Army wide.<sup>13</sup> Such reductions will severely affect USARPAC’s ability to sustain readiness, and participate in regional exercises and operations. Furthermore, these budget reductions result in only two of six USARPAC Brigade Combat Teams maintained at the highest level of readiness.<sup>14</sup> This fact alone presents USARPAC with a significant challenge in responding to USPACOM demands. Currently, USPACOM directs USARPAC to provide a total of four BCTs to support the following tasks: Contingency Response Force (CRF), Theater Security Cooperation

(TSC), Rapid Response Force (RRF) and a Quick Reactionary Force (QRF).<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, USARPAC must develop innovative solutions in which to accomplish these demands with only two BCTs at the highest readiness, and the remainder spread across the Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN) training levels.

### Geographical Challenges

USARPAC's ability to project forces across USPACOM's AOR is critical in molding the region in support of U.S. strategic interests. As President Obama stated in the National Security Strategy of 2015, "American leadership will remain essential to shaping the region's long-term trajectory to enhance stability and security..."<sup>16</sup> However, the sheer expanse of the Pacific and the time necessary to traverse it, along with multiple annual natural disasters, create significant obstacles to accomplish this objective. The Pacific Ocean is larger than all combined landmass in the world, and is approximately 15 times larger than the United States, including 16 time zones. Additionally, movement of the earth's crust along this "Pacific Ring of Fire" results in multiple typhoons, tsunamis, volcanic activity and earthquakes annually.<sup>17</sup> To complicate the environment even further, four of the world's top ten megacities are in this region, with millions more living in and around the littoral areas.<sup>18</sup> Unrestrained, this volatile and complex physical environment can create vacuums of leadership and a general lack of security, which can lead to violent extremist or terrorist activities. To help mitigate these risks, USARPAC must remain involved with regional partners and promote military security within Asia-Pacific nations.

Another hindrance to USARPAC's ability to provide immediate support is travel time. For example, the time for a USARPAC unit in Fort Lewis, Washington, to travel to Darwin, Australia, is approximately 16 hours by air or 12 days by sea.<sup>19</sup> This region has

no permanently positioned U.S. Army forces, so the closest available USARPAC forces are in Hawaii or Fort Lewis. Of course, these times assume the availability of adequate contract or sister service airframes and/or ships, since the Army itself has no long-range transport capability. The U.S. response to the November 8, 2013, strike of Typhoon Haiyan on the Philippines shows how forward deployed units can mitigate this time challenge. USPACOM forces from Japan deployed to support the Republic of the Philippines in just two days. It took three additional days for naval forces to arrive from Hong Kong.<sup>20</sup> In comparison, it would take a force from Fort Lewis approximately 10 days.<sup>21</sup> This example also provides context to the significant challenge of supporting a multi-island nation, as it took two weeks for humanitarian relief to reach most of the affected populace.<sup>22</sup>

### Force Stationing

U.S. posturing of permanent forward force stationing has changed little since the end of World War II. Post-Cold War Pacific basing focused on deterring communist aggression by the USSR, China, and the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK). North Korea remains a significant threat to regional stability justifying a continued large permanent presence in Northeast Asia. In regard to other Asia-Pacific regions, most nations are hesitant to allow permanent stationing of U.S. forces.

Alexander Cooley explains:

Although U.S. policymakers and scholars have consistently overlooked the internal political dimension for host countries, U.S. overseas bases and their governing arrangements repeatedly have been implicated in those countries' democratic struggles, authoritarian propaganda, populist election campaigns, and political infighting and factionalism. In short, I found that the U.S. basing presence means different things to different actors and that these views, even for the same actor, vary considerably over time.<sup>23</sup>

Permanent basing requires strong support of U.S. presence from the 'host nation', which as Mr. Cooley articulates, many such factors have created barriers to establishing a presence in South and Southeast Asia. Resultantly, USARPAC's ability to shape the South China Sea is diminished due to its lack of forward positioned forces in this area. If USARPAC could establish permanent forward stationing, Army forces would be in a better position to respond to a crisis. This will, however, require significant startup costs to establish infrastructure, training areas, lodging and security. Based upon a 2006 Army estimate for overseas bases, a replacement cost varied from \$1.61 billion for a large base to \$862 million for a small installation.<sup>24</sup> Day-to-day operational costs will also be high.

It is therefore important to consider options that also include rotational forward stationing. In most cases, a rotational force will not require the same infrastructure footprint resulting in a lower cost due to the rotation's limited timeframe. A rotational force also presents less negative connotations than a permanent U.S. presence. Either stationing option will provide interaction with the populace, awareness of an emerging threat, and may reduce 'black swan' or unforeseen events that could change U.S. strategic direction. Notwithstanding, the greatest benefit of a permanent force is a long-term presence, as a host nation may suspend the invitation for rotational forces at any time. Historically, re-establishment of such a presence has proven difficult.<sup>25</sup>

#### Pre-Positioned Equipment

Army pre-positioned stocks (APS) are also a product of the Cold War; but provide options in the wake of budgetary constraints. Various levels of pre-positioned equipment are placed in critical geographic positions around the world (normally within 1000 miles of a strategic hotspot). The use of this stock is necessary to USPACOM's

ability to rapidly project and sustain forces. The closest stocks for USARPAC use include APS 3 (afloat) and APS 4, which is located on the Korean Peninsula and in Japan (as shown in Figure 1).<sup>26</sup>

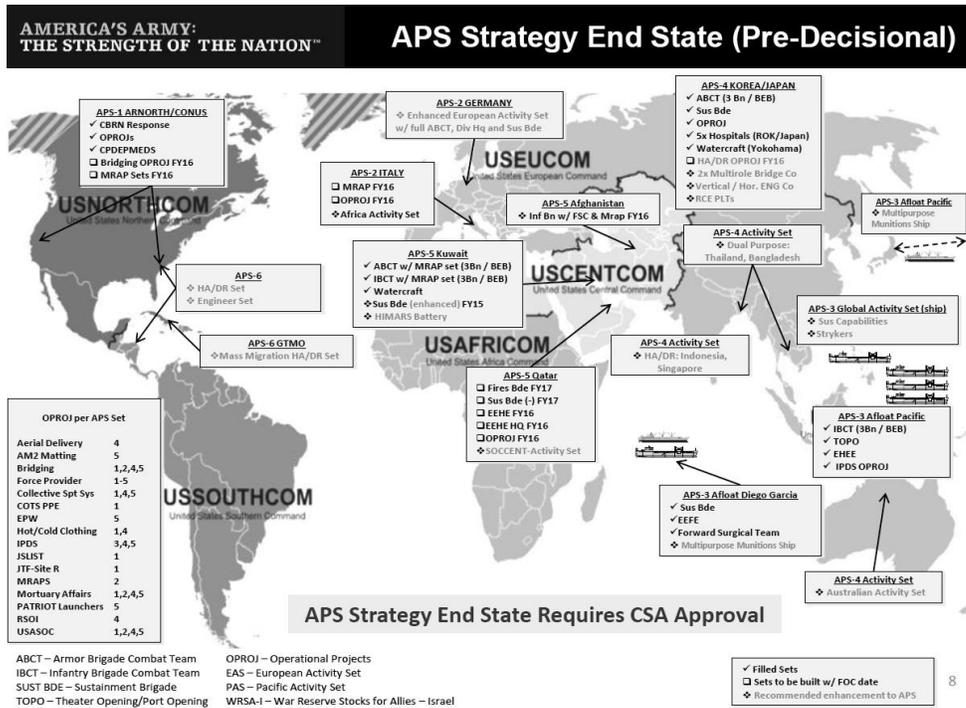


Figure 1. APS Strategy End State (Pre-Decisional)

The Department of Defense (DoD) originally established APS to support major contingencies, but the new strategy includes 'activity sets' for HA/DR, building partner capacity, and equipment to further support port opening and combined arms operations.<sup>27</sup> Upgrading the capability of APS solves only one problem. The next hurdle is expanding its availability for use during TSC training events. The ability to train with this stock will help mitigate transportation costs while maintaining its operability. USARPAC use of these activity sets, within APS, allows for some deliberate integration. However, without additional locations and the full use of available equipment, the geographical challenges outlined previously still delay response.

## Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational Integration (JIIM)

Due to the size of the AOR and other geographical challenges, USARPAC must operate within a JIIM environment. Land forces (Army and Marines) alone do not have the capability to reach across the Pacific. They are dependent upon the Air Force and Navy, specifically in regards to projection and sustainment. The Army also has joint responsibilities under the heading of Army support to other service (ASOS) to provide “force protection, theater-level logistics, command and control, joint reception, staging, onward movement and integration.”<sup>28</sup> Interagency and intergovernmental coordination is especially critical in the preparation, response and recovery subsets of a HA/DR mission. A Department of State representative is present in almost every Pacific nation to manage the diplomatic efforts, and to assist in the integration of military operations with the host nation. Additionally, the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), in coordination with USAID and other U.S. agencies, serves as the lead U.S. governmental representative during overseas disasters.<sup>29</sup> Thus, USARPAC must include these agencies during HA/DR exercises to ensure each have a common understanding of roles and responsibilities, and that any interoperability challenges are mitigated. Lastly, the multinational facet is the foundation of building partner capacity and includes senior leader engagements, HA/DR missions, multi-lateral training, and counter-terrorism events, and SPP events. A greater integration of JIIM during Phase 0 and Phase 1 operations will shape the environment, and expectantly provide a strong deterrent for violent extremist and terrorist organizations.<sup>30</sup> If deterrence is unsuccessful, relationships formed between USARPAC and JIIM participants will provide greater cooperation during a conflict or crisis.

## Analysis of Pacific Pathways Implementation

In an attempt to resolve the aforementioned challenges while nesting within the AOC framework, USARPAC implemented a concept it calls Pacific Pathways. Pacific Pathways, as assessed in its infant stages through an operation that served as USARPAC's proof of concept, embodied most of the AOC core competencies and did prove to mitigate many of these challenges. Of course, one cannot merely evaluate the first iteration to determine if it is the gold standard to be mimicked elsewhere. However, such an evaluation analyzes how well USARPAC met its obligations through this concept and where it can improve future iterations. This next section will therefore examine how well Pacific Pathways embodied the AOC core competencies while mitigating the many challenges that USARPAC continues to face in its operating environment. It is from this evaluation that the essay will attempt to identify recommendations for future improvement.

### Core Competencies

As previously discussed, Pacific Pathways is an innovative method that employs AOC core competencies. Prior to 2014, USARPAC conducted numerous bilateral exercises that were unassociated with other regional events. However, this did not fully employ the resources available to meet USPACOM goals. USARPAC therefore linked three of these exercises into a single operation, Pacific Pathways, which allowed them to affect multiple lines of effort in their support of USPACOM's goal of maintaining a stable and secure environment.<sup>31</sup> The following review will examine this initial operation conducted in 2014 by applying the AOC core competencies as criteria for success.

## Shape the Environment

The AOC suggests the necessity of shaping the environment to deter possible threats and build partnerships that promote peaceful collaboration. This message is consistent with former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's emphasis on the importance of constant engagement to fully implement President Barack Obama's "shift to the Pacific."<sup>32</sup> USARPAC has attempted to embrace this 'constant engagement' vision to shape the environment through Pacific Pathways.

Historically, bilateral exercises focused solely on training arrangements with one nation's army, and rarely impacted on another exercise. Additionally, TSC exercises comprised battalion-sized elements and smaller for short durations. Pacific Pathways changes this old way of operating by conducting multiple exercises as a single operation over a sixteen-week period, with division and brigade level leadership providing mission command.<sup>33</sup> Pathways further emphasizes collaboration and building partner capacity to foster long-term relationships. It does so through training that includes Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief (HA/DR) support, Non-Combatant Evacuation (NEO) operations, Security Cooperation, and Diplomatic Reinforcement.<sup>34</sup> To enable this training USARPAC also adjusted the type and amount of equipment it brings forward. Focusing on these mission types helps to transcend national boundaries and allow for shared understanding that further develops trust.

During the execution of its first Pacific Pathways operation, USARPAC learned several security cooperation lessons. Initially, participant countries lacked a clear understanding of the operational intent. They failed to comprehend that these were not a string of singular training exercises, but one dynamic operation, requiring unity of effort across all the countries involved.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, participants like Indonesia were

suspicious as to the motives of the operation, given the recent stationing of Marines in Darwin, Australia.<sup>36</sup> Resultantly, key leader engagement proved necessary to clarify the intent of the rotational operation and better achieve operational integration between participating countries.<sup>37</sup> Future iterations should seek to better inform participants and strive for integration of both civilian and military stakeholders during planning, as well as execution. Incorporating existing artifacts like the State Partnership Program between the Hawaii National Guard and the Republic of Indonesia is also instrumental in mitigating this lack of understanding. USARPAC also learned from this first iteration that the hierarchy of participating headquarters carries significant weight with the host military. Gen Iwata, Chief of Staff of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force, remarked “it is critical to establish these relationships early to stabilize the region in efforts to prevent contingencies from occurring.”<sup>38</sup> This increased level of leadership, combined with a longer continuous operation underscores U.S. military commitment and ability to support during a crisis. Bottom-line, partnerships are established through trust, and although the operation was ultimately well received, USARPAC must assure partner understanding and buy-in at the onset to adequately shape the environment. This may mean bringing the participating countries together early in the planning process.

### Set the Theater

A majority of Army personnel and equipment are positioned in CONUS; consequently, providing an appropriate response can be difficult depending on the nature and location of a crisis. Challenges range from force projection and sustainment to coordinating the arrival, reception, staging and interoperability with the host nation. The Army has therefore prioritized setting the theater as necessary to mitigate these

challenges. Pacific Pathways has the potential to be a beneficial way of supporting this competency.

As previously identified in this essay, the Army does not have a permanent presence in either South or Southeast Asia. Resultantly, USARPAC's first iteration of Pathways encountered integration challenges when preparing infrastructure to receive forces. Pacific Pathway units lacked knowledge in partner port capability and vessel type features complicating reception, staging, onward movement and integration (RSOI).<sup>39</sup> The host nation was similarly unprepared to facilitate this process.

Historically, USARPAC did not deploy with aviation assets, or with such a high density of wheeled-vehicles requiring multiple carriers. USARPAC's integration of forces and essential enablers created a larger footprint than utilized previously. This was further complicated by the duration of the operation and the movement between countries. Pathways tested established systems and procedures, since previously, units had not employed like equipment across the theater."<sup>40</sup> Additionally, USARPAC staff focused on supporting each of the exercise goals with logistics left primarily to ASCC sustainment personnel.<sup>41</sup> After realizing this was insufficient, the headquarters adapted by implementing alternative measures such as expediting requests through individual Country Teams at each Embassy; cross-leveling of equipment between units; adjusting work priorities to train port crews; funding additional commercial ships and rental vehicles; and the letting of contingency contracts.<sup>42</sup> They learned that future operations require greater Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) integration to mitigate challenges such as fuel procurement, contracting, force movement, and port operations. Additionally, 593<sup>rd</sup> Expeditionary Sustainment

Command may serve as a better option to coordinate the above identified sustainment requirements for future Pathways.<sup>43</sup>

Interoperability was also a challenge due to the expanse of the operating area, and various levels of partner nation modernity. Historically, USARPAC units only required long-range communication capability between home station and the exercise country. With Pathways, USARPAC had to establish communications across four separate countries as the brigade headquarters deployed forward, leaving a rear operation center at home station.<sup>44</sup> I Corps units also found a need for more “non-standard systems” to mitigate interoperability issues between military and commercial technology.<sup>45</sup> The force adjusted by using basic tactical communications with the partner’s military until they could establish enhanced network interoperability. Overall, this proved to be a challenging aspect of the operation, and afforded substantial lessons in which expanding operations will require enhanced command and control nodes, and a more robust network capability to sustain communications.<sup>46</sup>

Preparation and execution of Pacific Pathways as an operation provided site reconnaissance and allowed for a rehearsal, in essence, of areas U.S. units may operate in the future. This first iteration not only generated a database of participating host nation port information and required enablers, but refinements in standardized mission equipment lists and port procedures that can improve operational and sustainment efficiencies.<sup>47</sup> This is exactly within the AOC expectations for setting the theater.

### Project National Power

The first part of this evaluation highlighted the size of the Pacific theater. The preceding section outlined challenges associated with bringing capability into a region

and how Pacific Pathway helps to mitigate and set conditions that enable this process. This section will examine how Pathways addresses the process of projecting capability forward. This is probably Pathway's biggest contribution to this competency.

USPACOM requires specific capabilities postured to effectively shape the theater. As previously noted, fiscal challenges and force cuts degraded some of USARPAC's ability to provide a complete force package that meets these needs. During Pathways 2014, USARPAC sought to mitigate some of these concerns by deploying from multiple locations, and integrating Army Reserve and National Guard units from Hawaii and Washington to achieve a Total Force mix.<sup>48</sup> This allowed USARPAC to employ units familiar with the operating area, as well as low density capabilities required for theater operations, but not resident within a BCT.<sup>49</sup> They further learned this operation required the same rear operations construct used during deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Specific tailoring of the stay behind force to leverage reach-back capabilities such as the Intelligence Readiness Operations Capability (IROC) helped meet operational requirements without the deployment costs.<sup>50</sup> This first iteration did have some setbacks as late force requests, availability of enablers, and inadequate funding, equipping, and manning of reserve component forces reduced effectiveness.<sup>51</sup> Future iterations must identify and coordinate for these Total Force requirements early in the planning cycle.

APS is another factor that supports force projection. Its availability can reduce the amount of equipment that needs to be brought forward, as well as decrease deployment times, costs, and number of transport platforms. Well placed APS can allow a force to deploy by air when normally the amount of equipment would require sea lift.

Historically, DoD used APS for “unexpected contingencies,” and USARPAC did not use the full complement during Pathways 2014. Future strategies include the use of “activity sets to support building partnership capacity events.”<sup>52</sup> Not only will employing APS during future iterations of Pacific Pathways augment costs and reduce transportation timelines, its availability will also provide USARPAC with planning options for use during crisis response. As previously noted earlier in this essay, such adjustments will require the Army to make policy adjustments on the use of pre-positioned stocks.

USARPAC is also restrained in its projection of forces. This is a concern for General Brooks, Commanding General of USARPAC, who prioritizes a desire for “transport that would enable operations across the vast expanses of the Pacific.”<sup>53</sup> Historically, Air Force and Navy transport has often been unavailable or too costly. Consequently, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) would bid out the contract to a civilian vessel.<sup>54</sup> Under the Pathways construct, USARPAC was still able to reduce costs and expand type and amount of equipment within this transportation framework by employing as a single operation compared to previous exercise participation where they conducted separate transport to and from each exercise. This process can be further improved upon. First and foremost, joint operations should occur during steady state, not just during contingency. The Navy employs a Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV) in USPACOM’s AOR, where this vessel recently “participated in Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) Exercise 2014.”<sup>55</sup> Historically, USARPAC has used the three Logistic Support Vessels (LSVs) and ten Landing Craft Utility (LCU) vessels from APS during Combined/Joint Logistics Over the Shore (C/JLOTS) exercises, but should also

consider and coordinate for these vessels, along with other Joint transport, to support Pacific Pathways, especially in RSOI and regional mobility.<sup>56</sup>

### Combined Arms Maneuver

The Army is very capable of developing its ability to conduct combined arms maneuver within its own force structure during home station and CTC training. However, theater operations encompass an even greater requirement for integration. Here services must rely on JIIM capabilities to operate. Pacific Pathways seeks to expand the development of this core competency while also integrating other critical enablers and simultaneously expanding readiness.

Historically, USARPAC conducted bilateral exercises with a much smaller footprint that did not include air capability. Pathways, however, integrated a much larger force and equipment package. With such a diverse force package, USARPAC expanded its options to achieve combined arms integration with each of the Indonesian, Malaysian, and Japanese Armies, as well as the U.S. Navy.<sup>57</sup> While in Indonesia, USARPAC conducted a live-fire exercise that joined AH-64 Apaches, HH-60 Pave Hawks, UH-60 Black Hawks, and Strykers with the Indonesian Army's MI-35 and their land forces.<sup>58</sup> They conducted similar training in Malaysia and Japan. Additionally, while in Japan, USARPAC aircrews trained with the U.S. Navy on "over-water operations" conducting "hundreds of deck landings".<sup>59</sup> In Malaysia, combined arms training allowed USARPAC to test and share tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) to counter-improved explosive devices (C-IEDs). The dense jungle required modification of these TTPs developed from OEF/OIF.<sup>60</sup>

These are all examples where efficiencies gained through the Pathways concept increased training opportunities and actually enhanced joint and multinational

integration. Previously, Army leaders believed that CTC was the capstone event for training their brigade combat teams (BCTs), and were concerned readiness would drop during the operation. USARPAC's first iteration of Pathways in 2014 proved to the contrary-units actually built upon the CTC experience, and in ways the Army could not provide through that venue.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, employing the CTC trained BCT in Pathways adheres to the deployment training methodology over the last decade of using CTC as the Mission Readiness Exercise in preparation for OEF/OIF. Instead of deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan, the BCT deployed to the Pacific. This operation also proved important to the readiness of those organizations unable to train at a CTC. Future iterations should continue to employ enablers like rotary capability and seek joint integration in addition to the accustomed multinational training exercises. USARPAC should also consider incorporating their Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC).<sup>62</sup> Utilizing this capability in support of a Pathways operation offers a CTC like experience to those units unable to attend, as well as joint and partner nation participants.

### Wide Area Security

Pathways better develops an adaptive force to conduct wide area security missions (e.g. HA/DR, NEO, and Diplomatic Reinforcement). Specifically, it provides ready forces forward in the event of disaster or crisis, while also improving upon readiness and JIIM interoperability. This immediate response capability mitigates the challenge of forward force stationing and the extended travel time required from the U.S. to a crisis. This operation also allows USARPAC to better support USPACOM crisis response directives by tailoring forces to include a CTC trained BCT as the Pacific Pathway's unit serving concurrently as the Contingency Response Force (CRF). This will help mitigate the two of six BCT training challenge discussed earlier in this essay.

USARPAC's force construct for this operation parallels CRF requirements, so in theory, such an action would equate to forward positioning the CRF under Pathway's umbrella. Additionally, with a training focus on crisis response type missions and with the availability of the aforementioned JPMRC, USARPAC can further develop the CRF for missions it will be expected to do. Since not every Pathways operation may be able to employ a CTC trained BCT, this operation still remains a vehicle for training and projecting a crisis response force forward, thus, reducing time in which a security vacuum could occur, leading to a new stability threat.

### Cyberspace Operations

USARPAC did not categorize cyberspace as a separate area during Pacific Pathways. Its units maintained both tactical and operational communications across protected networks with no interruptions from a 'hack'. Notwithstanding, USARPAC worked in collaboration with each host military to ensure information security throughout the operation.<sup>63</sup> However, Pathways' greatest challenge to cyber security potentially derives from the interoperability between civilian and military architecture on a secure network. During this first iteration, there is no reference of challenges within this competency, but Pathways requires sustaining mission command across a region. Subsequently, USARPAC may become vulnerable to future cyberspace threats if defensive measures are not in place.

### Special Operations

The first iteration of Pathways also did not integrate the capabilities of Special Operations Forces (SOF), even with mission sets that included HA/DR, NEO, Security Cooperation, and Diplomatic Reinforcement. USARPAC attempted to request a 351<sup>st</sup>

CACOM battalion, but did so too late within the command's training timelines for it to participate during the Pathways 2014 operation.<sup>64</sup>

Utilizing SOF capabilities like civil affairs during a Pathways operation is not the only way USARPAC can nest with this competency. There are also opportunities to enable ongoing SOF operations. Special Operations Command, Pacific (SOCPAC) requires support from a number of enablers. For example, SOCPAC contracts out rotary aviation support in the Philippines. A future Pathways that includes this country could employ rotary aviation in support of a real world operation as well as a mil-to-mil exercise. Future integration of SOF will provide opportunities for joint interoperability within JIIM and demonstrate this AOC core competency.

#### Summary

Pacific Pathways provides an innovative solution for building partner capacity while projecting rotational forces in efforts to maintain theater stability and security. Readiness and operational effectiveness were also increased as USARPAC built regional competence and developed leaders during the operation. Based upon the analysis of this essay there is, however, some room for improvement. The following recommendations are therefore provided for consideration: 1) early and efficient use of key enablers across the Total Force; 2) closer integration of Pathways and the SPP; 3) improved stakeholder understanding of Pathways; 4) JIIM integration during Pathways planning; 5) iterative request for full use of APS; 6) JPMRC integration with Pathways partners; 7) greater integration of cyber and SOF into Pathways planning and execution; and 8) Pacific Pathways BCT serving concurrently as the CRF (this corresponds to recommendation #3- stakeholders must understand duality of purpose during the operation). In conclusion, USARPAC's use of the Total Force in operations such as

'Pacific Pathways' embodies the core competencies of the Army Operating Concept while mitigating many of its theater challenges.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> "Leadership Quotes," *Leader Speak Home Page*, <http://leadspeak.wordpress.com/leadership-innovation-quotes/> (accessed December 16, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *The United States Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World*, Pamphlet 525-3-1 (Fort Eustis, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, October 7, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-27.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-22.

<sup>5</sup> National Guard Bureau, *Posture Statement: Trusted at Home, Proven Abroad*, (Washington, DC: National Guard Bureau), 25-26.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *The United States Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World*, Pamphlet 525-3-1, 21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-22.

<sup>8</sup> John M. McHugh, Army Directive 2012-08, "Army Total Force Policy," September 4, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Raymond T. Odierno, "Marching Orders, 38<sup>th</sup> Chief of Staff, Army: Waypoint #2," <http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/329319.pdf> (accessed December 14, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Charles T. Hagel, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, (Washington, DC: The Department of Defense, March 4, 2014), IV.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Pacific Command, "USPACOM Strategy," <http://www.pacom.mil/AboutUSPACOM/USPACOMStrategy.aspx> (accessed December 6, 2014).

<sup>12</sup> David Vergun, "FY15 Army budget: request includes small pay raise, 490k end strength," *Army News Service*, March 4, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Rodney Laszlo, USARPAC Deputy G5, email interview by author, February 24, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> This total count precludes one BCT in the Republic of Korea. Kristofer Hopkins, I Corps Deputy G35, phone interview by author, December 2, 2014.

<sup>15</sup> Laszlo, USARPAC Deputy G5.

<sup>16</sup> Barack H. Obama, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, February 2015), 24.

<sup>17</sup> “Geography of the Pacific Ocean,” <http://geography.about.com/library/cia/blcpacific.htm> (accessed February 17, 2015).

<sup>18</sup> Bret Federigan, “World’s Largest Megacities,” *Colliers International*, January 20, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> Dennis Steele, “The ARMY Magazine Hooah Guide to Pacific Land Power,” *ARMY Magazine*, April 2013, 46.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Lum and Rhoda Margesson, *Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda): U.S. and International Response to Philippines Disaster* (Washington, DC: U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, February 10, 2014), 2-10.

<sup>21</sup> Steele, “The ARMY Magazine,” 46.

<sup>22</sup> Lum and Margesson, *Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda): U.S. and International Response to Philippines Disaster*, 2-10.

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Cooley, *Base Politics: Democratic Change and the U.S. Military Overseas* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), xi-xii.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>25</sup> Giving up bases in Taiwan and Philippines has made it extremely difficult to gain back. The Philippines wrote into their constitution that they would no longer allow foreign permanent basing and reestablishing basing in Taiwan is too contentious of an issue considering U.S.-Sino relations. *Ibid.*, 82, 86-87.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Army G8, “Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS),” May 9, 2014, [http://www.g8.army.mil/aerwg/past\\_conferences/aerwg20/1-AERWG20\\_APS\\_Update\\_9May2014.pdf](http://www.g8.army.mil/aerwg/past_conferences/aerwg20/1-AERWG20_APS_Update_9May2014.pdf) (accessed February 16, 2015), 3-8.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>28</sup> G.K. Cunningham, “Landpower: Foundations and Contemporary Applications,” *Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute), June 2006, 168.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, *USAID*, <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-democracy-conflict-and-humanitarian-assistance/office-us> (accessed February 15, 2015).

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Operational Planning*, JP 5-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense), August 11, 2011, III-42.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. Army Pacific, <http://www.usarpac.army.mil/pdfs/USARPAC%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf> (accessed January 29, 2015).

<sup>32</sup> Hillary Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century,” *Foreign Policy*, October 11, 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Hopkins, I Corps Deputy G35.

<sup>34</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>36</sup> Natalie Sambhi, "Has Indonesia welcomed the US pivot?" *The Strategist*, June 2013.

<sup>37</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 29.

<sup>38</sup> Kiyohumi Iwata, "Asia Pacific Rebalance – Pacific Pathways and Beyond," October 14, 2014, *AUSA Contemporary Military Forum #5*, video file, [http://www.ausa.org/AM/Documents/2014/Videos/TueVideo7\\_ILW5.aspx](http://www.ausa.org/AM/Documents/2014/Videos/TueVideo7_ILW5.aspx) (accessed December 18, 2014).

<sup>39</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 22-23.

<sup>40</sup> Sydney Freedberg Jr., "Reinventing the Army Via 'Pacific Pathways'," *Breaking Defense*, February 18, 2015.

<sup>41</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 16-23.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>44</sup> Freedberg, "Reinventing the Army Via 'Pacific Pathways'."

<sup>45</sup> Paul McLeary, "Army's Pacific Pathways: New Tactics, Lessons Learned," *Defense News*, October 13, 2014.

<sup>46</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 33-35.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>48</sup> Hopkins, I Corps Deputy G35.

<sup>49</sup> The Hawaii and Washington National Guards are partnered with Indonesia and Malaysia, respectively, under the State Partnership Program. National Guard Bureau, *Posture Statement: Trusted at Home, Proven Abroad*, 25.

<sup>50</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 5, 9, 15.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 5, 9, 22.

<sup>52</sup> U.S. Army G8, *Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS)*, 3, 7.

<sup>53</sup> McLeary, "Army's Pacific Pathways: New Tactics, Lessons Learned."

<sup>54</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 19.

<sup>55</sup> "Spearhead Class Joint High Speed Vessels (JHSV), United States of America," March 17, 2015, <http://www.naval-technology.com/projects/spearhead-class/>, (accessed March 17, 2015).

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> McLeary, "Army's Pacific Pathways: New Tactics, Lessons Learned."

<sup>58</sup> Kyle J. Richardson, "USARPAC boosts training innovation with Pacific Pathways," *Hawaii Army Weekly*, December 19, 2014.

<sup>59</sup> McLeary, "Army's Pacific Pathways: New Tactics, Lessons Learned."

<sup>60</sup> Freedberg, "Reinventing the Army Via 'Pacific Pathways'."

<sup>61</sup> Stephen Lanza, "Asia Pacific Rebalance – Pacific Pathways and Beyond," October 14, 2014, *AUSA Contemporary Military Forum #5*, video file, [http://www.ausa.org/AM/Documents/2014/Videos/TueVideo7\\_ILW5.aspx](http://www.ausa.org/AM/Documents/2014/Videos/TueVideo7_ILW5.aspx) (accessed December 18, 2014).

<sup>62</sup> Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability (JPMRC) is a "deployable package of personnel and equipment designed to support training exercises across the Pacific theater. It is not intended to replace a Combat Training Center (CTC) rotation, but provides additional capacity to evaluate unit readiness." Andrew Visser, "USARPAC DCG Receives Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Capability tour," February 10, 2014, [http://www.army.mil/article/119879/USARPAC\\_DCG\\_recives\\_Joint\\_Pacific\\_Multinational\\_Readiness\\_Capability\\_tour/](http://www.army.mil/article/119879/USARPAC_DCG_recives_Joint_Pacific_Multinational_Readiness_Capability_tour/) (accessed March 8, 2015).

<sup>63</sup> I Corps, *After Action Review (AAR) Pacific Pathway 14 Operations*, 33-35.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 9, 11.

