

# Strategy Research Project

## The U.S. Army in Transition: Preparation for Joint Force 2020

by

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United States Army War College  
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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**The U.S. Army in Transition: Preparation for Joint Force 2020**

by

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## **Abstract**

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As the U.S. transitions from 13 years of war into its next “interwar” period, it is confronted with an increasingly complex geo-strategic environment, replete with the full spectrum of threats, and the harsh realities of the growing financial crisis. Amid this environment, the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance and Capstone Concept for Joint Operations provide the U.S. Armed Forces clear strategic guidance to drive future force development and preparation for Joint Force (JF) 2020. The purpose of this paper is to explore and grade the U.S. Army’s preparation for JF 2020 by examining how the strategic guidance has been translated into Army priorities, and by exploring three of the Army’s major new initiatives--Mission Command, Regionally Aligned Forces, and Pacific Pathways--to determine how they relate to the following framework questions: Are these initiatives aligned with the strategic guidance? Do they contribute to joint warfighting requirements or do they trend toward parochial efforts to justify resources? Finally, do they contribute to developing a Joint Force which can Prevent, Shape and Win, regardless of the threat, when called to do so?



## **The U.S. Army in Transition: Preparation for Joint Force 2020**

This country is at a strategic turning point after a decade of war and, therefore, we are shaping a Joint Force . . . that will be smaller and leaner, but will be agile, flexible [and] ready . . .

—*Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Defense*<sup>1</sup>

After 13 years of war the U.S. is entering a period of transition driven by the financial crisis and growing complexities of the geo-political environment. Instead of being more stable and secure, the end of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan leave a world which is just as dangerous and potentially more unpredictable. Indeed, this “interwar” period will likely be one of persistent and emerging challenges, hybrid threats, and new vulnerabilities.<sup>2</sup> In this environment, the continued threat of al Qaeda, instability in Africa and Syria, ongoing challenges with North Korea and Iran, as well as the rising power of China and the resurgence of Russia present challenges which demand full-spectrum military capabilities. The dilemma is how to preserve and develop the capabilities necessary to protect long-term security interests, while responsibly paying down the national debt and avoiding past mistakes which would lead to ill-preparedness.

The risk to the nation is real. The U.S. cannot forego its security requirements or foreign commitments, but it can also no longer avoid putting its fiscal house in order. That means hard choices. The implication is obvious, defense spending and force structure are already being cut. The Army, in particular, has already been directed to reduce its end strength from 570,000 to 490,000 Soldiers and cut 12 Brigade Combat Teams by 2017.<sup>3</sup> Further, based on Secretary Hagel’s recent proposal, it is likely the Army will be directed to cut another 40,000 Soldiers, if not more.<sup>4</sup> As a result, each of the services is now attempting to redefine its post-war, Joint Force (JF) role and protect, as best possible, its share of the dwindling defense budget. New operational concepts

such as Air-Sea Battle and Unified Land Operations reinforce these efforts by emphasizing the continued importance of service specific, cross-domain contributions to joint warfighting requirements. The question, amid these fiscal constraints, is how well the Army is preparing for future U.S. security requirements?

### Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of this paper is to explore and grade Army preparation for JF 2020. The paper starts by identifying the major aspects of the strategic planning guidance, how that translates into Army priorities and their alignment with that vision. It then examines three of the Army's major new initiatives--Mission Command, Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF), and Pacific Pathways--to determine how they relate to the following framework questions: Are these initiatives aligned with the guidance? Do they contribute to joint warfighting requirements or do they trend toward a parochial effort to justify resources? Finally, do they contribute to developing a Joint Force which can Prevent, Shape and Win, regardless of the threat, when called to do so? The initiatives will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Alignment with strategic guidance
- Feasibility of implementation
- Suitability--provides needed Department of Defense (DoD) capability
- Consistency between Army statements and actions
- Cost and sustainability

### Strategic Planning Guidance

The two documents providing the strategic planning guidance driving future force development are the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) and Capstone Concept

for Joint Operations (CCJO): JF 2020.<sup>5</sup> Amid the current strategic environment, the DSG describes the necessary rebalance to the Asia-Pacific, while maintaining presence in the Middle East, commitments to Europe, and 10 primary missions:<sup>6</sup>

- Counter Terrorism (CT) and Irregular Warfare (IW)
- Deter and Defeat Aggression
- Project Power Despite Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) Challenges
- Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD)
- Operate Effectively in Cyberspace and Space
- Maintain a Safe, Secure and Effective Nuclear Deterrent
- Defend the Homeland and Provide Support to Civil Authorities
- Provide a Stabilizing Presence
- Conduct Stability and Counterinsurgency (COIN) Operations
- Conduct Humanitarian, Disaster Relief, and Other Operations<sup>7</sup>

The CCJO serves as the implementation guidance driving new operating concepts, force development, and emerging doctrine to support the requirements of JF 2020.<sup>8</sup> The CCJO further describes the strategic environment, the importance of globally integrated operations and provides select implications for future force development (Figure 1).<sup>9</sup>

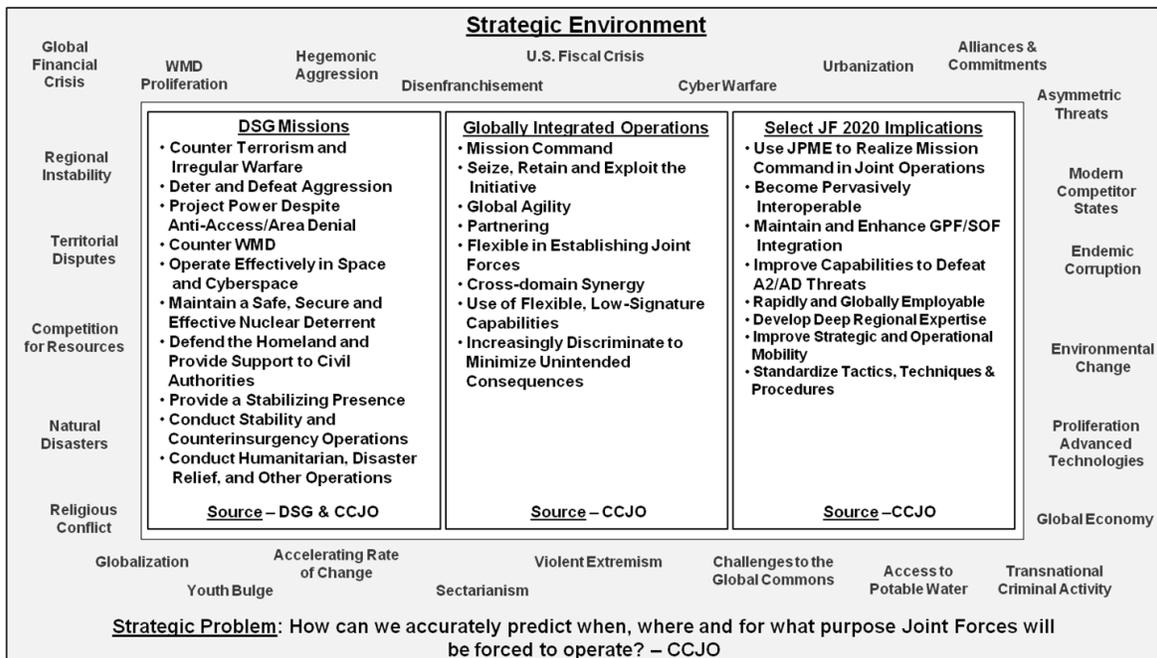


Figure 1. The Strategic Environment and CCJO Guidance<sup>10</sup>

The imperatives that must be taken from this guidance are the following:

- Contribute to improving joint warfighting, cross-domain capabilities
- Institutionalize Mission Command
- Become more agile, adaptive, responsive and expeditionary
- Retain critical capabilities developed over recent operations, while honing more traditional skills which provide a credible deterrent
- Retain and improve ability to project power and conduct non-permissive forced entry operations
- Become more globally engaged and develop regional expertise<sup>11</sup>

### Building the Future Army

In response to the DSG and CCJO, the Army produced the 2013 Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG) which clearly illustrates recognition of the environment and understanding of the need to adapt to meet JF 2020 requirements. The ASPG provides four primary focus areas:

- Commitment to the current fight
- Downsizing the Force
- Adapting to the new security environment
- Meeting the requirements of the new DSG<sup>12</sup>

The ASPG further stipulates the need to transition from a COIN-focused force to one able to meet the “full-range of Combatant Commander (CCDR) requirements.”<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, it envisions the Army as being more globally responsive, regionally engaged, and a full-spectrum capable force which better supports the Joint, Interagency, Inter-governmental, and Multinational team.<sup>14</sup>

As part of that goal, the ASPG describes the Future Army as being a regionally-aligned, mission-tailored, and campaign-quality force which dominates across the full range of military operations.<sup>15</sup> In shaping that future force, it also offers a number of specific objectives, including: developing more agile and adaptive leaders; integrating lessons learned; and adapting the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) Model to better manage future operational requirements.<sup>16</sup>

However, there are some things which are surprising and/or possibly misaligned. First, while environmental factors are different and terms have changed, there is not much new in the 2013 ASPG. Many of the major themes, such as providing modular (tailored) capabilities-based organizations, developing highly adaptive leaders, and a rapidly deployable campaign-quality Army with a joint and expeditionary mindset, are evident dating back as far as the 2004 Army Transformation Roadmap.<sup>17</sup> Yet, in spite of guidance issued almost ten years ago, the Army has still not achieved these objectives.

Similarly, one might question why the Army uses only three of the DSG missions to shape its future force.<sup>18</sup> First, while the Army certainly has a role in CT and IW operations, those missions are traditionally the purview of Special Operations Forces. Second, the Deter and Defeat mission is somewhat nebulous in terms of using it as part of a force sizing construct; how much capacity does it really take to deter? Of the three, Defending the Homeland and Supporting Civil Authorities is probably most appropriate, but likely has greater implication to Guard and Reserve structure than to the Active force.

What is striking is the decision not to use Stability/COIN or the A2/AD power projection requirements. The DSG specifically states that DoD “will no longer be sized to conduct large-scale, prolonged stability operations.”<sup>19</sup> However, stability operations remain a specified mission.<sup>20</sup> Further, it is also an integral part of one of the Army’s own specified Core Competencies, Wide Area Security.<sup>21</sup> Finally, one might wonder why the Army did not leverage A2/AD to emphasize essential XVIII Airborne Corps and 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne (Global Response Force) Joint Forcible Entry Operations capabilities.

Further, while the Army is directed to conduct “prompt and sustained” operations, a capability it should retain, its emphasis is not well aligned with building the expeditionary mindset it aspires to develop.<sup>22</sup> A more appropriate message might emphasize the global agility and decisive overmatch capabilities Army brigade combat teams (BCTs) bring to the battlefield (to terminate conflict quickly), as well as the other expeditionary capabilities that only the Army can provide to enable the Joint Force.

Finally, the ASPG’s repeated emphasis on land, whether intended or not, comes across as parochial, undermining the credibility of any references to Army contributions

to the Joint Force. Further, it provides critics ammunition to challenge Army intentions and attack Strategic Landpower as an attempt to protect Army resources. Armies, by definition, operate on land. The over-the-top emphasis is unnecessary and likely doing more to undermine Army strategic messaging than help. In summary, the Army's Strategy receives a passing mark using the following criteria:

- Alignment: Good – mostly aligned; inadequate force sizing construct
- Implementation: Good – appears fiscally and geo-strategically conscious
- Suitability: Good – provides a specific list of appropriate objectives which support the JF 2020 vision
- Consistency: Fair – some inconsistency between espoused objectives and actions, indicating at least two underlying strategic messaging problems
- Cost/sustainability: Good – recognizes fiscal realities and need to operate within available resources

### Mission Command

Institutionalizing the Mission Command philosophy is perhaps the single most important thing the Army is trying to accomplish today. The CCJO clearly mandates the commitment to use Mission Command.<sup>23</sup> The problem, described in the Mission Command White Paper, is that the task of fully imbuing Mission Command into the Joint Force “is an immediate challenge.”<sup>24</sup> Further, while General Dempsey states we have started living the principles of Mission Command in combat, these principles have not been made institutional, “They do not pervade the force and therefore, we cannot consider ourselves ready.”<sup>25</sup> This problem appears most apparent in the Army.

Mission Command is not new. *Auftragstaktik*, or mission-type tactics, can be traced to 1806 and Prussia's defeat at Jena and Auerstädt, demonstrating the need for a more flexible Command and Control (C2) philosophy.<sup>26</sup> For the U.S. Army today,

Mission Command has been a part of doctrine and its “preferred style of exercising command since the 1980s.”<sup>27</sup> Although Mission Command is referred to as an evolved concept, the underlying philosophy directing commanders to: visualize the battlefield; develop clear and concise orders; provide intent; and empower subordinates to exercise initiative is not.<sup>28</sup> So what prevents the Army from institutionalizing it?

Major General Werner Widder (German Training and Doctrine Command) states his Nation’s struggle to inculcate *Auftragstaktik* was a long, difficult process and, despite Helmuth von Moltke’s decisive efforts, was resisted for years.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Widder implies that it was not until 1914 (108 years after the Prussian defeat) that *Auftragstaktik* firmly established a place in German military philosophy.<sup>30</sup> Today, *Auftragstaktik* is inextricably linked to the concept of *Innere Führung*, or intrinsic leadership.<sup>31</sup> *Auftragstaktik* is not merely a technique for issuing orders, it is a leadership philosophy inseparably linked to the institutional trust and respect of each German Soldier. As Widder states, it ultimately became part of their corporate culture.<sup>32</sup>

Perhaps, like the Prussians, there is something about U.S. Army culture which is in tension with Mission Command. “The Army’s culture has an enduring, legitimate pull between essential centralized control and necessary, decentralized innovation.”<sup>33</sup> Illustrating this point, Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster (United Kingdom) specifically criticized the Army’s cultural rigidity, stating “whilst the U.S. Army may espouse Mission Command, in Iraq they did not practice it.”<sup>34</sup> Ultimately, the hard lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan slowly forced the Army to adapt and start exercising Mission Command. However, it certainly was not an easy transition and, as General Dempsey points out, it is still not firmly established.<sup>35</sup>

Consequently, one could argue that the Army struggles with Mission Command because it has not adequately addressed the need for cultural change. Further, with the end of the wars (the forcing function) in sight, the strong pull of organizational history and tradition may actually work against the philosophical changes necessary to make Mission Command institutional. But what is it about Army culture that makes it so difficult to embrace change?

### U.S. Army Culture and Mission Command

General Dempsey makes the analogy that the post-Vietnam environment and “doctrinal revolution” championed by General William Depuy provides a “strikingly similar example of where we are today.”<sup>36</sup> While there are similarities, the type of change General Dempsey calls for today is decidedly different. What DePuy accomplished moved the Army away from a decade-long focus on COIN back to the core function of its cultural identity, combined-arms maneuver warfare, and restored its institutional image. The revolution being attempted today will be far more difficult because it is not calling for a return to its core purpose. It calls for evolving the force into one designed for something different: hybrid, full-spectrum, and decentralized operations. This is not well aligned with the ethos and tradition which form a significant part of the Army’s cultural identity.

Much has been written about the difficulty of changing organizational culture, precisely because it is not easy. As stated in a 2008 U.S. Army War College study, “Culture change in a mature organization is extremely hard” and “Success makes culture change more difficult.”<sup>37</sup> The U.S. Army is both a very mature and successful organization with an illustrious history, one that its members hold on to as a source of pride and self esteem.<sup>38</sup>

Andrew Hill describes factors which contribute to the development of organizational culture and illustrates the inherent difficulty to change it.<sup>39</sup> Simply, military culture is strongly associated with history and tradition, but more importantly, its institutional view of the concept of war and the function its Soldiers perform in it.<sup>40</sup> One has only to look at the walls of the Army's educational institutions to identify the observable artifacts which describe its cultural identity.<sup>41</sup> With minor exception, these artifacts clearly show the U.S. Army's cultural identity today is derived from the American Civil War and, most importantly, World War II; large-scale, combined-arms maneuver wars. Depuy's transformation further galvanized that image.

Using Hofstede's Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Project dimensions, the Army has a deeply rooted institutional view of how its commanders exercise command.<sup>42</sup> Further, combined with the natural competitiveness of Army officers and their aversion to failure, they are motivated by an exceptionally strong sense of "Performance Orientation," which creates a natural propensity for risk avoidance and micromanagement.<sup>43</sup> As a result, the Army's "Power Distance" and "Uncertainty Avoidance" dimensions are not well aligned with Mission Command, which calls for commanders to trust and empower subordinates to exercise initiative.<sup>44</sup> Despite the gains made in Iraq and Afghanistan, this dynamic will likely only worsen as combat deployments (the forcing function) continue to decline and the organizational tendency tends to pull it back towards a more pre-war, zero-defect command climate and hierarchical command style.

What does this mean for Mission Command? Despite the strong cultural tendencies pulling the Army one direction, its organizational history does include

significant experience with asymmetric conflict and military operations other than war. Second, Mission Command emerged in Army doctrine as the changes General Depuy put into place were taking root in the early 1980s. Third, Iraq and Afghanistan ultimately developed an entire generation of Soldiers who lived it and understand what it should look like. Finally, while “Performance Orientation” can have negative implications, it can also serve as an exceptionally strong motivator if properly leveraged.<sup>45</sup> While there are obstacles, there is a foundation to support the transformation.

### The Army Effort

Much of the Army’s current effort to imbue Mission Command aligns with expert suggestions. John Kotter argues that creating organizational change requires simple, clear, and easily restated communication<sup>46</sup> and Edgar Schein argues it needs embedding and reinforcing mechanisms.<sup>47</sup> General Dempsey, in particular, clearly articulates the JF 2020 vision and the need to institutionalize Mission Command. The Army is now aggressively articulating the change vision. Further, re-writing doctrine, establishing the Mission Command Center of Excellence and the Mission Command Training Program, are positive steps to embed the philosophy into the organizational culture.<sup>48</sup>

However, despite the aggressive effort, the Army is not communicating very effectively. As Lieutenant General David Perkins openly admits, significant misunderstanding as to why the Army has Mission Command and what it really means still remains.<sup>49</sup> The reason there is still so much dissonance, the Army violates Kotter’s rules of simplicity and consistency.<sup>50</sup> The problem centers around two factors: 1) trying to describe Mission Command as both a philosophy and a warfighting function (counter

to Joint Doctrine); and 2) the complexity of the concept's articulation (implies something more than mission-type orders and decentralized execution).

First, Army doctrine should nest with, not deviate from Joint doctrine if it is serious about becoming "pervasively interoperable."<sup>51</sup> Describing Mission Command as both a philosophy and a warfighting function only creates confusion. The Germans view *Auftragstaktik* as a C2 philosophy, not as a warfighting function.<sup>52</sup> Further, not all situations lend themselves to Mission Command, requiring greater control and synchronization. U.S. Marine Corps doctrine states that the type of C2 exercised depends on a wide variety of factors.<sup>53</sup> Hence, the need for commanders to constantly assess the environment and carefully balance, as Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0 aptly describes, the Art of Command and Science of Control.<sup>54</sup>

Second, simplicity is essential for successfully communicating the change vision across large organizations.<sup>55</sup> The Army's Mission Command definition is fairly complex, refers readers to another concept (Unified Land Operations), and cannot be easily absorbed in just one reading.<sup>56</sup> It is not simple, clear, or easily restated. In contrast, German Army Regulation 100/100, *Command and Control in Battle*, describes *Auftragstaktik* in a manner which is quickly comprehensible and repeatable.<sup>57</sup> To be fair, much in ADP 6-0 is good and the effort to streamline Army doctrine is a step in the right direction. However, exchanging length for complexity might not achieve the desired result. Quoting Kotter, "whenever you cannot describe the vision driving a change in five minutes or less and get a reaction that signifies both understanding and interest, you are in for trouble."<sup>58</sup> Regarding the execution of inculcating Mission Command philosophy into its culture, the Army earns the following marks:

- Alignment: Excellent – CCJO specified task
- Implementation: Fair – current approach is unlikely to address the cultural change required to institutionalize the philosophy
- Suitability: Excellent – the concept would help provide the agility and adaptiveness required for the geo-strategic environment
- Consistency: Poor – inconsistent with joint doctrine; definition and conceptualization imply something more than mission-type orders
- Cost/sustainability: Negligible – perhaps some cost in terms of future investment in mechanisms to imbed Mission Command into Army culture

### Recommendations

The Army's definition of Mission Command should be simplified and made consistent with Joint Doctrine. Reinstating C2 as a Warfighting Function and describing Mission Command as a leadership philosophy for exercising it would help. Further, the following recommended definition may add clarity:

The Army exercises C2 across the full spectrum of operations through Mission Command; the decentralized execution of military operations based on mission-type orders and commander's intent. To accomplish this, commanders are charged with building cohesive teams and the environment of trust, creating shared vision and purpose, providing clear intent, and establishing the climate which encourages subordinates to accept prudent risk and exercise disciplined initiative to accomplish the mission.<sup>59</sup>

Moreover, the Army should expand efforts to embed the philosophy in its culture. First, the Army should leverage the "Performance Orientation" so inherent in its culture by tying rewards and status to how well leaders cultivate and exercise a Mission Command climate.<sup>60</sup> Second, the Army should place much greater emphasis on education and broadening experiences which help Soldiers develop the ability to discern context; an essential trait for Mission Command. Third, the Army should assign and reward only the best as instructors in professional military education institutions.

Finally, consistent with General Odierno's fourth strategic priority, the Army must continue to emphasize professionalizing the Force.<sup>61</sup> This includes developing the Army version of *Innere Führung*, which the Marines (once a Marine always a Marine) and the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment (Ranger Creed) have already done. Doing this also supports the development of a critical component in the calculus of getting leaders to psychologically embrace Mission Command, building trust across the organization--the belief that Soldiers, even at the lowest levels, will do the right thing.

### Regionally Aligned Forces

RAF is the Army's concept to reorient as it draws down from conflict in Afghanistan. Its purpose is to provide CCDRs with scalable, tailored capabilities, from squads to a Joint Task Force (JTF)-"capable" headquarters.<sup>62</sup> The Army's four objectives:

- Better support CCDR requirements
- Develop Army Total Force Soldiers and units
- Engage partner nations with highly trained, culturally savvy Soldiers
- Connect the Army globally through an expeditionary mindset <sup>63</sup>

The Army envisions RAF units falling into one of three categories:

- Assigned
- Allocated
- Service Retained, Combatant Command Aligned (SRCA) <sup>64</sup>

U.S. Forces Command (FORSCOM) will align units through a Mission Alignment Order (MAO).<sup>65</sup> FORSCOM will habitually align division and corps headquarters, providing at least one JTF-"capable" HQ to each CCMD.<sup>66</sup> FORSCOM will align BCTs

and enablers rotationally through a new 24-month ARFORGEN cycle.<sup>67</sup> Prior to official alignment, RAF units must receive Combat Training Center certification and receive specific cultural, regional expertise, and language (CREL) training.<sup>68</sup> Most units remain continental U.S.-based and employed in small teams for limited durations.<sup>69</sup> The Army believes it will take until 2017 to reset the force and fully implement the RAF concept.<sup>70</sup>

The December 21, 2012 RAF Execution Order initially aligned forces as of 01 OCT 2013:<sup>71</sup>

- I Corps: Assigned to Pacific Command (PACOM)
- III Corps: Allocated to Central Command (CENTCOM)
- XVIII Airborne Corps: SRCA to Global Response Force
- 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division (AD): Allocated to CENTCOM
- 2/1 Infantry Division (ID): Allocated to Africa Command
- 3/2 ID: Allocated to PACOM
- 1/1 Cavalry Division: Allocated to European Command (EUCOM); 45-day Prepare to Deploy Order as part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Response Force
- 48<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Georgia Army National Guard): Allocated to Southern Command

As a result, the Army supported more than 5700 activities involving 61,082 partners in 162 countries, to include establishing the East African Response Force and supporting Niger's preparation for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.<sup>72</sup> Further, RAF helps the U.S. establish and strengthen relationships which contribute to building access, trust, and influence; improves partner capacity and interoperability; and improves DoD ability to support and work with other agencies.<sup>73</sup>

RAF also does two things which support embedding Mission Command. First, it forces the Army to continue preparing to operate in a decentralized and distributed manner, similar to the way it had to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan. Second, it exposes Soldiers to a variety of real world challenges which cannot be replicated in training, helping to develop the agility and versatility necessary for Mission Command.

Most important, RAF permits the use of other funding authorities to support Army readiness. With the end of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding in sight, the Army's top line Operations and Maintenance dollars leave it well short of the funding required to keep the force ready. Illustrating the point, General Odierno recently stated the Army's 2014 budget would only allow them to get 20-25% of the force trained in its core competency.<sup>74</sup> RAF provides the Army the ability to leverage other funding authorities to offset shortfalls for units supporting RAF.<sup>75</sup> Further, for units assigned or allocated to a CCMD, much of their theater-specific activities and training are paid for through other authorities and CCDR funds.<sup>76</sup>

### Challenges

Unfortunately, CCMDs do not have unlimited resources and this is a zero sum game. Therefore, competition and politics exist about "who does what and who contributes where."<sup>77</sup> This has contributed to inter-service skepticism that RAF is just a tactic to justify force structure and resources.<sup>78</sup> Regardless, there are a number of practical challenges that must be considered.

Brigadier General Wayne Grigsby made several observations regarding 1AD's RAF allocation to CENTCOM. First, bureaucratic challenges hinder network communications with the theater from home station.<sup>79</sup> Second, the U.S. tendency to over-classify information presents major obstacles to effective trust building and

partnering with multinational partners.<sup>80</sup> Third, there are challenges establishing unity of effort with other government agencies because of competing priorities and agendas.<sup>81</sup> Finally, RAF does not solve all resourcing shortfalls and additional funding is required.<sup>82</sup>

Unfortunately, other funding authorities do not cover all RAF costs and, as it is still in its Proof of Principle, the actual cost is not yet known. However, the Army already projects a \$412 Million shortfall in the 2015-2019 Program Objective Memorandum.<sup>83</sup> While most of this is due to sharply increased demand, a significant portion of these costs remain Army institutional.<sup>84</sup> They include shifting \$118 Million from OCO to the base budget for its Fort Polk training program, plus additional costs for CREL requirements.<sup>85</sup> The cost for language training alone could be high. As such, the Army is currently trying to determine how to fund these requirements within existing resources.<sup>86</sup>

The Army also identified the challenge of working with the State Department (DoS) and country teams, particularly those in Africa, whose corporate culture is wary of DoD motives and any implication of “militarizing” the Continent.<sup>87</sup> Further, while Army trainers may be cheaper than contractors for supporting the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program, the value DoS sees in contractors is not reflected in terms of physical cost. The value they see is reflected in terms of the regional and language expertise most of the contractors bring to the mission, and the fact that they are not the military. This fear of “militarization” will be difficult, but not impossible, to overcome. The key is perception and, therefore, also a potential risk when employing squads. Maturity and absolute professionalism will be essential, as any mishap could have catastrophic effects.

Directly related is the issue of trying to develop regional and language expertise. One expert believes there are at least seven major languages required to minimally cover Africa: French, Arabic, Portuguese, Kiswahili, Afrikaans, Amharic, and Somali.<sup>88</sup> The Army could prioritize and focus on just a few. However, most Soldiers are only going to be aligned to a CCMD for two years. It is therefore unlikely that many will ever develop any real proficiency and there will be little long-term return on the investment.

Finally, the Army is debating how much of its structure it should regionally align, balancing the tension between how to register the most demand while retaining as much flexibility as possible.<sup>89</sup> According to Army analysis, SCRA provides the most flexibility, but does not register demand.<sup>90</sup> Assigning or allocating provides the greatest CCMD support and best registers demand, but limits Army ability to maintain flexibility and one standard Army.<sup>91</sup> If RAF and supporting the CCMDs is the priority, one should question why the Army struggles with this especially since it is a way to clearly demonstrate demand and establish a baseline for communicating strategic risk. Title 10 provides the authority to reallocate or assign forces as required, thereby eliminating the Army's concern.<sup>92</sup> The real challenge is how to manage ARFORGEN so that it can balance RAF against its other GFM and Operations Plan requirements. In summary, the Army's RAF grade would be:

- Alignment: Good – a way to support CCJO goal of becoming globally integrated and developing regional expertise.
- Implementation: Poor – current rotational approach for BCTs and enablers will not develop regional or language expertise; current plan appears to have several challenges which have not been entirely thought through.
- Suitability: Fair – Army initiative that will provide more predictable support to CCDRs, but does not adequately balance or efficiently develop a full-spectrum capable force.

- Consistency: Poor – espoused goals inconsistent with several Army actions, indicating an underlying strategic messaging problem.
- Cost/sustainability: Poor – current plan projects significant POM shortfall; language proficiency goal, in particular, is too costly and unsustainable.

### Recommendations

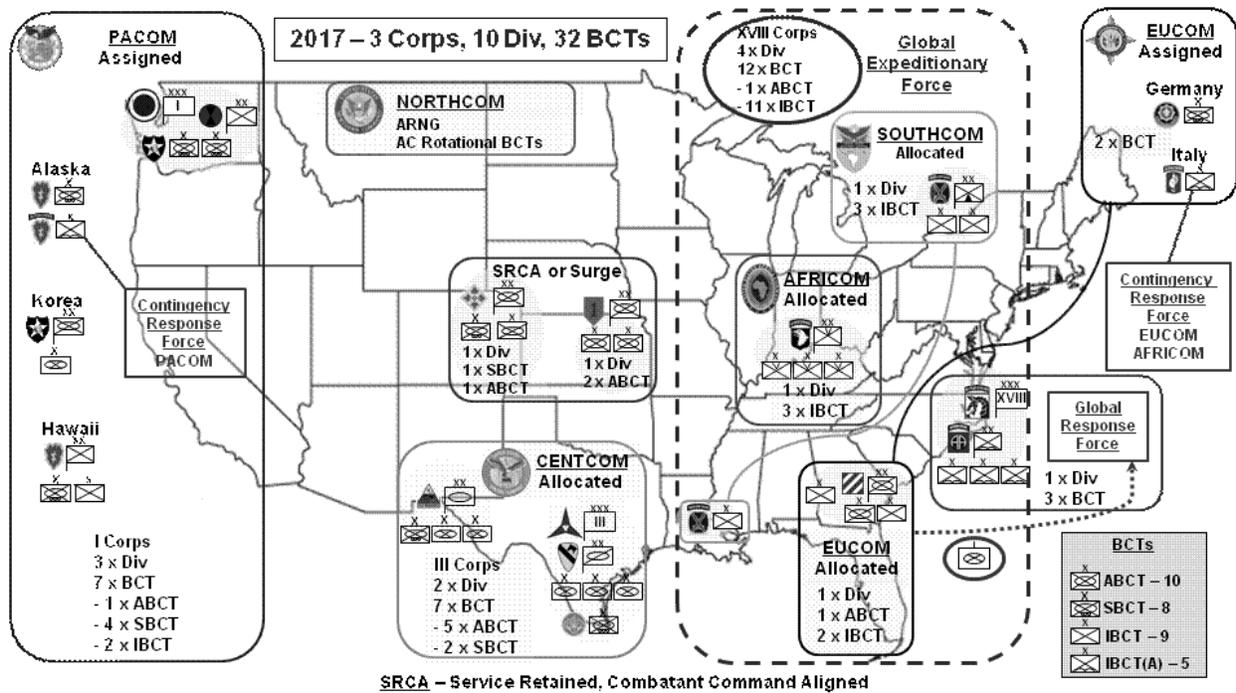
The Army should habitually align BCTs and enablers. As currently planned the Army will not develop the “Deep Regional Expertise” specified in the CCJO.<sup>93</sup> With just a two year alignment, coupled with unit rotation and normal personnel cycles, the Army will never develop more than basic regional or language familiarity. The decision to habitually align corps and division headquarters (HQ) provides long-term focus, the ability to develop regional expertise, and generates efficiencies as aligned headquarters/units work through growing pains and bureaucracy. Further, true language proficiency goals for the general purpose force are probably unattainable and too costly to be practical. Basic functionality is achievable but only if Soldiers are habitually aligned. Therefore, Soldiers should be given the “option” to regionally focus, similar to a Special Forces model, and managed throughout their career for recurring assignment to CCMD aligned units.

The Army should abandon the goal of maintaining one standard Army and manage the force using a heavy, medium, light construct to achieve full-spectrum balance. With current constraints, attempting to maintain full-spectrum capabilities within each unit is unattainable and cost prohibitive. The goal is to have a full-spectrum capable force, not necessarily ensure each unit possesses the full-spectrum of capabilities. Using this construct, heavy units should focus on maintaining campaign-quality and decisive combined-arms maneuver skills, and lighter/medium units on more

expeditionary skills. Using armor units to train Africans on small unit tactics makes little sense. In this manner, the Army could determine the optimal balance--heavy, medium, light – across the force and geographically align units based on most likely threat.

BCTs should align with their parent division HQ and this entire formation used as the basis for RAF. BCTs should retain their current, robust organic capabilities to deploy self-contained and be augmented, as necessary, by enablers. Doing so creates an organic and focused formation capable of providing CCMDs tailored formations from squads to JTF-“capable” HQs. A “way” to achieve RAF with the three corps, 10 divisions and 32 BCTs currently projected in the force by 2017 is illustrated in Figure 3 and consists of the following:

- The corps aligned functionally IAW the current MAO
- Divisions and organic BCTs aligned using the heavy, medium, light construct and based on most likely contingency requirements
- Illustrates the rebalance to PACOM, while maintaining support to CENTCOM and EUCOM
- Preserves the Global Response Force and provides a Global Expeditionary capability under XVIII Airborne Corps
- Provides two dedicated regional Crisis Response Force elements
- Retains two division HQs and four BCTs as strategic surge capability



*This is a way to set up a sustainable ARFORGEN and force allocation cycle to Regionally Aligned Force requirements.*

Course of action based off the HQDA G-3/5/7 24 June 2013 Reorganization Plan and modified to reflect available unclassified planning guidance as of the writing of this document – reduced to 32 BCTs and known BCT conversions by 2017 (Does not account for future mandated reductions). BCTs are rotate through the ARFORGEN cycle to maintain readiness and surge capability.

Figure 2. A way to Regionally Align Forces<sup>94</sup>

Finally, the Army should return to a three year ARFORGEN cycle. With three BCTs remaining in most divisions they could be managed to provide surge capacity. For example, BCT 1 is in the Available Force Pool, BCT 2 in the Ready Pool, and BCT 3 is in the Reset/Train Pool. With BCT 1 supporting RAF, BCT 2 could theoretically be at a readiness level which would allow it to be part of the strategic reserve for contingency operations. If training readiness is managed properly, more of Army Top Line monies can be used to resource higher-end, heavy force training and more of the other budget authorities used to prepare medium and light forces.

### Pacific Pathways

Pacific Pathways is a way U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) intends to support RAF in PACOM. It was ostensibly first conceived as a way to help lower Theater Security

Cooperation Program (TSCP) costs by reducing the number of expensive back and forth transits from Hawaii, Alaska or Fort Lewis to support multiple exercises and events. Using Military Sealift Command (MSC) to move bulk equipment, rolling stock and helicopters, Soldiers would fly from point to point on charter aircraft, link up with their equipment, and participate in scheduled events.<sup>95</sup> In this way USARPAC, which conducts roughly 134 engagements with 34 countries annually, could link several larger events and theoretically reduce transportation costs.<sup>96</sup>

USARPAC envisions a “pathway” as involving a single Task Force (TF) for a specific period of time and set number of engagements.<sup>97</sup> A TF would consist of up to 700 personnel, and five major parts: C2, a tactical element, support, aviation, and enablers; all tailored to meet the specific requirements of the pathway.<sup>98</sup> The first, a Proof of Principle pathway, starts in September 2014 and supports three separate exercises.<sup>99</sup> Ultimately, USARPAC’s goal is to have three pathways per year.<sup>100</sup>

On the surface, this sounds logical. The concept increases the Army’s forward presence, helps it become regionally engaged, and potentially saves money. However, the idea now to operationalize the concept by putting Army “forces closer to potential crises” and able to “respond to likely contingency operations” has generated a lot of questions and the ire of some in the media and the Marine Corps.<sup>101</sup>

Two recent publications illustrate the point. The first asserts that Pacific Pathways is the Army’s crisis mode response to save their budget and justify end-strength.<sup>102</sup> The second, attempts to take a more objective view of the potential costs and challenges associated with the concept, specifically addressing complexities related to expeditionary disaster relief operations.<sup>103</sup> To be fair, problems exist in both articles.

As the first rightly points out, the Army has a long history in the Pacific.<sup>104</sup> However, there will be additional costs and they have yet to be determined.<sup>105</sup>

For planning purposes, USARPAC estimates the Proof of Principle will cost \$14.7 Million which, they admit, is probably low.<sup>106</sup> According to a Transportation Command Action Officer, costs associated with moving the cargo are in line with that projection.<sup>107</sup> However, USARPAC planners recognize other un-forecasted costs, citing the budget estimate currently lacks a fully developed sustainment concept, does not accurately account for vehicle and aviation maintenance or fuel, or the additional strategic airlift required to sustain the TF.<sup>108</sup> However, assuming the estimate is accurate, USARPAC's plan still leaves a \$3.2 Million Unfunded Requirement.<sup>109</sup>

Evolving Pacific Pathways into an operational capability will incur significant additional costs. These costs have to be accounted for, especially regarding modifications and maintenance requirements for Army aviation.<sup>110</sup> Are those costs worth it? From a practical standpoint, the concept helps increase Army forward presence. But, it does not necessarily provide better responsiveness or strategic options for the CCDR. First, the equipment and the Soldiers are not deployed together. Based on distances and potential contingency locations, it could take days for the two to meet. Second, in the event of a disaster relief mission, it may be unreasonable to assume that there would be a usable airfield or other facility to conduct ship-to-shore operations and facilitate onward movement. Third, while MSC provides roll-on, roll-off capability, it is not configured for operational ship-to-shore employment or flight operations.

Objectively, the Army might be able to respond more quickly and effectively from home station with strategic lift than from the sea; unless of course it really did invest in

developing a true maritime expeditionary capability. Further, there is inherent risk with having unarmed vessels with U.S. military equipment, advanced avionics and ammunition transiting through areas like the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea.<sup>111</sup> Finally, what drives three pathways per year? Is there actual demand or is this just a way to keep an Army TF's worth of equipment afloat throughout the year? What about the maintenance costs associated with the equipment sitting idly aboard a ship for prolonged periods of time in the harsh maritime conditions? Would existing Army Pre-Positioned Stocks (APS) and strategic airlift be more efficient and effective? In summary, the Army's effort earns the following marks:

- Alignment: Mixed – as a potential innovative cost savings tool, it makes sense and supports CCJO guidance for regional integration; as an operational concept, it appears parochial and unnecessary
- Implementation: To Be Determined – Proof of Principle will tell
- Suitability: Mixed – as a cost savings tool it could be very suitable; as an operational concept it does not create expeditionary capability or greater responsiveness
- Consistency: Poor – attempting to operationalize what was ostensibly a cost saving initiative is totally inconsistent, indicating a strategic messaging problem
- Cost/sustainability: TBD/Poor – the Proof of Principle will tell whether any efficiencies are gained from the unit movement perspective; the costs associated with operationalizing the concept are likely prohibitive and unsustainable in this environment

### Recommendations

The Army should continue to develop and execute the Proof of Principle pathway to test the concept and determine its true costs. The Army will remain engaged in PACOM and needs innovative, cost effective ways to support TSCP requirements. The

Proof of Principle results should clearly inform future decisions on the sustainability of this aspect of the concept. If it saves money/improves efficiency, it should be sustained.

Regarding developing a Marine Expeditionary Unit capability, the Army should consider other ways of globally posturing and integrating into PACOM. MSC and charter aircraft do not create expeditionary capability or greater responsiveness. Both are goals the Army should continue to pursue, but it should consider other options.

The Army should explore how to better support PACOM requirements. There is no doubt valuable lessons will be learned through the Proof of Principle pathway, but it seems fairly clear that the additional costs associated with evolving this concept into a contingency response capability will be prohibitive and unsupportable given the fiscal environment.

### Conclusion

In general, aspects of all three initiatives explored in this paper are clearly in line with the JF 2020 vision. However, there are some common problems that run across the ASPG and the three initiatives. First, the Army appears to have a problem articulating a consistent strategic narrative. The ASPG is full of statements that clearly demonstrate an understanding of the strategic environment and what it should do. Yet time and again the Army stumbles through its articulation and implementation of supporting initiatives or concepts. This is a major problem in this fiscal environment, as an inconsistent and poorly synchronized narrative could very well lead the Army to take a larger share of budget reductions, further putting at risk its ability to support the National Military Strategy.

Second, it appears the Army is rushing to decisions rather than taking the time to develop a strategic roadmap and a supportable, well conceived plan to execute them.

The considerable amount of time Army leaders spend clarifying its purpose and intent is indicative of its lack of resonance.

Finally, there appears to be something in the Army culture holding it back from realizing true and necessary transformation. JF 2020 and the future strategic environment require all the services to be learning and adapting organizations which continually evolve to remain relevant and capable of defeating future threats. This must be addressed. As Charles Darwin stated, “It is not the strongest that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> U.S. Army, I Corps, "Pathways Mission Analysis Brief," 13.

<sup>96</sup> GEN Vincent K. Brooks, lecture U.S. Army War College (07 Feb, 2014).

<sup>97</sup> U.S. Army, I Corps, "Pathways Mission Analysis Brief," (no date provided), 8-9.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 8-9 & 13.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Army's Pacific Pathways' Initiative Sets up Turf Battle with Marines," *Washington Post Online*, December 29, 2013, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/armys-pacific-pathways-initiative-sets-up-turf-battle-with-marines/2013/12/29/11c948c8-69b1-11e3-a0b9-249bbb34602c\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/armys-pacific-pathways-initiative-sets-up-turf-battle-with-marines/2013/12/29/11c948c8-69b1-11e3-a0b9-249bbb34602c_story.html) (accessed January 27, 2014).

<sup>103</sup> Aaron Marx, "The Wrong Path in the Pacific," *Brookings: Up Front*, blog entry posted January 14, 2014, <http://brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2014/01/14-army-wrong-path-pacific-marx> (accessed January 30, 2014).

<sup>104</sup> Chandrasekaran, "Army's Pacific Pathways' Initiative Sets up Turf battle with Marines."

<sup>105</sup> U.S. Army, I Corps, "Pathways Mission Analysis Brief," 10.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>107</sup> Information obtained from a request for information to the TRANSCOM J3 Office. Without being directly involved in the USARPAC planning and without releasing any proprietary information, an Action Officer was able to confirm from the MSC Market Survey for the maritime movement component of the mission is consistent with the USARPAC projection.

<sup>108</sup> U.S. Army, I Corps, "Pathways Mission Analysis Brief," 14-15 & 21.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>110</sup> Marx, "The Wrong Path in the Pacific."

<sup>111</sup> U.S. Army, I Corps, "Pathways Mission Analysis Brief," 10.

<sup>112</sup> Good Reads, "Charles Darwin Quotes," [http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/12793.Charles\\_Darwin](http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/12793.Charles_Darwin) (accessed March 25, 2014).