CIV-MIL NEXUS

ORDER FROM CHAOS

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CIV-MIL NEXUS exists to create shared understanding and to highlight the great work Civil Affairs Soldiers, Interagency Partners, and Unified Action Partners achieve around the globe in pursuit of shared interest. Pictures on the cover are a sample of the meaningful work Civil Affairs soldiers are persistently executing with partners across the globe.

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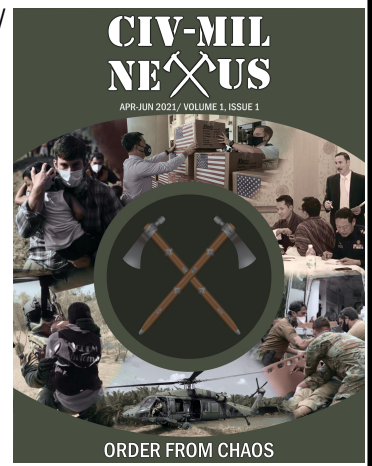17

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FROM THE COMMAND TEAM

In this inaugural issue of the CIV-MIL NEXUS, we look to highlight some of the great work this Regiment has conducted with our interagency partners to achieve unity of effort in training and operationally across the globe. This issue demonstrates our work and incorporates insights from our interagency partners to create shared understanding of what we do to achieve USG interests on a daily basis. As experts of our craft, it is essential that we continue to share our story through professional writings, such as those captured in this publication.

We invite you all to join the dialogue and advance this enduring conversation as we compete and win in the civil component. ⚔

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98th CA BN (SO) (A)
SOUTHCOM

92nd CA BN (SO) (A)
EUCOM

97th CA BN (SO) (A)
INDOPACOM

91st CA BN (SO) (A)
AFRICOM

Geographic Combatant Commands and Areas of Responsibility

Legend
USAFRICOM   United States Africa Command   USINDOPACOM United States Indo-Pacific Command
USCENTCOM   United States Central Command   USNORTHCOM   United States Northern Command
USEUCOM   United States European Command   USSOUTHCOM   United States Southern Command

VISION

WE UNDERSTAND AND INFLUENCE THE CIVIL COMPONENT TO ADVANCE OUR NATION'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND WIN.

ORDER FROM CHAOS.

The mission of Civil Affairs is to provide military leaders with a vital connection to local civilians. This matters because in a complex and dangerous world, local populations are a critical dimension of any military operation. Our adversaries work tirelessly to manipulate and exploit civilians and their governments for their own gain and to undermine U.S. objectives. To be effective, we have to win at this same game.

That's why U.S. Special Operations employ Civil Affairs as a specialized force of "warrior diplomats" to counter and compete on this front. Civil Affairs are skilled in governance, economics, and politics. In these efforts, they become the face of trust of the U.S. Government.

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1. Through our people – We are highly selected professionals who apply our knowledge of civilian populations and governments to affect human behavior. We are trained in foreign languages, cultural expertise, and negotiations techniques to work effectively and efficiently in small teams.

2. Through our partnerships – We are skilled at building formal and informal networks to accomplish important missions in diplomatically or politically sensitive areas.

3. Through our persistent presence to maintain trust and access, and we are not limited to the capital or embassy. We can work alongside partners whenever and wherever they're needed.

Civil Affairs is a unique strategic capability that gives our military leaders a decisive advantage wherever people and their government leaders need to get on our side and stay there. ⚒

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Effective Interagency Coordination: Barriers and Opportunities

by
Barnett S. Koven, Ph.D.
University of Maryland, Modern War Institute at West Point, and Joint Special Operations University
&
Katy Lindquist, Ph.D.
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While serving as the Commanding General of Joint Special Operations Command, then Lieutenant General Stanley McChrystal recognized both the importance and difficulty of robust interagency (IA) coordination, opining something to the effect of, "if you feel like you're doing more than your fair share in making the inter-agency process work, you're not doing enough. If you feel like you are going way above & beyond what you should to make the IA process work, you might be doing it right. And we need everyone feeling like that."[1] Given the complexity of missions that require skillful navigation of complex human terrain, effective IA coordination is especially important for Civil Affairs (CA) soldiers. This brief article therefore endeavors to explain why effective IA coordination is challenging, and what CA can do about it. It is adapted, with permission, from the authors' forthcoming monograph with Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) Press, *Barriers to Special Operations Forces – Led Counterterrorism.*

Barriers to Effective IA Coordination

A lack of altruistic, mission-focused coordination between the IA would come as no surprise to those who study organizational behavior and bureaucracy. Government agencies and departments, like all organizations, have their own sets of interests. These include "maintaining influence, fulfilling its mission, and securing the necessary capabilities," for which "maintaining or expanding roles and missions, and maintaining or increasing budgets" are both important aims.[2] Thus organizations in the public sector "must be seen as political actors with dynamic relations to political leadership and to actors in the society they are a part of."[3] This means that agencies have incentives to expand their mission and to frame key issues of the day in ways that bring the most influence and funding to their doorstep. Put differently, whole of government efforts are highly multifaceted, and when it comes to each agency or department's view of priorities and the best means of addressing them, "where you stand depends on where you sit."[4]

Organizations also often establish boundaries about who is "inside" and who is "outside" their organization; they get to decide who their members are and, just as importantly, who they are not. Anthony Downs, a foundational thinker on how bureaucracies function has articulated what he calls the "Law of Self-Serving Loyalty." He posits that, "all officials exhibit relatively strong loyalty to the organization controlling their job security and promotion."[5] This leads to the development of organizational cultures and also creates incentives for those who are aiming to rise and succeed in their own agencies to follow norms and examples set by their own leadership. It is also worth noting that

in organizations as large as US government (USG) agencies and departments, there are often competing elements with their own incentives, cultures, etc., within agencies or departments—of which one clear example is the inter-service rivalries and that exist within the Department of Defense (DOD).[6] Ultimately, organizations of all kinds, including components of government bureaucracies, have a tendency toward "us versus them" thinking when it comes to everything from securing budget appropriations to determining what leaders and sources of authority are worth listening to.

The aforementioned dynamic also applies to shaping an organization's mission. Through careful framing, agency or departmental leadership can exert substantial influence on what activities are considered "inside" or "outside" that organization's mission. Insofar as the IA competes for influence over the crafting and execution of policy, this can contribute to a kind of territorial mentality.[7] It is here that the concept of "turf" emerges. Furthermore, organizations can have a core mission bias, where most of the organization perceives a particular activity as their essential purpose or function, or even "essence."[8] Sharing competencies, especially in an area that one agency or department considers part of its core mission, with another organization risks decreasing the relevance of one's own organization and therefore jeopardizes funding and influence.

Distinct missions and competition over turf and budget can be a significant challenge to an effective IA process. It is not, however, the only barrier that CA will encounter. Though related to questions of core mission and budget competition, several other obstacles routinely present themselves to DOD personnel when navigating IA processes and relationship. Authorities issues can enter into discussions about turf and core missions, muddying already turbulent waters with concerns about legality and congressional oversight. CA soldiers must also recognize that they are part of an enormous (both in terms of manpower and budgetary appropriations) organization, the DOD, which can appear monolithic and even threatening to IA partners. Organizational culture also presents another barrier, as does the use of language. The different agencies and departments have unique organizational cultures, and this promotes within them worldviews and lexicons that can make it difficult to communicate effectively with other entities.[9] Relatedly, there are limited professional incentives for individuals in almost any USG entity to devote the time and energy required to learn to effectively navigate IA processes. Finally, though not always a barrier, the effectiveness of IA processes can be highly sensitive to individual personalities. In part because there is little standardization of IA matters and even less formal training about navigating it, individual personalities at both the highest levels and further down the chain of command can have outsized impacts, both positive and negative, on IA effectiveness.[10]

Opportunities for Improvement

Despite pronounced barriers, the IA can still unite around a shared purpose. Doing so nevertheless requires overcoming "bureaucratic politics" and structural constraints inherent in the current IA process. This requires a shared understanding of the diverse cultures, vernaculars and incentive structures that exist in disparate USG agencies and departments. Most importantly, it requires leaders and staff who are adept at managing the myriad personalities that exist across the IA. Fortunately, the DOD is well-resourced and uniquely positioned for leading efforts designed to increase mutual understanding across the IA and ensure that personalities are effectively managed by assigning personnel to tasks they are best suited for. This section explores three areas for im-

provement.

Leverage Former Military Personnel

Following the Civil War, Congress enacted legislation—which has been expanded overtime—that gives veterans preferential consideration in federal government hiring in recognition of their military service.[11] The net result of this practice is that there are substantial numbers of veterans across virtually all USG agencies and departments. At the low end, 7.5 percent of the Department of Health and Human Services' personnel were veterans in 2016. On the high end, 47.5 percent of the civilian DOD workforce were veterans in that same year. Importantly, among the agencies and departments most relevant to IA coordination for CA efforts, the percentage of veterans among their ranks is consistently in the double digits.[12] By virtue of their prior uniformed service, these individuals already possess an understanding of, and potentially an affinity for, DOD culture and the associated vernacular, as well as processes. CA and IA personnel ought to seek out and leverage these individuals to help improve mutual understanding across agencies and departments. Ideally, these relationships should be established and built upon in advance of specific collaborative efforts.

Expand Interagency Participation During Exercises

Successful IA partnerships must be established left-of-bang. Exercises like STALKHM present an ideal opportunity for CA and IA personnel to learn about the culture, terminology and incentive structures evident in other agencies and departments. Something as simple as knowing that the Department of State communicates using cables and memos versus the slide decks preferred by the DOD can ensure IA engagements get started on the right track. Learning these simple lessons during low-stakes exercises is far preferable than having to do so during high-stakes, real-world engagements. In short, IA participation during exercises helps build deeper understanding and personal relationships across CA and the IA.

Improve Personnel Selection

Since the quality of IA coordination is so heavily dependent on the personnel involved across agencies and departments, personnel selection offers an important area for improving IA collaboration. Improving personnel selection entails both identifying the right people for IA roles and incentivizing them to perform these critical functions. As regards identifying personnel best suited for roles requiring IA collaboration, recent efforts to reform the Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) system prove insightful. Specifically, performance in interagency-focused courses (like those offered at JSOU and the US Air Force Special Operations School)—following guidance from the Joint Chiefs of Staff—should then be used to help select personnel who excelled into roles that entail IA work.[13] Beyond JPME, regular evaluations that are already commonplace in the military, like fitness reports/officer evaluations and promotion boards, could be adapted to include evaluation criteria to help improve personnel selection.

Of course, identifying personnel well suited for IA work is only half of the battle. There must also be appropriate incentive structures such that these personnel seek out and are enthused by working with the IA. Currently, IA work is often seen as detrimental to one's career. One U.S. Army Special Forces Colonel—an accomplished Special Operations Support Team (SOST) member who swore by the program, which places special operators in IA liaison roles—recognized this reality and

jokingly referred to the SOST program as the "No Colonel Left Behind" program; a program where field grade officers who were passed over for command assignments go to finish out their military careers.[14] Given this perception, it is not surprising that SOST, and other IA assignments go unfilled with some frequency, or are filled with officers who are not ideally suited to the agencies or departments they embed with.[15] Consequently, the efficacy IA coordination is impaired.

Recoding some of these positions and ensuring that these assignments are seen as career enhancing may encourage the best suited applicants to fill these roles. Short of formal changes to personnel selection, however, CA leaders can send clear signals to their subordinates that engaging in IA work is a priority. They can also invest the time and energy to assign personnel to coordinate with different IA partners based on their unique experiences and skillsets. ⚒

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NOTES:
1. U.S. Army SF Colonel, in conversation with authors, 11 May 2021.
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3. Tom Christensen, Per Lægard, Paul G. Roness, and Kjell Arne Røvik, Organization Theory and the Public Sector: Instrument, Culture, and Myth (New York: Routledge, 2007), 11.
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From Fort Bragg to Bhutan: Civil Affairs In Action

by
MAJ Ari Cohen, Ph.D.

After months working with Special Operations Command Indo-Pacific's (SOCPAC) Team in India, select members of the U.S. country team in the U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, and having received final clearance from the Kingdom of Bhutan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), myself and two members of D/97th Civil Affairs Battalion, departed Indira Gandhi International Airport for Paro International Airport in the Kingdom of Bhutan. Soon after takeoff, the haze and smog of an October day in New Delhi gave way to clear Himalayan air and breathtaking views of Mount Everest just past the port side wingtip of the Bhutan Airlines jet delivering us into the heart of "The Land of the Thunder Dragon" to plan the first ever U.S. Department of Defense engagement with civilian and military leaders in Bhutan's capital, Thimphu. This historic engagement would hopefully be the first of many engagements with Bhutan, a land-locked Himalayan nation wedged between India and China. Adding to the excitement of this engagement was the special circumstances under which the meeting was unfolding. Although the U.S. does not have an official diplomatic relationship with Bhutan, relations are cordial, and subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs) had been ongoing between the U.S. Government (USG) and Bhutan for almost a decade.
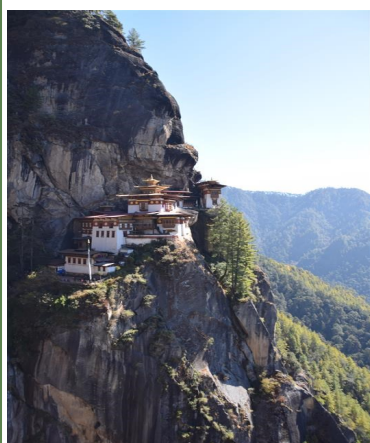
Figure 1. The Tigers nest

Upon arrival in Bhutan, we were met by MoFA representatives and Commandos from the Royal Bhutan Army (RBA). The initial meeting and discussion in the airport set the tone for the type of civil-military cooperation that is a hallmark of Civil Affairs (CA) operations since the activation of the 95th CA Brigade (SO) (A) in 2007. The purpose of this trip was to set the agenda for a Disaster Response SMEE to address disaster response and risk reduction concerns that had grown in Bhutan in the wake of the Gorkha Earthquake in 2015, which devastated Nepal and was responsible for deaths in four countries. After a brief meeting with the Director General of the Department of Disaster Management, senior police, and civil service personnel, the agenda for the SMEE was set and we were left to marvel at the beauty of Bhutan, enjoying the food, culture, and hospitality of a country that measures its progress and development in terms of Gross National Happiness.

When the team returned to Bhutan in November 2019 for the SMEE, it included four additional personnel: two members of the SOCPAC Public Affairs Office, the 97th CA Battalion's Physician Assistant (PA), and a disaster informatics expert from the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC). Bhutan was represented by almost 40 personnel from across the government, including representatives from the RBA, MoFA, Royal Bhutan Police (RBP), Department of Disaster Management (DDM), Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Transportation (MoT), and others. The Government of Bhutan also invited the United Nations' senior representative in the country to participate in the SMEE, expanding the community of interest working together to reduce disaster risks in Bhutan. As requested by DDM and RBA senior leaders, the U.S. side focused on disaster mitigation and preparedness factors, post-disaster healthcare concerns, and disaster risk informatics and risk reduction. Representatives from the DDM and RBA detailed the Kingdom's disaster response incident command system and structure. After two days of lectures and

Figure 2. D/97TH conducts SMEE with Bhutanese Partners

context building sessions, the U.S. and Bhu-

tanese representatives worked side-by-side on a table-top exercise overseen by the PDC's representative.

The SMEE was a resounding success with representatives from the DDM, the RBA, and RBP all requesting additional SMEEs and training evolutions with U.S. Army Civil Affairs.   The warm welcome, cooperation, and positive energy cemented a foundation for future Civ-Mil engagements in Bhutan and set conditions for the expansion of a mutually beneficial relationship. The first DoD engagement in "The Land of the Thunder Dragon" could not have been more positive and was appropriately sealed over a hot cup of yak butter tea. ***Tashi Delek!*[1]** ⚒

Figure 3. Members of the 97TH CA BN discuss healthcare with Bhutan Ministry of Health officials

Figure 4. Members of the 97TH CA BN with Bhutanese Partners

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NOTES:
1. Cheers in Dzongkha, the language of Bhutan.

Interagency Efforts in Civilian Harm Mitigation

by

MAJ David Thompson and Loren Voss

"If you go to that house tonight, you'll find what you're looking for. Also, avoid the house at the end of the street. It's rigged to blow." An Afghan man said this to me in 2010 in Kandahar. Later that night, we captured three Taliban leaders and safely cleared a house-borne improvised explosive device.

Civil affairs operations help fulfill DoD responsibilities under applicable domestic and international laws to civilian populations by minimizing, to the extent feasible, the negative impacts of military operations on civilian populations.[1] Army doctrine states, "[p]rotection of civilians (PoC) refers to efforts that reduce civilian risk from physical violence, secure their rights to access essential services and resources, and contribute to a secure, stable, and just environment for civilians over the long-term."[2] It goes on to state that PoC is important for "moral, political, legal, and military reasons."[3] Civilian casualty mitigation includes: "measures to avoid or minimize unnecessary civilian casualties and to reduce the adverse impacts of those that occur."[4] There is a clear tie between Civil Affairs operations and PoC.

Civilian Harm Mitigation (CHM) is a segment under the larger framework of PoC. At the baseline of PoC is international human rights law (IHRL) and a country's civil liberties. If PoC is a ladder, this is the ground floor. The 'next rung in the ladder' is international humanitarian law (IHL, or also known as the law of war) and refugee law. These apply during certain situations (i.e. armed conflict). The 'third step' is CHM. There is a 'fourth step' under this mode that includes proactive measures to protect civilians.[5]

Our adversaries purposefully target civilians. One does not need to look hard to find examples of Russian IHL abuses—Syria, Ukraine, and others. The international community responded with alarm. The U.S. applies the law of war during all armed conflicts and military operations.[6] This provides two opportunities for strategic advantage: 1) advertise our adversaries' disregard for innocent civilians and 2) make sure we apply CHM. A population-centric focus demonstrates to the world that the U.S. is a force for good that cares about mitigating harm to civilians. This approach provides a strategic benefit and favorable views towards the U.S., particularly when compared to other nations. Promoting CHM through both practice and narrative enhances the positive image of the U.S.

Civil Affairs is not alone. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), in close coordination with Department of State Bureau for Political-Military Affairs and Office of the Secretary of Defense Policy Office for Stability and Humanitarian Affairs, work on CHM. Together, they have four lines of effort. First, develop a foundational curriculum to reduce the risk of civilian harm. This includes modules that go further than stating the law, and build understanding on civilian protection, responsible employment of weapons, tracking and assessing civilian casualties, and accountability mechanisms. Second, increase system-specific capabilities. This provides partners enhanced tools and training to better use U.S.-origin munitions, such as providing tools and training on target coordinate mensuration, weaponeering, and collateral damage estimation. Third, build advisory programs on civilian protection. While the DoD leverages many advisors to partner forces, they frequently do not have the expertise to advise on how to integrate CHM principles into military planning and operations. DSCA is building material on these topics that will be available to any DoD organization. Fourth, enhance DoD's CHM risk framework. This increases DoD's capacity to conduct assessments of partner's risk of causing civilian harm during military operations and identify measures to help minimize such risk.[7]

Coming back to the Afghan man in 2010, I was a young Lieutenant on an operation south of Kandahar City—less than 200 meters from where al Qaida planned the 9/11 attacks. We needed to safely detonate an IED, and, unfortunately, that meant we had to place it in someone's field to avoid the most collateral damage. I offered the man that owned the field some amends to pay for the damaged crops and mitigate negative sentiments towards the U.S. We were the first to give him some money and apologize for damaging his property.

By taking the time to understand the human environment and facilitate access to basic needs, he provided life-saving information. The connection to the population served as our greatest force protection measure. ⚔

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MAJ J. David Thompson is a U.S. Army Civil Affairs officer assigned to 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne). He has a Juris Doctorate from Washington and Lee University School of Law with an MBA-Leadership and B.S. in Economics from Liberty University. He has multiple deployments to Afghanistan and Jordan. Outside the Army he has professional experience with the United Nations Refugee Agency, Department of Defense, and Physical for Human Rights – Israel.

Loren Voss is the Senior Advisor for Civilian Harm Mitigation at the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. She is a former Air Force officer and has a JD from Harvard Law School and a MA in Global Affairs from Yale University.

NOTES:
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Increasing Effectiveness in C-TCO Operations through Interagency Convergence

by
MAJ Bryan D. Philpott

Security cooperation within the context of counter-transnational criminal organizations (C-TCO) operations faces two systemic challenges. The first is the ability to achieve and maintain the initiative against an ambiguous threat across iterative, if not episodic, engagements. The second is a potentially destabilizing approach to security cooperation, which invests in foreign defense institutions as a solution to partner nation (PN) internal security and law enforcement problems. The solution to both challenges lies unsurprisingly with effective unity of effort among interagency partners. This paper proposes the adoption of a proven model that both unifies security efforts at the tactical level and represents a pointed opportunity for Civil Affairs (CA) forces.

The organizational structures, capabilities and purposes of PN security forces seldom neatly mirror our own. Developing partners, in particular, lean heavily on their trusted and professional military institutions to support law enforcement activities. Due to this unique involvement of PN military in domestic security, it is necessary for partner military organizations, while acting in this role, to shape their operations by appropriate law enforcement - rather than military - tactics and procedures.

Recent interagency security cooperation efforts demonstrate successful unification of effort around the Community Based Policing (CBP) model. The *Place-based Strategy* in Honduras enjoyed particular success by maximizing an interagency convergence of resources on CBP activities with PN security forces in targeted urban centers.[1] Besides eliminating excess cost and duplication of effort, the strategy was instrumental in successfully dethroning San Pedro Sula as the murder capital of the world. CA teams operating in Honduras at the time found a ripe environment for their interagency integration. They served a critical role within the strategy through their partnership with key PN security forces.

CA elements are well positioned to lead the DoD involvement in this interagency partnership. Our CA teams maintain an already existent partnership with the interagency community, PN military units, and community actors across the region. Civil Affairs Operations find close alignment with Community Based Policing, particularly in regard to community involvement and intervention.

CBP originates from law enforcement and community partnerships that produced successful counter-gang/drug interventions within the US. CBP finds its success in collaborative civil society, government and security solutions implemented by, with and through the local community. CBP principles and techniques are further expounded in US Department of Justice manuals.[2] Civil Affairs could easily assimilate CBP methodology into emergent CA doctrine and into CA support to foreign internal defense and indigenous governance tasks. By building partner CBP capacity, CA teams will achieve greater success in C-TCO by providing partners with effective and sustainable domestic se-

curity solutions while maximizing the space of interagency convergence. ⚒

<u>Community Based Policing Model</u>
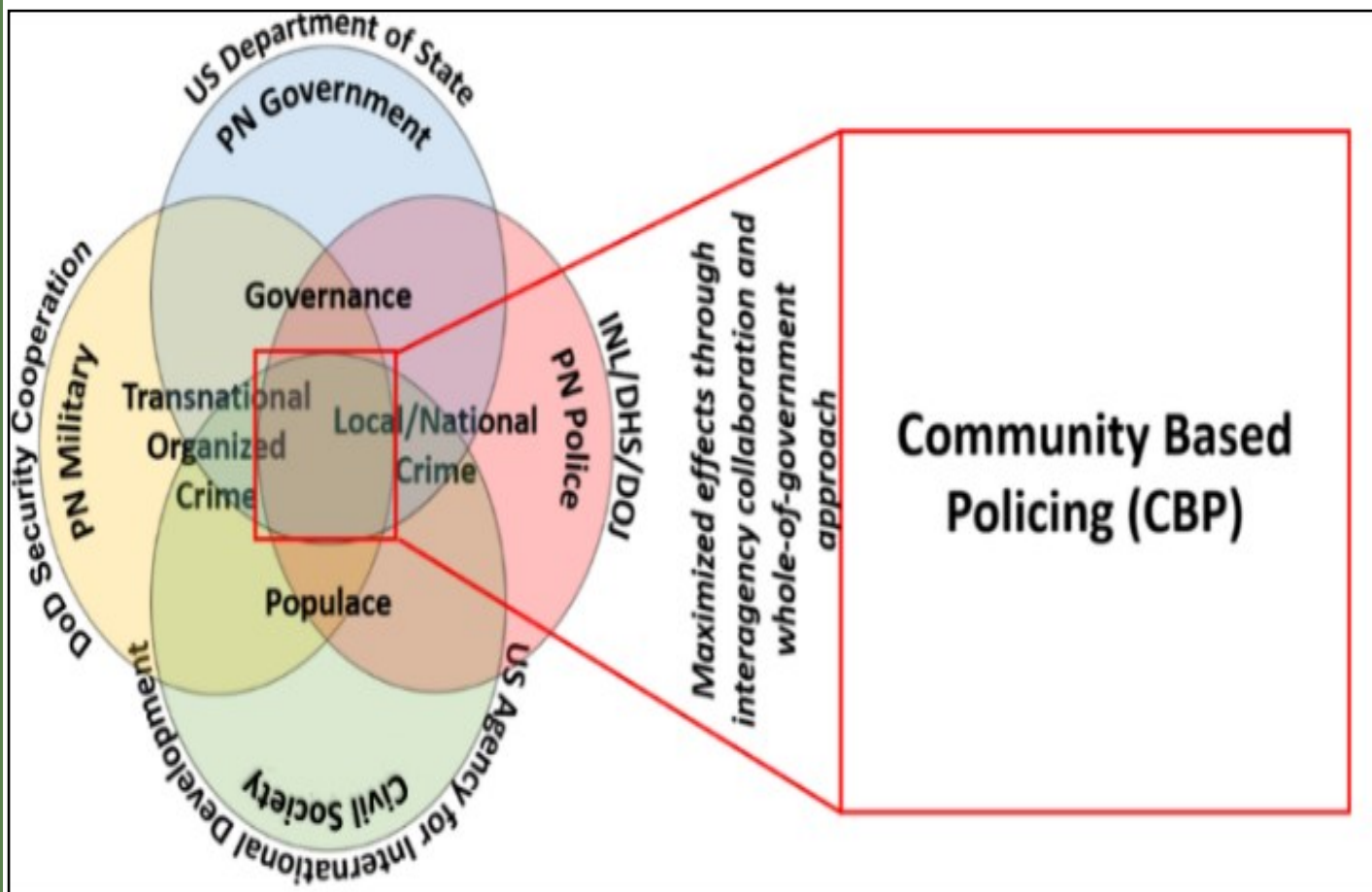
Figure 1. Interagency convergence in community based policing

<u>About the Author</u>

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STALKHM Interagency Virtual Tabletop Exercise

by

CPT John Stahmer

The STALKHM Exercise, named after six SOF CA Soldiers who were killed in GWOT, is the premier SOF CA Brigade-level validation exercise, is an incredibly complex scenario that encompasses the entire competition continuum. (Sluss-Tiller, Ahearn, Lindenaue, Kline, Hartman, Memon) A battalion headquarters with three company headquarters and teams "deploy" to multiple military training facilities in the American Midwest to a fictional continent that currently is in crisis. During STALKHM, teams and company headquarters will be expected to support large-scale combat operations, counter-violent extremist organizations, and great power competition in permissive or denied environments. This exercise, conducted three times since 2018, has validated multiple CA companies and teams for their follow-on deployments in every global area of responsibility.

Figure 1. 95th CA BDE Planner listens to IA partner during STALKHM IA TTX

Previous STALKHMs have provided excellent tactical challenges to the teams on the ground. However, even with the planning that the brigade staff has done for the exercise, previous CA planners lacked the experience and expertise that our Interagency partners bring when creating a training environment as complicated as STALKHM. Previous STALKHM exercises invited the interagency to participate in planning and executing, but due to mitigating circumstances, STALKHM has lacked a robust interagency presence. For STALKHM 21-02 (to be conducted in September 2021), the 95TH Civil Affairs Brigade decided to bring our interagency partners early into planning so that not only the teams and companies being evaluated are in a more robust environment, but our IA

partners are provided opportunities to engage with SOF CA in a realistic training environment prior to their deployment.

While several members of IA/UAP were interested in supporting STALKHM, they could not commit to participating in planning conferences due to COVID travel restrictions and due to budgetary constraints. It was determined that an in-person and virtual tabletop exercise would be best method of real-time collaboration between the CA, PSYOP, and our

Figure 2. 95TH CA BDE (SO) (A) Planner briefs USASOC Political Advisor Mr. J. Arlen Holt on the STALKHM Strategic environment

IA/UAP partners. The 95TH CA BDE (SO) (A) Interagency coordinator led multiple meetings coordinating the disparate staff and planning sections to identify the outcomes and goals of incorporating the interagency. The meetings identified what injects the STALKHM planners wanted to incorporate into the exercise and how to build them into the scenario.

On 14 May 2021, the 95TH Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) held a Tabletop Exercise (TTX) with retired Department of State ambassadors and officials, and current personnel from USAID, Department of State Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The TTX provided the CA planners and IA personnel an opportunity to meet and further develop STALKHM. For example, the TTX identified that the scenario needed to have USAID OTI to be present in the scenario at the beginning in order to be more realistic, as well as how. By bringing in our interagency partners early and often, culminating in the TTX, STALKHM planners and the interagency community are better prepared now to support and train the 15 teams and three company headquarters for deployments throughout the globe during STALKHM execution. ⚒

About the Author

CPT John M. Stahmer *is a U.S. Army Civil Affairs officer currently serving as a Plans Officer in the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade. Prior to this position, he served as a team leader in the 97th Civil Affairs Battalion where he deployed to Thailand. He holds two B.S. degrees in American Politics and Comparative Politics from the United States Military Academy .*

E/98th Civil Affairs Battalion's Utilization of MAGE to Facilitate Mission Command

by
CPT Brian Hamel

In the fall of 2020, members from E Company, 98th Civil Affairs Battalion operationalized a National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) application called the Mobile Awareness GEOINT Environment (MAGE) to provide seamless situational awareness for the Commander of U.S. Southern Command. During the five days of the response effort, special operations forces worked in tandem with Joint Task Force Bravo, the interagency, and host nation elements to medically evacuated over 75 personnel, and deliver 127,000lbs of targeted humanitarian assistance. The maneuver elements utilized MAGE to convey their front-line trace, send pictures of potential helicopter landing zones, videos of the disposition of the displaced populace, and photos of critical infrastructure which was impacting mission objectives. The overall efficacy of this application allowed commanders at echelon to make more timely decisions and effectively allocate their finite resources. These efforts provided validation for an effort that was two years in the making.

In September 2018, the 91st Civil Affairs (CA) Battalion (BN) was conducting a team collective training event with Native American populations across the United States. Two teams from the 98th CA BN were also hand selected to attend the event in an effort to help achieve greater interoperability between battalions. As part of the preparation for the training event, all teams were introduced to a geo-spatial common operating picture (COP) platform that was developed by the NGA, called MAGE. The CA Task Force utilized this platform and successfully tracked team disposition, as well as the "observations," or reports that MAGE allows a user to generate. These observations can be pictures, videos, or soundbites that are attached to a generic 5Ws construct, or customizable forms.[1] The team from E Company, 98th CA BN (E/98th) took the lessons from this exercise and utilized MAGE with different unified action partners (UAPs) during the company's deployment later that year. Specifically, the program was used in United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) with UAPs to facilitate reconnaissance beyond the forward line of troops to understand the composition and disposition regional threat networks. This was the original litmus test in the 98th CA BN, which validated a proof of concept for the continued operational employment of MAGE.

Due to E/98th CA BN's successful integration of MAGE, it was taught in the BN's subsequent technology-focused fusion weeks and was again incorporated into E/98th's team collective training event in Texas. The civil military operations cell (CMOC) and command team (CMD TM) tracked the teams as they conducted movement to, and within TX, logging all their observations along the way to maintain enhanced situational awareness. All observations were concurrently tracked by the 98th CA BN's operations section to maintain positive mission command over the maneuver elements. The shared understanding that was validated across several thousand miles would prove pivotal when E/98th employed MAGE operationally late the following year.

During the summer of 2020, E/98th deployed to the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility (AOR) in support of United States Government (USG) objectives. As the company carried out their

traditional operations, activities, and investments (OAIs), it was evident that Hurricane Eta would disrupt the daily schedule. Understanding that MAGE was an unclassified system, and could operate seamless within the joint, intergovernmental, interagency and multinational (JIIM) environment, E/98th coordinated with Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF-B), and NGA technicians to establish a server dedicated to USSOUTHCOM's response to Hurricane Eta. This server would come to provide leaders from Washington D.C. to South America seamless situational awareness of the maneuver elements' OAIs which were being uploaded as observations.

E/98th supported JTF-B and was expertly employed by the ground force commander with air assets to medically evacuate (MEDEVAC) the wounded, pregnant, and vulnerable populations while providing lifesaving humanitarian assistance and projecting needed supplies to the displaced populace.

Figure 1. U.S. Special Operations personnel conduct evacuation and treatment of injured local nationals

Figure 2. E/98th meets with military and civilian leaders to ensure unity of effort in HA/DR operations

Each morning, the CMOC from the 98th CA BN integrated themselves into JTF-B's operations update brief, which included members of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). After the synchronization brief, the CMOC would refine the plans with U.S. aircrews, take off from a Honduran military base, and fly to a nearby soccer stadium, which had been retrofitted as a staging base by local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Honduran military.

From there, the CMOC would integrate into their operations process, working closely with civilian and military leaders who had been working through the night to keep updating running estimates.

Figure 3. JTF-B Air Crews assist HN personnel loading supplies into a UH-60 aircraft

Once the CMOC confirmed the grids with the host nation (HN) leadership and helicopter crew, a targeted humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) package would be loaded to selectively fit the needs of that specific village. The CMOC, in coordination with a local NGO representative, would fly to these areas and drop off the specified supplies and conduct medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) of the wounded or those about to give birth.

Figure 4. E/98th coordinates with NGOs and JTF-B to fly to remote areas to deliver HA, and conduct hoist operations

During this process, the CMOC would create observations on MAGE, including locations of operational landing zones for helicopters, disposition of displaced personnel, and dilapidated critical infrastructure which was impacting the flow of humanitarian assistance (HA). The NGA's technicians were pivotal in taking candid feedback from the teams and customizing the forms that U.S. forces needed to properly articulate mission requirements to higher headquarters to create shared understanding. This process was continuously refined over the course of five days.

When recovery efforts regarding Eta were under control, E/98th returned to their base of operations, and began preparing for Hurricane Iota. While continuing OAIs, the CMOC began working with JTF-B and USSOUTHCOM personnel to expand auto-ingesting application programming interface (API) development. APIs enable computer programs to communicate with one another.[2] Auto-ingesting APIs means that the data from one server, or common operating picture (COP), is automatically assimilated into another. In the context of this problem set, E/98th worked with JTF-B and USSOUTHCOM to construct new auto-ingesting APIs so the COP at USSOUTHCOM and Washing-

ton D.C. was a greater amalgamation of US, host nation, and interagency COPs, thereby facilitating shared understanding and unity of effort. The end state of this effort allowed Commanders at echelon to view a more holistic joint, multinational COP, that facilitated timely and accurate decisions with the finite amount of air assets and humanitarian assistance resources available.

As we continue to explore great power competition through a multi-domain operations construct, it is imperative that SOF truths are accounted for. This operation continuously reinforced two of these truths. First, most special operations require non-SOF assistance. These HA/DR missions delivered 127,000lbs of HA, and MEDEVAC of 75 personnel in five days. This would not have been possible without air support from JTF-B. Second, humans are more important than hardware.

Figure 5. (picture above) The expertise of JTF-B pilots permitted them to conduct 'pinnacle landings,' allowing the joint task force (JTF) to reach remote areas. **(picture on the right)** These makeshift landing zones were uploaded to MAGE to drive operations.

The additional personnel that accompanied the CMOC enhanced SOF and conventional forces interdependence, interoperability, and integration (SOF-CF I3). Their expertise and tenacity were key factors to mission success. These lessons learned reinforces SOF's ability to create SOF-CF I3 with available tools to satiate warfighting functions, explore OAIs with a high return on investment, and integrate into information related activities. The effective utilization of MAGE and auto-ingestion efforts offered the USSOUTHCOM CDR a medium to conduct mission command, provided viable options to achieve his end state, and ultimately allowed him to bring order from chaos. ⚒

Figure 6. E/98th soldier facilitates evacuation of stranded families.

Figure 7. E/98th and JTF-B fly to remote areas and conduct hoist operations.

About the Author

CPT Brian Hamel *is a U.S. Army Civil Affairs officer currently serving as the Deputy Human Network Analysis Chief for the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (SO)(A). He has written several papers on how to utilize APIs in conjunction with other COP tools and emerging platforms to facilitate the targeting process. He holds a M.A. from Northeastern University in National Security, and a B.S. in International Development and Economics from the University of Vermont. He has deployments to Afghanistan, Central America, and South America.*

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To Keep Pace with Rivals, We Must Analyze the Competition Space

by

CPT Tommy Daniel and Mr. Aaron Honn

In modern great power competition, much of the U.S. military's focus has been on ensuring military capabilities exist to secure Europe against Russia and counter China's military capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region.[1] However, hybrid threats and grey-zone tactics by malign actors are an increasingly serious threat to U.S. efforts to establish influence in strategic countries.[2] The U.S. military, primarily through Special Operations Forces (SOF), conducts indirect military actions to strengthen local populations' resiliency to such threats.[3] In conjunction with other agencies including the State Department, it works to counter malign influence. However, no widely-known framework currently exists to help interagency teams visualize and understand the breadth of malign actors' overt operations, activities, and investments (OAIs). **The U.S. military should use network and operational experience gained from counterinsurgency campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan to develop a malign actor event and network data base – in military vernacular, a common operating picture—with interagency partners to help counter malign actors' OAIs and synchronize United States Government (USG) efforts in contested spaces.** Competition Space Analysis (CSA) is an event and network-based methodology to map malign actor activities, revealing their foci and connections between seemingly benign organizations and people. By visualizing malign activities over time, CSA allows the USG interagency to use targeted programming to better compete with other countries seeking to expand their influence in-country. This article will discuss: 1) the depth and flexibility of CSA analysis, 2) a hypothetical case study of effective application of CSA analysis, and 3) the inherent potential of the expanded use of CSA for interagency efforts to plan and synchronize operations to counter malign activity efforts.

Why CSA?

CSA's ability to inform a U.S. whole-of-government approach during great power competition is essential due to malign actors' use of whole-of-society approaches and their military theories about using information and shared history in weaponized narratives against the U.S. in key areas around the globe.[4] To achieve this, CSA codes political, economic, social, shared history, and nostalgic historical events which allows for robust analysis through a whole-of-government lens.

How Do You Solve A Problem You Can't Describe?

The Department of State (DoS) and various interagency organizations use the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) and Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) to ensure that in-country activities advance U.S. policy priorities as laid out in the National Security Strategy, the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, and State regional and functional bureau strategies. However, while these strategic documents identify malign foreign influence as something to combat, they lack a finer

-grained picture of the physical actions, resources, and intent of malign actors. Without a useful methodology, interagency actors cannot effectively counter malign actor networks.

While operating in Eastern Europe, our interagency team comprised of DoS and DoD individuals developed such a methodology, which has since become known as Competition Space Analysis (credit to MAJ Charles Noble). CSA is an event data (behavior data) and network science approach that takes malign actor events and sorts them into various themes, e.g. economic, political, and shared history. This codification of events draws extensively from social science contentious politics literature where event data has been used "to trace the rise and fall of movements, shifts in goals or tactics", and the geographic patterning of events.[5] Long term, CSA can provide a wealth of analysis and robust statistical testing of malign actor events similar to contentious politics analysis methods. With this knowledge, DoS and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) can better focus and target their counterprogramming efforts on specific locations and understand local and malign actor networks. Additionally, CSA informs and allows the interagency to observe malign actors' reactions to their counterprogramming efforts.

Event Data: How Rivals Also Vie for Hearts and Minds

As mentioned previously, the event data portion of CSA sorts malign actor events into standardized themes, which allows quick identification of what issues those actors are engaging with. Depending on the actor, the country, and the audience, these themes may include economic coordination, revisionist history, family conservation, and language or education-themed events. Over time, these events yield insights into malign actor operational aims and disposition. Because these themes are standardized and well-described, they can be reliably identified and coded by successive team members over a long timeline, allowing robust regression and multi-variable analysis. In addition, events conducted on a given theme can then be correlated with variables including municipal demographics, voting data, and other sociological indicators. This capability is vital because great power competition is ultimately local and its success or failure is dependent on local demographics, social trends, and cultural characteristics. The interagency may have a big-picture understanding of malign actors' strategic goals or lines of effort, but the informed analysis from CSA helps practitioners on the front lines of great power competition contextualize seemingly random operations by malign actors, identify patterns—and take action.

Network Mapping: Who, What, Where, and Why?

In addition to event data, CSA also focuses on network mapping using network science techniques. Malign actor networks are developed by analyzing open source information such as social media posts from malign actors' embassies, press releases by affiliated organizations and government agencies, and press coverage of events. This open source information provides date on time, date, location, key individuals, and key organizations that sponsored or facilitated each event. This data in turn informs our reconstruction of malign actor networks. This capability of CSA was informed by the DoD's Attack the Network efforts to curb threat networks and IEDs during the Global War on Terror (GWOT), network engagement doctrine, and new countering threat networks doctrine.[6]

Mapping competition space networks is conceptually no different from network mapping an insurgent organization. In fact, it is considerably easier due to the rate of information shared by malign actor embassies and agencies conducting hybrid warfare and grey-zone activities. Soft power is most effective when it is publicized. We can use our competitors' own posts and press releases to identify their frequent partners, track their favorite themes, map their events, and, ultimately, determine what their objectives are.

With this information, our team used social network analysis to understand what actors or organizations hold central positions within the malign actor network, how information flowed within the network, and the structure of the network as a whole.
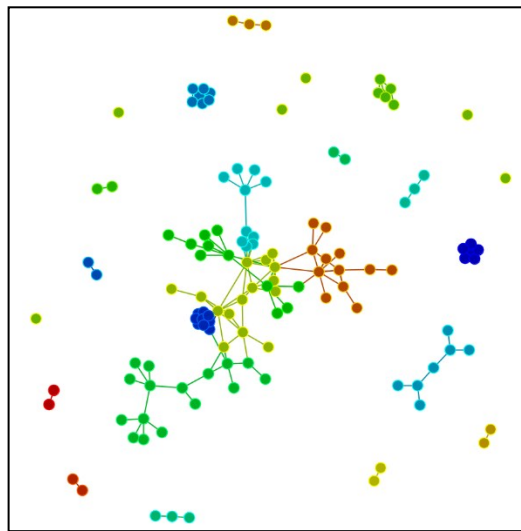
Figure 1: Malign actor network example

How CSA Imposes Costs on Our Competitors

CSA informs and empowers the interagency to impose costs on malign actors. It provides us data on: 1) Where and what type of events took place, 2) The frequency of events over time and proportion of nationwide events that fall within our scope of malign influence, and 3) The identities of key individuals and groups who facilitated or played a key role in the events.

As an example, CSA event data shows that the "Stonegard (hypothetical location)" municipality has seen a malign actor conduct three economic-themed events over the last two months. A review of historic CSA data shows that, over the last year, malign actors have only conducted 10 economic-themed events, most of which took place in the capital. During the monthly DoS interagency coordination meeting, interagency representatives discuss the increased activity in "Stonegard" and identify an opportunity to counter-program. USEMB Public Affairs Section (PAS) develops a plan to step up activities and messaging to emphasize U.S. economic support in Stonegard. USAID reps identify development funds that can counter malign actor activity in the municipality and surrounding region. A SOF cross-functional team representative recommends the Civil Affairs team meet with local community leaders to identify potential Overseas, Humanitarian, Disaster Assistance, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) projects in the "Stonegard" municipality, while the Military Information Support Team

coordinates with USEMB Political Section to meet with local governance to support their emergency communications plan. If a military base is located near "Stonegard", there also exists the potential for U.S. and host nation military cooperation through a training mission by a Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha. Immediately, "Stonegard" becomes a contested space using a whole-of-government approach powered by CSA. This causes a dilemma for the adversary as it forces them to a decision-point: increase investment to counter USG actions or abandon gains and start over elsewhere. Either decision comes at a cost to malign actors.

False Information

One potential challenge to network mapping is the possible deliberate introduction of false personas and event information by malign actors in an attempt to skew the network. While this a legitimate concern, it is somewhat limited by the whole-of-government approach malign actors often take when influencing populations. Malign actors often host highly publicized events to build rapport with communities. Faking these events would discredit malign actors with their target audiences and would be unnecessarily costly for their image. Additionally, analysis of photographs of the events, individuals seen using microphones or handing out certificates, and speaker quotes in press releases can act as evidence of an individual's placement in the network to reduce coding inaccuracies from false information attempts.

Conclusion

For great power competition, CSA should be the foundation from which we develop our strategic campaign plans in each country affected by malign actors. Our experiences--as regional planner for a Theater Special Operations Command and a Special Operations Civil Affairs Team Leader and as a State Department Public Diplomacy Officer in Washington and overseas—have shown us that interagency teams operate in their own individual "silos of excellence" **and lack a malign actor event and network data base–or, in military vernacular, a common operating picture— to help them counter malign actors' OAIs and synchronize United States Government (USG) efforts in contested spaces**. This increased need for collaboration among the interagency has been documented by RAND in 19 of 36 reports on USG strategic communication.[7] The initial CSA brief to embassy leadership changed their perception of malign actor activity and led to more focused counterprogramming. As DoD continues to develop strategies in a great power competition, it has the abundance of resources, analytical experience, and flexibility to conduct Competition Space Analysis for the interagency in priority countries. Ideally, this would take place at U.S. Combatant Commands like EUCOM, AFRICOM, and INDOPACOM and inform the programming and activities of U.S. Embassies engaged in countering malign influence. This would maximize planning synchronization, because CSA analysts would be located adjacent to the Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) tasked with advising on operational planning efforts in line with the 2012 guidance on Interagency Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication of the Federal government.[8] Additionally, either the J-7 or J-9 staff sections could act as a liaison, providing information and receiving requests for additional information from the country team or specific sections within the country team (e.g. USEMBs' Public Affairs Sections, Defense Attachés, and USAID offices). To maximize CSA, interagency teams abroad could provide valuable "ground truth" through qualitative analysis to bolster CSA's findings. An additional benefit of GCC's hosting CSA analysts would be facilitating the U.S. Military's indirect action operations and nonlethal targeting opera-

tions. CSA could improve and support mission analysis and information preparation of the battle-field for large multi-national operations, security force assistance, influence operations, and civil-military operations. CSA, if adopted, must not solely reside within the intelligence community. There exists to great a possibility of CSA becoming overly classified and being lost as a common operating picture from which the interagency can plan and synchronize operations.

For the United States to counter malign influence, it must first understand malign actor intent. CSA provides a data-driven methodological baseline to better understand malign actor behaviors and networks. Once networks are mapped and understood, the interagency can work together to counter them with our network of civil society organizations, international donors, and other U.S. government agencies. CSA is simple to train and a highly effective tool that provides our diplomats, government employees, and military with an analytical framework that allows the interagency to "achieve levels of knowledge, speed, precision, and unity of effort that only a network could provide[9]" to compete against malign actors. ⚒

About the Authors

CPT Tommy Daniel is an active-duty U.S. Army Civil Affairs officer serving as a team leader in the 92nd Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (SO) (A). He has also served with the 173rd IBCT(A). Tommy is a rotary scholar with a Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution in Divided Societies from King's College London and a Bachelor of Science in Defense Strategic Studies from the United States Military Academy.

Mr. Aaron Honn is a Foreign Service Officer in the U.S. Department of State. He is currently serving as the Public Affairs Officer for U.S. Embassy in Moldova.

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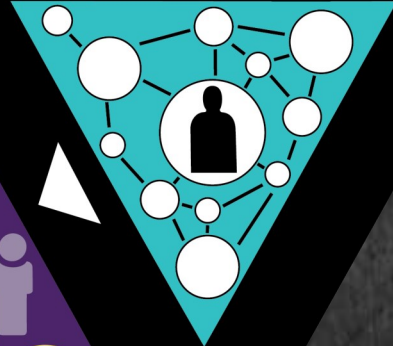
Innovation

95TH CA BDE (SO)(A) INNOVATES TO COMPETE AND WIN WITHIN THE CIVIL COMPONENT

AI/ML ENABLED CIVIL RECONNAISSANCE

HUMAN NETWORK ANALYSIS

INDIGENOUS PARTNERS

EMPLOY THROUGH AND WITH PARTNERED NETWORKS

ENHANCE/DISRUPT INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE
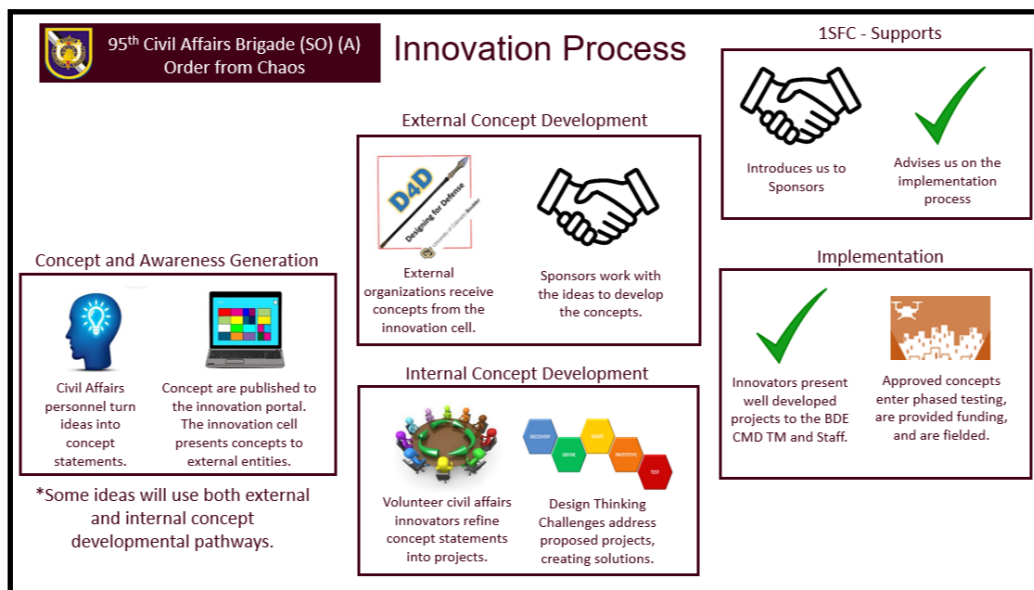
95TH CA BDE (SO) (A) Innovation Process

by
CPT G. Erik McElroy

The size and depth of the innovation base in the United States, both public and private, is staggering. Tasked with developing new technologies and methods to benefit the national interest of the United States, these agencies are both professional and open to working with the military. Access to this community of innovators is open to the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade through the newly minted Innovation Framework operating out of the Brigade S-5. In this paper an overview of innovation cell partners, the support offered to innovators, and the process to get involved is covered to inform the community of interest.

Partnership with specialized agencies such as the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), and the Hacking 4 Defense academic network has never been more important than it is right now. The rate and persistence of change in the operational environment is accelerating as the power of relatively small, highly specialized non-state actors grows in the face of a weakening network of nation-states. Our success in the modern environment will be determined by our ability to adapt to the shifting sands of conflict as technology, social disturbance, and political schisms upend both our way of war and the social fabric that binds us together.

Supporting the vision and requirements of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade through access to the expertise of the national innovation base is the founding concept behind the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade Innovation Framework. While making a truly systematic innovation system is a challenge because every innovation will take its own course, the framework is intended to guide both the innovator and their projects down a path that enables the Brigade Innovation Cell the ability to mentor, protect, and encourage innovators along their way to developing field-capable products.

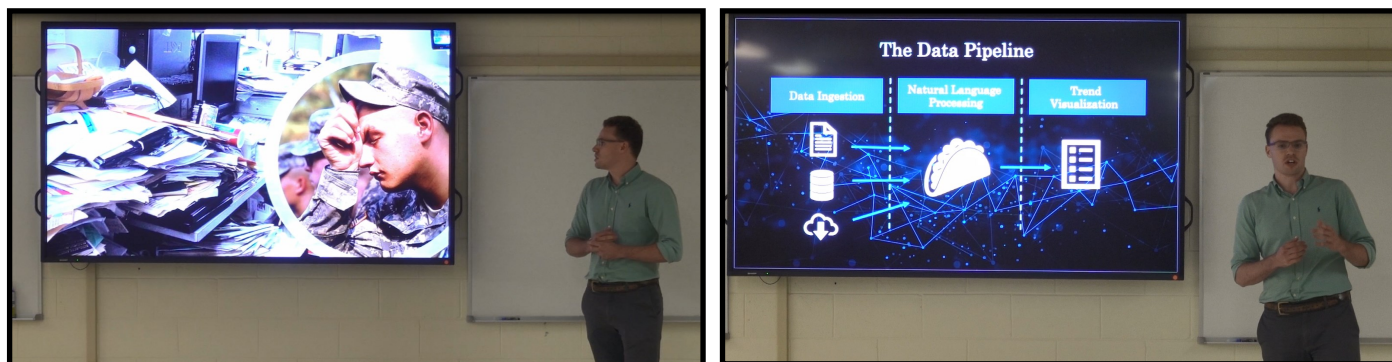***Figure 1.*** 95TH CA BDE Innovation Process

The submission of a concept statement to the Innovation Cell is the first step in this process. This should include some key pieces of information that inform the beginning of the innovation project including the problem the concept is attempting to resolve and how it intends to resolve it. The exact format and contents of a concept statement are expected to vary widely from statement to statement, especially considering that some concepts are far along in their development path and are just now coming to light while others are fresh out of an innovator's mind. The framework is designed to support projects in any stage of development to include simply aiding the fielding of an al-

ready completed innovation.

Once the statement is received by the innovation cell, it can take one of two pathways through development. The internal development pathway is for concept statements that either do not require the aid of or are not ready to be presented to experts external to the Brigade. These concepts will still receive support from the Innovation Cell in the form of design thinking challenges in which a larger audience of personnel from within the Brigade will apply the Design Thinking Methodology to the concept statement to review the concept in its initial form and identify ways to improve upon it with the innovator. The external path is for concept statements that both require external help to be brought into reality and are mature enough in their development that they are ready to present to external research and development professionals. Once in the pathway, the Innovator is responsible for developing their idea into an applicable method or item – the Innovation Cell is responsible for tracking the idea's development, supporting the Innovator when requested, and coordinating the fielding plan for the innovator's finished product.

This system is new and consistently in flux as it continues its own development, but the energy and passion of the Innovation Cell is both selection criteria for those who would join it and the constant that keeps the system running. The piece of the system that is difficult to find, but crucial to the success of the Brigade Innovation System is the innovators themselves. You, members of this regiment, have a massive potential within you to significantly contribute to the profession of the Civil Affairs Branch through the innovative ideas that have been flourishing in your mind ever since selection. The rise of the National Innovation Security Network (NSIN) represents a sea change in the military's willingness to entertain innovation in the face of a fraught decade which is rapidly approaching. Now is the time to reach out and submit your ideas for the good of the Brigade – your ideas can make a difference. ⚒

Figure 1. (Left) and **Figure 2.** (Right) At the inaugural 95th CA BDE innovation symposium a student from the University of Colorado at Boulder briefs his teams software developed as part of the 95TH CA BDE (SO) (A) sponsorship of and Hacking 4 Defense project under NSIN. The software named Trend Analysis of Civil Affairs is designed to enhance CA capacity to conduct human network analysis.

About the Author

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Design Thinking and Civil Affairs' Future

by
LTC Samuel Hayes, Jr., Ph.D.

Design Thinking is a creative problem solving process to invent one's future. Design Thinking begins with a challenge: How should the Army be designed for 2020?[1] How should Norwegian Special Operation Forces (NORSOF) be strategically designed for 2025?[2] The Civil Affairs Regiment employed Design Thinking to explore the strategic design of CA 2025;[3] how CA teams, companies, and battalions could be structured;[4] and how to harness collective influence of information related capabilities (CA, PO, and IO) within USACAPOC (A).[5]

Design Thinking

In response to the challenges and problems they face, people from multiple perspectives and disciplines come together to fashion new solutions such as new product process, service, or strategic designs.[6] Their goal is to find tailor-made solutions to integrate people's needs with technological feasibility and economic viability (i.e., the sweet spot of Design Thinking).[7] Design Thinking's distinguishing characteristics are human-centered design, radical collaboration, visual and embodied learning, a bias toward action, and open and configurable design spaces. Human-centered design focuses first and foremost on people's needs and not just technological and financial concerns. Radical collaboration opens up the problem solving process to harness different perspectives and build on the ideas of others.[8] Designers use visual and embodied learning to understand complex ideas. Rather than lengthy discussions, designers quickly build prototypes and refine their ideas through the feedback process. The design space is open with reconfigurable furniture to support collaboration and design activities.

Once a design challenge (e.g., a problem or issue facing an organization) is identified, a sponsor outlines the constraints, such as time, resources, etc. To address the problem, issue, or question, a design team then launches the five-phase Design Thinking process: empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test. Figure 1 substitutes Discovery for Empathy in the first phase of the Stanford Design Thinking model to highlight the importance of data gathering with empathy.
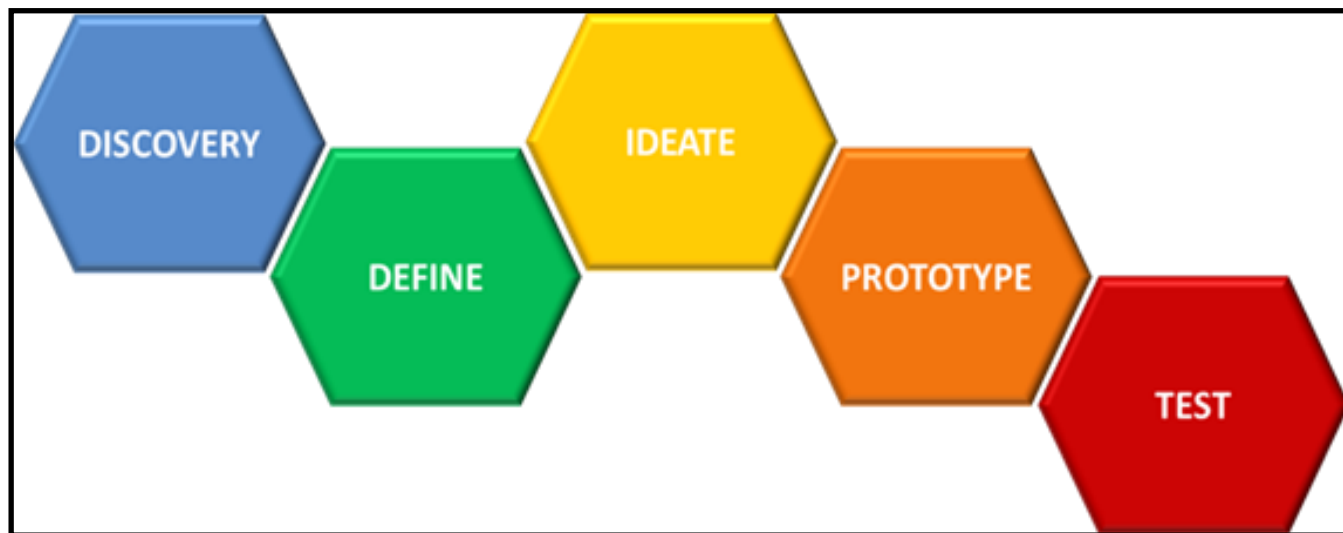

Figure 1. Modified Five-Phase Design Thinking Model

In the Discovery Phase, designers search the archival records, conduct interviews, and observe settings and interactions to help them understand the problem space and the people in it. Often evoking stories, prompted by "why" questions, interviewers probe for people's richer and deeper experiences to understand their context and to discover their latent needs, which "they may not even know they have."[9] Various data collection and data reduction tools are used during Discovery such as the Empathy Maps and Point of View (POV) statements. With Empathy Maps, designers capture the interviewee's thoughts and feelings and with POV statements they synthesize the information to describe a person, his or her desires, and the underlying needs driving those desires.

After collecting and reviewing archival data, synthesizing interview and observational data, designers begin the problem finding and problem definition phase. The Problem Definition Phase is one of the most challenging of design since it requires designers to make sense of the vast array of data they have collected and to agree as a collective what the data means. The problem definition is typically a short statement that zeros in on an upstream issue that drives some of the downstream problems that people are experiencing.

In the Ideation Phase, designers generate ideas to address the redefined problem statement. In the brainstorming sessions, designers use "how might we" (HMW) questions to brainstorm new ideas and build on the ideas of all group members.[10] With a wide array of ideas, designers then group similar ideas by visual clustering that can lead to deeper insights, possibly leading to more ideas. Mind mapping, a form of clustering, allows for illuminating relationships between and among the idea groupings. The design team ultimately establishes selection criteria and votes on the ideas that will be prototyped in the next phase.

Designers in the Prototype Phase transform ideas into physical representations.[11] For example, designers may produce prototypes such as models, physical objects, role-plays, skits sketches, and videos. Typically prototypes start as a rough draft (*e.g.*, napkin drawing) to initiate a design team conversation. Designers then evolve the rough drafts to higher resolution prototypes based on discovering what aspects of their prototypes work and which do not, learning from their mistakes. "Fail early to succeed sooner" is the designer's motto.[12]

In the Test Phase, designers have an iterative conversation with those asked to review their prototypes. What do reviewers like about the prototype? What improvements and changes need to be made? What new ideas do they offer? If the feedback is positive, the design team continues to make higher resolutions prototypes. If the feedback is critical, the team makes modifications as required, and in some cases returns to Ideation to select other ideas to prototype, or even returns to Discovery or Problem Definition phases. Ideally, through this iterative process, a tailored-made solution to the design challenge emerges that integrates people's needs with technological feasibility and economic viability.

The Way forward

The Civil Affairs Regiment is at a critical juncture in its history. It has experienced the power of Design Thinking to help it think about its future and how it can be prepared to respond to the challenges that lie ahead. Although the prototypes—the strategic design of CA 2025,[13] CA Regimental Design Challenge,[14] and harnessing collective influence[15] —for the Civil Affairs Regiment are not official nor final, they continue to generate creative proposals for ongoing transformation efforts. Together with the new ideas that will emerge from future challenges they will offer prototype-tested ideas to inform how CA contributes to great power competition and beyond. ⚒

Figure 2. An Example of mind mapping

Figure 3. Exploration Prototype Example

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Train Like You Fight: Why Civil Affairs Needs Creativity

by

LTC Daniel Gomez

Train like you fight. It's a simple concept that encourages the leadership of the United States Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) and its organizations, such as the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) to plan, create, and execute realistic task based training to prepare their personnel for deployment. These personnel require a specific set of skills that should give them the ability to operate in remote, austere, semi-permissive environments, with little to no guidance and minimal external support. One of the most overlooked skills required in these types of operating environments, is Creativity. Civil Affairs (CA) personnel have consistently used Creative Thinking to prevail in their operating environments, and it's time that leaders promote this type of training.

Creativity is an intrapersonal skill which encompasses the ability to discover new and original ideas, connections, and solutions. Joint Special Operations University's SOF Design and Innovation Basic Course Workbook defines Creative Thinking as the process of "challenging existing habits, patterns, and paradigms to generate new ideas and develop relevant responses to unique situations. Creativity results in the novel, the surprising, and often within a complex adaptive system forces the system to respond".[1] Creative Thinking is often referenced as the opposite of Critical Thinking, which is defined as "the deliberate, conscious, and reflective evaluation of facts, assumptions, and inferences from multiple perspectives in order to appreciate the consequences of actions and beliefs".[2] These two types of thinking would be better understood as dealing with the known (Critical Thinking), and dealing with art the possible (Creative Thinking). When personnel encounter an operational environment that is uncertain, complex, or ambiguous, just understanding the knowns is often not enough to provide a path forward for action; it takes SOF personnel engaging in the art of the possible to think outside the box and accomplish the mission.

Working as Civil Military Support Elements (CMSE) to US Embassies across the world, CA personnel are placed into a precarious web of command relationships, authorities, and cultural situations. The black and white orders and tasks issued from a Chain of Command, are replaced with a Commanders Intent, centered on strategic policy objectives and building relationships with Interagency and Host Nation partners. Whereas an Armor Officer would maneuver his tank Company to secure a piece of terrain, CMSEs may need to converse with the Defense Attaché, to reach out to the Deputy Chief of Mission, to get approval for engagement with the Host Nation's Provincial Minister of Transportation, to conduct Civil Reconnaissance of a new shipping port, to attain information required by the Special Operations Joint Task Force Commander. These operations may require the unique use of resources met with timely opportunities, to build trust with the United States Country Team and Host Nation partners in order to achieve mission success.

Figure 1. CMSE with HALO partner on de-mining effort.

CSME personnel must use Creative Thinking to generate new ideas to unique situations. A great example of this is when a CMSE was working with the De-mining Nongovernmental Organization Halo Trust in Jaffna, Sri Lanka.[3] The team was able to legally use Commanders Emergency

Relief Funds from the Office of Defense Cooperation's pool of money to purchase concrete culverts to reinforce roads leading to an active minefield. This purchase allowed Halo Trust to focus resources on de-mining and not worry about reconstructing washed out roads; thereby expediting mine removal and allowing displaced civilians access to vital farmland. Another example of Creativity by a CMSE, was the creation of the Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelter (MPCS) concept in Bangladesh.[4] The CMSE combined the need of the Bangladesh Coast Guard to establish outposts to deny nefarious actors freedom of movement in coastal waterways, with the humanitarian need of local communities to seek relief from seasonal flooding. The CMSE was able to plan, fund, and create a network of MPCSs using a myriad of DoD funds, which resulted in great rapport with the US Country Team and the Host Nation Partners.

Figure 2. Children in front of Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelter (MPCS) in Bangladesh. This was a whole of government solution CMSEs developed with unified action partners.

The CMSEs mentioned above, had little to no training in Creative Thinking; yet were able to use their intrapersonal skills and innate creative abilities to discover and create or, take advantage of, opportunities to meet their Commander's Intent. If these teams were trained in Creative Thinking, and given the resources and education to achieve a basic introduction to creative skills, they would be able better equipped to succeed in their mission. Simple exercises such as how to detect novel ideas, take on more challenging tasks, and combine unrelated things or ideas have shown to boost creativity.[5] Studies have shown that students who are taught creativity, become more engaged and confident in their ability to learn.[6]

Leaders of CA personnel should absolutely add Creativity training into their pre-mission training. This type of training will give their personnel another mental tool to place in in their mental tool kit. Upon encountering uncertain, complex, or ambiguous situations and after discovering and analyzing a multitude of knowns; these Creative Thinkers can pull out that mental tool of Creativity and be confident in engaging in the art of the possible. SOF Truth Number One is that "Humans are more important than hardware". Training SOF personnel in Creative Thinking validates that Truth. ARSOF deploys its humans across the globe, and every day they are in the "fight." It's the duty of our leaders to ensure they are best prepared for that fight, because in the Army, you train like you fight. ⚒

Joint Special Operations University Design Related Courses

- JSOU's Design Fundamentals Online
- SOF Creative Problem Solving – Fundamentals Online
- SOF Creative Problem Solving- Tools and Techniques – Virtual
- SOF Design and Innovation Basic Course - Virtual
- SOF Design and Innovation Advanced Course – Virtual
- For more information: https://www.jsou.us/Courses/Catalog

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Applying Design Thinking to enhance Human Network Analysis in Civil Affairs Operations

by

CPT Wallace Stromberg, CPT Patrick Mulholland, CPT Patrick Moriarity, and CPT Michael Bramer

Utilizing the Stanford Design Thinking Methodology, Civil Affairs Service Members and supporting MOS's identified challenges, implications, and prototype solutions to enhance Human Network Analysis (HNA) at the Civil Affairs Company level. LTC Samuel Hayes, Ph.D., S5 for the 95TH CA BDE (SO) (A), led this design thinking challenge. Consisting of five stages, the Stanford Design Methodology requires Thinkers to **Discover** and **Define** a problem set, **Ideate** potential solutions for the proposed challenges, develop near and long-term **Prototypes** and then **Test** their solutions via peer-review. The following is an overview of their findings.
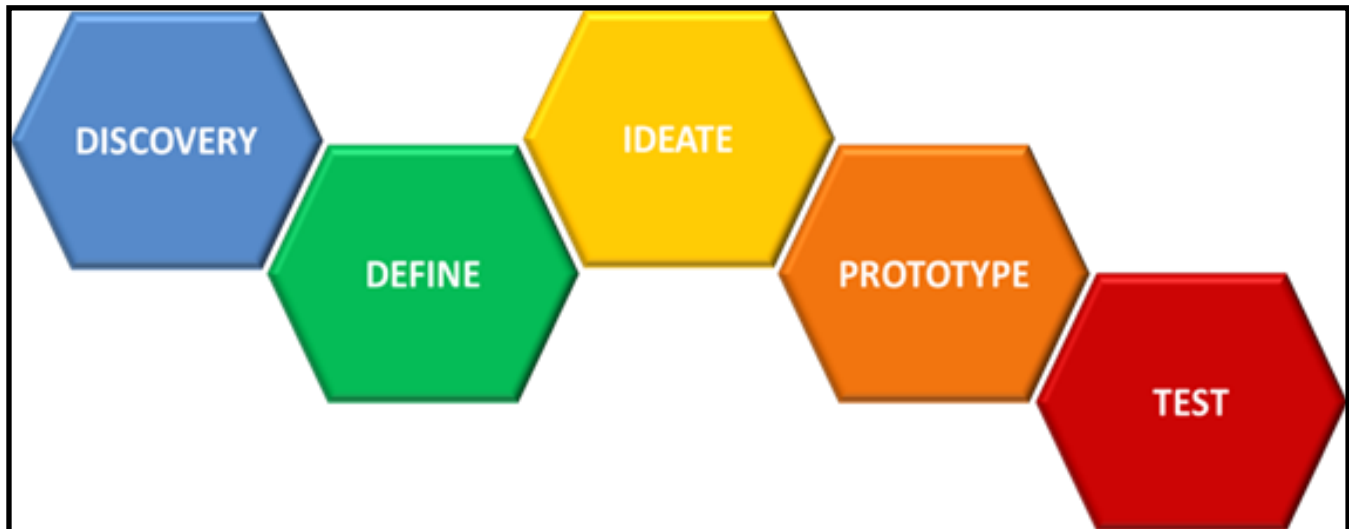
Figure 1. Modified Five stages of the Stanford Design methodology; changed Empathize to Discovery

Considering environmental and organizational factors, participants framed the problem-set during the **Discovery** phase. Thinkers interviewed twelve individuals from different echelons and with varying degrees of experience within Civil Affairs. As a result, Thinkers identified three common themes which drove the development of three potential opportunities for reimagining HNA at the CA Company level. The themes include:

1. A lack of a comprehensive understanding of what HNA is and how to conduct HNA to produce tangible outputs.
2. The Civil-Military Operations Company, as it's currently configured, does not have the training, personnel, or tools to conduct effective HNA.
3. Successful HNA operations are driven by personality, not process. More specifically, inherently intelligent Team Leaders and NCOs utilizing previous education and experience to drive HNA outputs and effects, rather than relying on doctrine, training or procedure.

Identifying these common themes illuminated three critically important opportunities which provide the groundwork for defining the problem set. The opportunities identified include:

1. An appetite exists throughout the CA Regiment to redefine HNA at the Company Level

2. The 95th CA BDE has unrealized potential. Service Members within the BDE possess diverse educational levels and specialties, unique operational and personal experiences, and previous civilian and military training. Additionally, the 95th CA BDE has access to a wide array of tools which are currently being underutilized: Pulse; Palantir; Edgebook; and datasets from historical reporting, academia, and governmental subscriptions.

3. CA can and should develop HNA to be a unique skill and capability specific to the Regiment.

As a result of the **Discovery** process, Thinkers were able to **Define** the problem as: *The Civil Affairs Company is unable to conduct quality HNA because of an insufficient amount of specialized capabilities and lack of HNA training, due to PMT task competition and an absence of output standardization.*
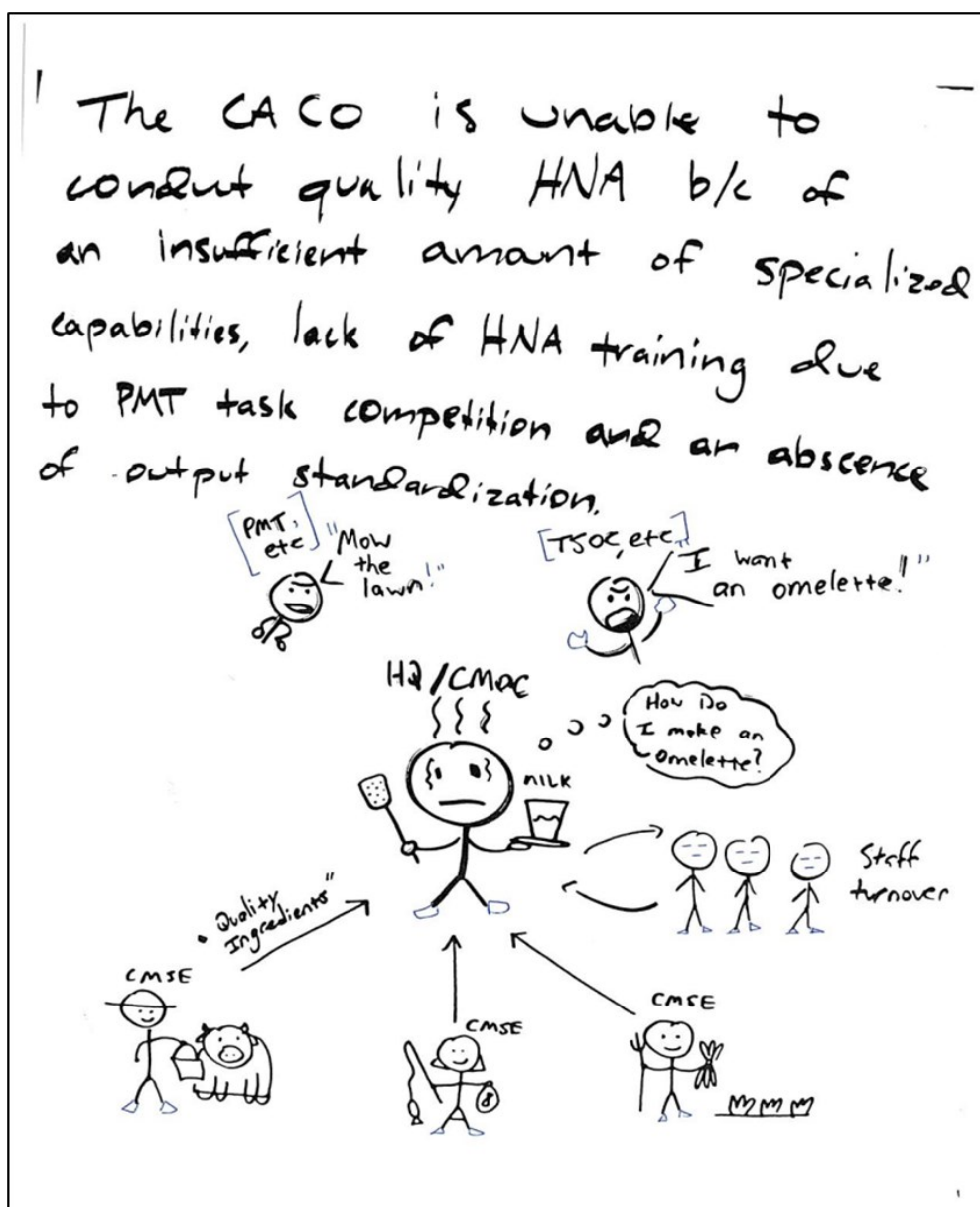
Figure 2. Thinker's graphic describing the current situation as it relates to HNA at the Company level

In figure 2 above, the CMOC and/or Company is depicted as a restaurant (the stick figure in the middle) who is receiving quality, raw materials, and goods from their vendors, the CMSEs, in the bottom portion of the drawing. The customer in the top right corner, in this instance, the TSOC, is requesting an omelet, but the HQ/CMOC is only able to provide milk. The analogy posits that the CMOC lacks the requisite training, manning, and tools to take raw reporting and create a product specific to the operational level leveraging information from the CMSEs. Meanwhile, the PMT cycle (top left corner) is demanding the CMOC mow the lawn, creating requirements that are unrelated to the operational mission.
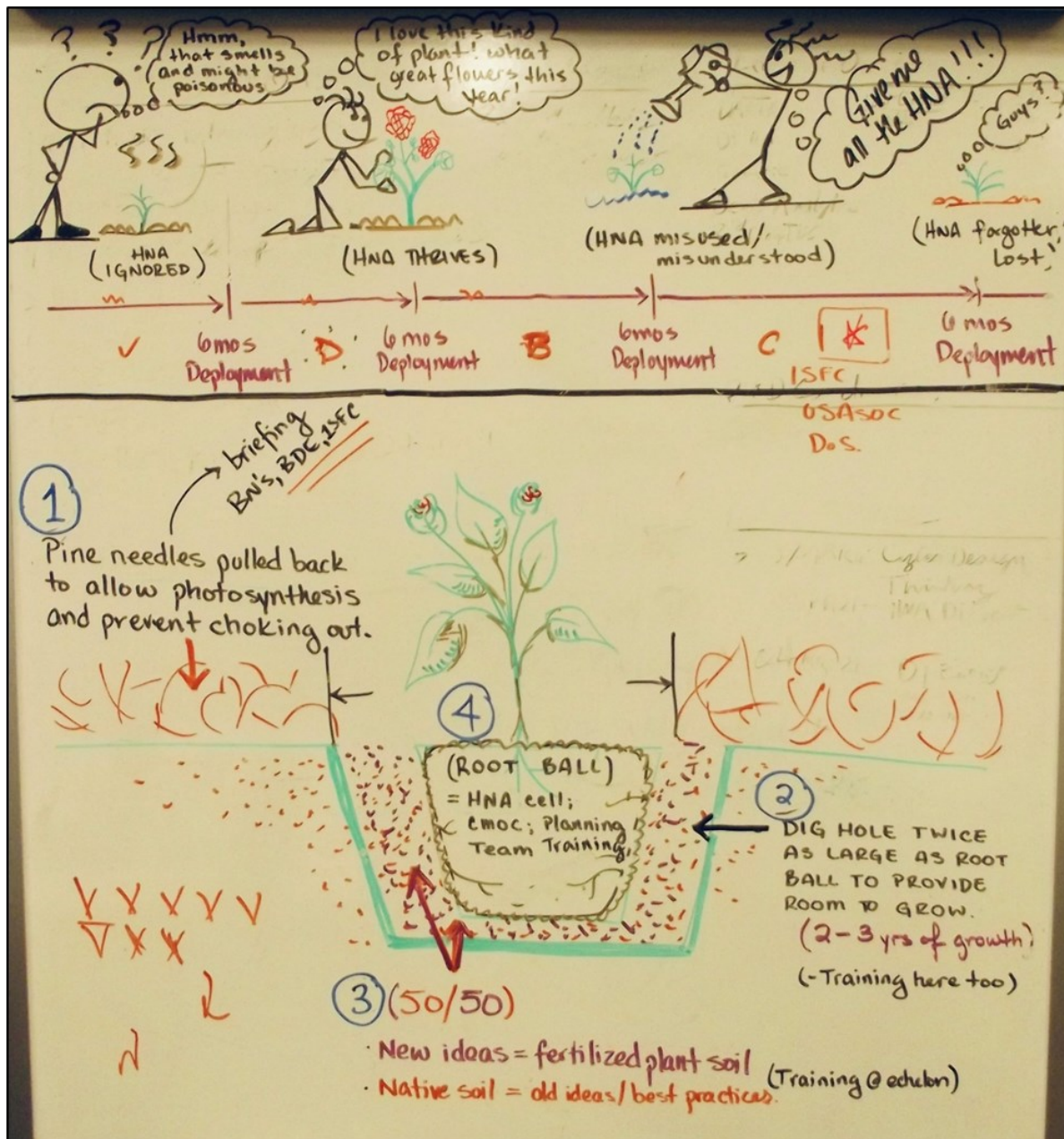
Figure 3. *Drawing depicts HNA output as a plant that does or does not yield fruit based on the person who tends to its' needs*

The top half of the figure 3 drawing above depicts the lack of HNA continuity from one six-month deployment to the next. The bottom half of the drawing reflects the necessary conditions needed for quality cultivation of HNA outputs. Without accurate understanding of end state, proper training and tools and correct capabilities, HNA will not produce the effects it should.

With the problem defined, Thinkers generated a "How Might We" statement to **Ideate** solutions. The "How Might We" statement for this challenge read: *How might we enable the Civil Affairs Company to conduct operationally relevant analysis for the respective client?* The **Ideate** phase yielded numerous results and drove the development of two **Prototypes** consisting of a 0-1 year, zero-growth solution and a 3-5 year, limited-growth solution. These are actionable prototypes that require additional planning but address the identified problem.

The Thinkers ranked them in order of precedence under three categories: Structure, Organizational Processes, and Culture. Finally, the Thinkers presented the findings to interested parties during the **Test** phase (highlighted portions are suggestions/recommendations from **Test** phase participants).

One Year Prototypes

Structure

1. Prioritize HNA/S5 losses and fill MTOE more equitably across the formation.
2. Operationalize BN planning teams (send them forward)
3. Open source research SME at the company level
4. 1/5 CONUS Slant in support of "CBOS Lite (CONUS based operational support)."

Organizational Processes

1. In-briefs/Out-briefs to BDE Command Team IOT standardize/enforce HNA Focus
2. Running estimates product to enhance MA and ensure continuity
3. Standardize HNA Outputs and expectations
4. Reduce requirements for NGT/RMT packet submission
5. Training scenarios become less scripted, allowing more depth of analysis
6. Prioritize HNA METL and assume risk on others

Culture

1. Make HNA position Key Development (KD) for both NCOs and Officers
2. Utilize "One CA" and "Indigenous Approach" podcast to generate common operating picture of CA and HNA
3. Establish an Experiential Learning Model shared idea throughout SOF
4. Incorporate NDC/ODC program of instruction into PMT cycle or course
5. Promote BDE "IWC Annex" (former CIM classroom) for BN collaboration
6. Best CA completion incorporates HNA themed tasks, event becomes more cognitive
7. CA led/run/hosted symposium that brings in SMEs, UAPs and vetted grad students into the conversation. This is SOF wide IOT to set the stage and promote CA capabilities.

Three to Five Year Prototypes

Structure

1. Restructure Company MTOE (add XO, 380A, x2 HNA 38NCOs, 12Y, 35F)
2. Blow up CMOC concept and generate tangible METL for elements of the company to train against
3. CFT relationship exists at AOB/CATF echelon
4. Add a FSC to the BN and a BSB to the BDE
5. 18F-like pipeline resulting in an HNA Specialist

Organizational Processes

1. Develop library of HNA outputs and best practices (example: Westlaw type database that exists for lawyers)
2. TSOC CA Planners advocate for role of CA Company

Culture

1. BN to TSOC; conversation of RCMSE/TCMSE expectations and capabilities (set stage)
2. POI from NDC/ODC taught at SWCS (network development understanding is goal)
3. Send 38B SM to MI courses/targeting
4. Recruiting emphasis from MI branch. Promote CA to MI
5. 12Y NCO at BN (MTOE currently x2 E-4 12Y or below at BN)

The design thinking participants will maintain continuity of findings and ensure appropriate operational planning teams are organized to further develop viable solutions to improve HNA. ⚒

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CPT Michael Bramer is a U.S. Army Civil Affairs officer assigned to the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion as the Civil Knowledge Integration Chief. CPT Bramer graduated from the Ball State University in 2012 with a Bachelors degree in Architecture and from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a Masters degree in Project Management. As a CA Officer, he served as the Assistant Battalion Operations Officer, and as a CA Team Leader, deployed to Syria in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in 2020.

Proposal for the CKI Company
by
MAJ Woodrow Crosby

Civil Knowledge Integration Company: Provide sustainable manning and technical expertise to conduct Civil Network Development and Engagement, Civil Knowledge Integration (CKI), develop collection plans to support Civil Reconnaissance, and maintain continuity for stakeholders. CKI is the analysis, evaluation, and organization of civil information gained through civil engagement, civil network engagement, civil reconnaissance, and assessments for operational relevance.

As SOF Civil Affairs (CA) continues to increase their capacity to conduct multi-domain civil reconnaissance (CR), ***the necessity for increased analytical rigor within our formation is critical to maintain relative advantage against our adversaries***. Reconfiguring a CA Company within each Battalion (BN) to meet this critical gap in our capability will ensure information from our teams is synchronized with operational requirements to enhance commander's ability to make informed decisions. Establishing this capability in the near term is even more critical as we pivot to Great Power Competition (GPC); requiring teams to operate within the socio-political layers of the physical and digital space of the operational environment (OE).

The capability would be generated from one company with additional manning absorbed from the BN human network analysis (HNA) cell and intelligence analysts from the S2. ***The significant shift from a traditional company rests not in the organization, as much as in the task, aligning itself against three lines of effort; Operational Focus, Analysis, and Digital Reconnaissance.***

Operational Focus

The civil-knowledge integration (CKI) civil military operation center (CMOC) provides continuity between companies, battalions, and the Operational HQs. Maintaining a persistent relationship with the elements down range allow companies to focus on training without losing visibility on the mission or emerging requirements. The CKIC also provides input to BN S3's and Command Teams for operational decisions. The integration of a CKI Cell (CKIC) for data management provides a mechanism to enforce SOPs with operational CMOCs to ensure reporting is collated for follow on analysis and CNDE. The CKIC also works with the interagency team to identify new data sources within academia, interagency, and nontraditional partners. The most significant change for the organization would be a shift in focus from targeting to establishing a collection management cell (CMC). Recognizing that targeting will always be essential to our process, the focus on collection management ensures continuity of mission by synchronizing operational requirements with our organization's organic capabilities. The CMC will drive analysis to ensure OAAs maintain operational focus despite the level of experience on a team or 180 day deployment cycles.
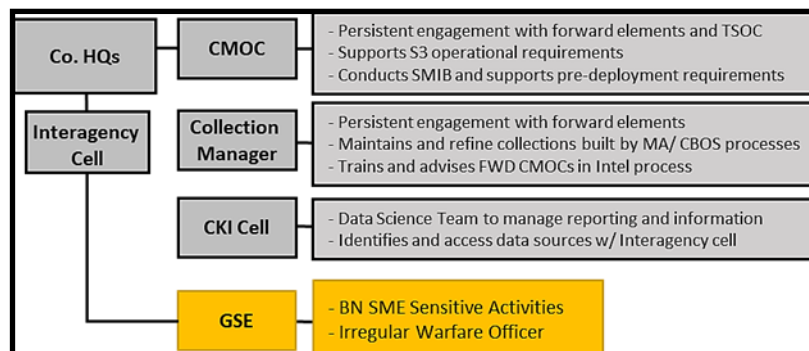

Figure 1. *Proposed CKI Company Task Org*

Analysis

Reconfiguring three of the CA Teams (CATs) into civil network development and engagement (CNDE) Cells (CNDEC) provide the necessary analytical bandwidth to maintain running estimates, support CONUS based operational support (CBOS) requirements, and develop Civil Information Collection plans in collaboration with the CKI CMOC. ***Similarly to the CKI CMOC, CNDEC's remain focused on theater specific problem sets, enabled by a training pathway to build analytical skills and the operational processes to amplify team activities as well as reporting.*** The CNDEC manning will run in lock step with sister company's readiness cycle in preparation to deploy as the CMOC's fusion cell. In garrison the CNDEC will update Company's throughout their ARM, support CBOS requirements and train with subject matter experts (SMEs) from the PAI Cell to build expertise in software, analytics and emerging TTPs.
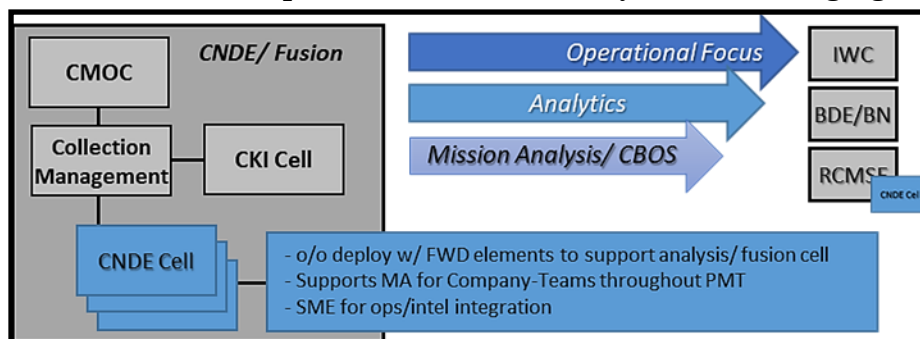

Figure 2. *Proposed CNDE cell provides in-depth political and economic analytics*

Digital Reconnaissance

The Interagency Team, PAI Cell (PAIC) and Tech Team will provide a mechanism for integration of external resources and pool technical expertise within the BN. The interagency team builds and maintains enduring relationships with JIIM partners, both at the TSOC and the national capital region. The PAIC and Tech Team are responsible for building the BNs capacity to conduct CR and developing technical expertise through collaboration with academia and industry. The PAIC training pathway includes advanced PAI courses similar to Special Warfare Touchstone, or EAG's advanced course and provide mentorship for CNDEC's. The tech team serve as the BN experts on current TTPs in theater; training teams on CR, force protection, and non-standard communication. The team will require expertise in both physical and digital force protection (Brighton) and support R&D initiatives with the interagency team. ⚒
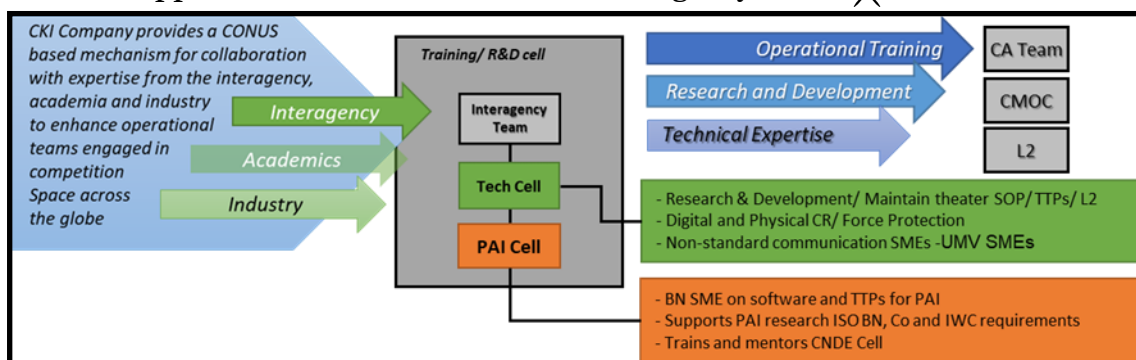

Figure 3. *The Interagency Team, PAI Cell (PAIC) and Tech Team provide integration of external resources for the BN*

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95ᵀᴴ CA BDE (SO) (A) Unmanned Mobility Systems in Action

by

CPT G. Erik McElroy

The Unmanned Mobility Systems (UMS) program within the Advanced Skills Detachment (ASD), 95ᵀᴴ CA BDE (SO) (A) is persistently working to move the Brigade civil-reconnaissance capability forward through a focus on mission-tailored UMS production. The UMS team is working to develop an organic capability at the Civil Affairs Teams (CAT) level that goes beyond the simple ability to take top-down aerial photographs. Civil Reconnaissance (CR) is a task that is conducted in all environments, to include places with low hanging obstructions which could defeat a typical quad-copter and the maritime environment. Any drone program commensurate with the need of the 95ᵀᴴ CA BDE (SO) (A) will require systems that can operate in any environments; this is the role that the ASD hopes their UMS program will address.

This program is unique because of the two concepts it is focused on. The first of these is to acquire unmanned systems capable of CR operations in the air, on the ground, and in the water. The second is more complex in both its implementation and implications because it focuses on equipping teams to construct their own systems during mission. This is a particularly innovative focus because it addresses issues facing CA soldiers executing the key task of CR; such as, assessing whether there are microscopic cracks in the concrete of a dam or to build an over the horizon common operation picture in the middle of a natural disaster.

Through this system, a team could give the ASD a mission requirement and ASD could tailer training that teaches the team to produce a drone designed to meet their needs using commercial off the shelf solutions in the country in which they will operate. This is a cost effective way to enhance a team's capacity to complete their mission in the complex and austere environment indicative of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) mission set.

While the build-a-drone aspect of the program is still under development, it is a fully functioning drone program in its own right already. Teams can attend training through ASD to gain access to a quad-copter style drone or Soldier Borne Sensor (small drones intended for pocket carry) for their mission abroad. The drones themselves can be signed out from the ASD UMS program once a team has a trained drone operator within their team.

Figure 1. ASD Soldier demonstrates various UMS platforms currently in the BDE inventory

Figure 2. ASD Soldier teaches civil reconnaissance utilizing UMS platforms

The future of warfare includes drones of all shapes and sizes, eventually it will be difficult to justify any operation without the inclusion of an unmanned system to reduce risk, enhance effects, and aid analysis. The time is now to enhance the BDE's UMS portfolio to maintain the competitive edge needed for our complex civil reconnaissance missions. Get ahead of the curve and contact the ASD to support your pre-mission training. ⚒

About the Author

CPT G. Erik McElroy *is a U.S. Army Civil Affairs officer currently serving as the Civil Affairs Future Readiness Officer for the ARSOF Division, OPMD, HRC. Prior to this position, he served as the Innovation Officer for the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade and established the initial Innovation System. He holds a B.S. in Defensive Strategic Studies from the United States Military Academy and deployed to Syria with the 97th Civil Affairs Battalion.*

SOF CIVIL AFFAIRS

The 95th Civil Affairs Brigade is the joint force's only Special Operations Forces (SOF) Civil Affairs formation. We are quiet professionals and problem solvers that excel in ambiguity.

Our companies and teams are globally deployed 24/7/365, in over 30 countries, working alongside Special Mission Units (SMU), Special Forces, Navy Seals, with interagency partners, and international partners.
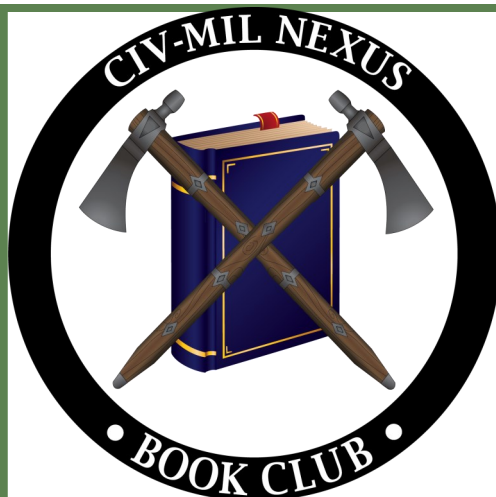
We understand and influence the civil component to advance our nation's competitive advantage and win.

AIRBORNE

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The 95th CA BDE (SO)(A) is hosting a monthly book club starting on 12 August 2021 with our first book being *Prisoners of Geography* by Tim Marshall. Each month, the Nexus Book Club will read a book on global issues, AOR-specific problem sets, organizational culture, and other issues that surround being a Civil Affairs Soldier.

The first book, *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics*, by British conflict journalist Tim Marshall, spans the entire globe and highlights each AOR and how geography, culture, and borders shape conflict in the past, present and future. Come join us in the 95th BDE Lecture Hall and Zoom (Zoom information to be published in the BDE FRAGO, contact POC for info) on 12 August at 1300 as Mr. Tim Marshall will be present on Zoom to participate and field questions on his extensive career in conflict zones across the globe.

The first three books of the Nexus Book Club are:

12AUG21: *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics*, by Tim Marshall

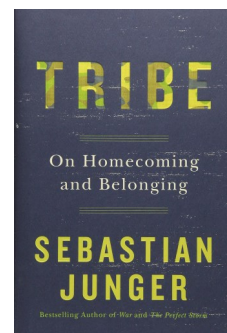**23SEP21:** *Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization*, Parag Khanna

27OCT21: *Tribe: On Homecoming and Belonging*, Sebastian Junger (joint meeting with GEMS)

Exact time, location, and Zoom/VTC information to be published in the BDE FRAGO. Contact POC (CPT John Stahmer, 910-908-8593, john.stahmer@socom.mil) for information.
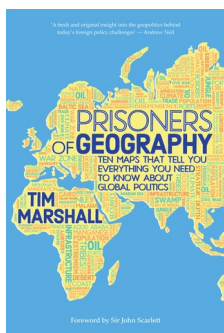
August 2021
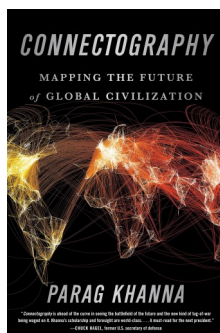
September 2021

October 2021

Proposed Book List November 2021-July 2022	
November 2021	*Horn, Sahel, and Rift: Fault-lines of the African Jihad*, Stig Jarle Hansen
December 2021	*The Good American: Epic Life of Bob Gersony, the US Government's Greatest Humanitarian*, Robert Kaplan
January 2022	*From Cold War to Hot Peace: An American Ambassador in Putin's Russia,* Michael McFaul
February 2022	*The Hundred-Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower*, Michael Pillsbury
March 2022	*Black Wave: Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Forty-Year Rivalry that Unraveled Culture, Religion, and Collective Memory in the Middle East*, Kim Ghattas
April 2022	*The Forgotten Continent: A History of the New Latin America*, Michael Reid
May 2022	*The Return of Great Power Rivalry: Democracy Vs. Autocracy from the Ancient World to the US and China*, Matthew Kroenig
June 2022	*Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, Roger Fisher
July 2022	*Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*, Daron Acemoglu & James A. Robinson

Anyone interested in participating in the Nexus Book Club are welcome to attend. If you would like to join or have a book recommendation, send it to POC: CPT John Stahmer, 910-908-5983, or at john.stahmer@socom.mil.