Lesson Report

Strategic Planning for Peacekeeping and Stability Operations

Officers participating in Exercise Regional Cooperation 2019 (RC19), collaborate on a mission plan in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, August 13, 2019. RC19 promotes security and stability in the Central and South Asian region and includes participants from Mongolia, Tajikistan, United States and Uzbekistan and observers from Pakistan. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. Jennifer Shick)

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Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI)
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1. INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Planning for Peackeping and Stability Operations (PSO) Lessons Learned Report supports the release of Army Doctrine Publication ADP 3-07, Stability in July, 2019. As stated in ADP 1 The Army “organizes, trains,and equips the force to conduct offensive, defensive, and stability op-erations . . .” (ADP 3-07, p. v) overseas as part of, unified land operations, the Army’s contribution to
the conduct of joint operations, or Unified Action. “Stability is the set of conditions in which a local populace regards its governance institutions as legitimate and its living situation as acceptable and predictable.” (ADP 3-07, p. 1-1)

Executed through Decisive Action and guided by the philosophy of Mission Command, there are six tasks comprising stability operations supporting the host nation: establish civil security, establish civil control, restore essential services, support governance, support economic and infrastructure development, and conduct security cooperation. (ADP 1, p. 2-7) PKSOI has produced an excellent training class, complete with slides and trainer notes, on Establish Civil Security for Brigades, Collective Task Number: 71-BDE-8600.

“Army stability operations are part of broader efforts by other agencies and organizations, including the United States Government (USG), international governments, or nongovernment agencies and organizations to set and maintain conditions for stability in an unstable area or to reestablish enduring peace and stability after open hostilities end.” (ADP 3-07 p. 1-2)

Stability is the result of a comprehensive approach integrating “the cooperative efforts of the departments and agencies of the USG and, to the extent possible, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, multinational partners, and private sector entities to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal.” Further, stability depends on the collaborative efforts of the departments and agencies of the USG in a whole-of-government approach. (ADP 3-07, p. 1-3 – 1-4) For more on the comprehensive and whole-of-government approach, see Joint Publications JP 3-07, Stability, and JP 3-08, Interorganizational Cooperation.

The U.S. government’s Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR) serves as the framework for diplomatic, development, and defense operations in conflict, post-conflict and fragile states – the 3D Approach. The SAR centers on the roles, functions, and various lines of effort the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) will take up in stabilization efforts. For those with a Common Access Card (CAC), SAR annexes detailing these collaboration plans for eleven fragile states are available at Max.gov.

This Lessons Learned Report has three sections. The first focuses on broader insights when planning for PSO. The second highlights the importance of Civil-Military collaboration. The third section provides techniques and specific considerations for PSO planning.

2. PSO PLANNING INSIGHTS LESSONS

National Strategies for Stabilization and Consolidating Gains in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria

(Lesson #2709)

Observation:

**Discussion:**

The NSS promotes US security with a forward-deployed development model that partners with countries that want progress based on free market principles and rule of law. It deemphasizes grant assistance and emphasizes approaches that attract private capital and catalyze private sector activity. (NSS, pp. 33, 38-39) The US will do this by synchronizing diplomatic, economic, and military tools simultaneously, placing a priority on economic support that achieves local and macroeconomic stability, helps build capable local security forces, and strengthens the rule of law in partner nations. (NSS, p. 40) Regarding Iraq and Syria specifically, the NSS states that the US will strengthen a long-term strategic partnership with Iraq as an independent state. The US will seek a settlement to the Syrian civil war that sets the conditions for refugees to return home and rebuild their lives in safety. (NSS, p. 49) For Afghanistan, the US will continue to partner with them to “promote peace and security in the region and pursue anti-corruption reform to increase the legitimacy of the Afghan government and reduce the appeal of violent extremist organizations. The US is committed to supporting the Afghan government and security forces in their fight against the Taliban, al-Qa’ida, ISIS, and other terrorists. The US will bolster the fighting strength of the Afghan security forces to convince the Taliban that they cannot win on the battlefield and to set the conditions for diplomatic efforts to achieve enduring peace.” (NSS, p.50)

The NDS focuses on deterring war and protecting the security of America. It emphasizes Joint Forces structured to win in an environment of emergent peer nation states, rapidly developing and dispersing technologies, and changing concepts of war that span the entire spectrum of competition. A key NDS Line of Effort is strengthening alliances and attracting new partners. Defeating terrorism and interagency cooperation also remain a key element of the US’s Strategic Approach. The NDS lists 11 Defense objectives. One peripherally addresses preventing terrorism overseas and another addresses “bolstering partner nations against coercion.” (NDS, pp. 4-5) The Strategic Approach to attaining these 11 Defense Objectives includes “develop[ing] enduring coalitions to consolidate gains we have made in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria . . .” (NDS p. 9)

The PCD is a compilation of assessments and recommendations based on The National Defense Strategy Commission’s analysis of the NDS and the larger geopolitical environment in which that strategy must be executed. The bi-partisan Commission appointed by Congress consulted with civilian and military leaders in the Department of Defense, representatives of other U.S. government departments and agencies, allied diplomats and military officials, and independent experts. The Commission argues that America confronts a grave crisis of national security and national defense as US military advantages erode and the strategic landscape becomes steadily more threatening. If the United States does not show greater urgency and seriousness in responding to this crisis and does not take decisive steps to rebuild its military advantages now, the damage to American security and
influence could be devastating. (PCD, p. 1) PCD provides 32 Findings and Recommendations. Two of them address Stabilization and Consolidating Gains strategy in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

**Recommendations:**

PCD recommendations:

1. Listed as recommendation #10 under "Near- to Mid-Term Force Priorities" in PCD: “Even after the demise of the core ISIS ‘caliphate,’ the United States will still face state and non-state military challenges that require persistent military engagement in the Middle East.

Recommendation: U.S. military posture in the Middle East should not become dramatically smaller, even though the precise mix of U.S. capabilities should be reexamined.” (PCD, p. 66)

2. Listed as recommendation #23 “Civil-Military Relations” in PCD: “There is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues of strategy development and implementation. Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of US defense and national security policy. Allocating forces across theaters is an inherently political-military task, decision authority for which should be held by America’s civilian leaders.

Recommendation: An increased civilian role is crucial in integrating responses to global challenges. DOD, with Congressional oversight, must emphasize decision-making processes that highlight the political-military dynamics of force management shifts. The Secretary of Defense and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy must fully exercise their responsibilities for preparing guidance for and reviewing contingency plans.” (PCD, pp. 69-70)

Additional Recommendations:

3. Specifically determine the strategic outcomes that constitute success for stabilization and consolidation of gains in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. These strategic outcomes must be measurable, but by no means absolute. Enduring change takes time and is incremental. Indication of progress in corruption elimination, government efficiency, and extremist defeat are attainable strategic outcomes.

4. Specifically link the US military capabilities deployed to desired strategic outcomes in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

5. Specifically determine the composition and characteristics of the “enduring coalitions” that will help secure the desired strategic outcomes in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. The report’s main recommendation is the U.S. should pursue a new whole-of-government effort focused on developing a joint strategy to prevent the underlying causes of extremism. The three supporting recommendations are: develop a Shared Framework for Strategic Prevention that presents a common understanding of how to prevent violence and extremism; develop a Strategic Prevention Initiative that operationalizes the prevention framework within the U.S. government; and develop a Partner Development Fund that inspires the international community to support locally-led efforts to prevent extremism.

**Implications:**
America undoubtedly faces threats from a revanchist Russia, aggressive China, and resilient terrorists. The complex synergies created by rapidly changing technology and methods of competition must be mastered by the US if it is to attain its national goals. However, the 18 years of effort invested in Afghanistan, 16 years in Iraq, and 7 years in Syria must not be forgotten. Enduring Stabilization and Consolidation of Gains are possible in these nations for minimum cost with properly focused strategies and appropriate resources and forces to implement them.

Sources:


Lesson Author: Mr. Jack Dougherty, PKSOI Lessons Learned Analyst. Published in SOLLIMS 27 November 2018.

Peacekeeping: A Strategic Approach

(Lesson #2721)

Observation:

Since 1948, the guiding principles of UN peacekeeping missions have remained the same: only intervene if all parties agree; remain impartial; and only use force for self-defense. These principles limit peacekeeping effectiveness. For optimal effectiveness, analysis indicates a peacekeeping force must present a credible threat of force to compel adversaries to behave peaceably.

Discussion:

The key to a successful UN peacekeeping strategy is clearly and credibly communicating to all potential belligerents the willingness to use force if necessary to establish peace. This “strategic deployment” strategy relies on the threat of intervention to make adversaries conduct themselves peaceably.

The study this lesson is based on uses “Contest Success Function” modeling to describe in great detail the value of a “strategic deployment” strategy in peacekeeping. The key is the credible threat to use military force to bring peace to a conflict, not the actual deployment of those military forces.
The study compared Strategic Deployment to two other strategies that involved actual UN peacekeeping force deployment. The first is titled “Full Deployment,” where the peacekeeping force entered a conflict as an unintegrated “third” side to impose peace. The Contest Success Function model indicated that the force size required for this strategy to succeed is unacceptably large. A second strategy, “Underdog Deployment,” consisted of support only for the weaker side, with no regard for the strength of either belligerent. According to the model, this strategy failed to produce peace because each belligerent continued to compete through recruitment, armament, negotiation and violence to be perceived as the “underdog” and attract the deployed UN peacekeeping force’s support.

The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations currently functions on the basis of three broad principles outlined in 2005’s UN Capstone Doctrine document. First, all parties involved in a conflict must agree to allow UN intervention. Second, impartiality must be maintained throughout the peacekeeping operation. Third, UN peacekeepers are not allowed to use force except in self-defense. Also in 2005, one of the central themes of the UN’s Word Summit Outcome was the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) initiative sponsored by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. The R2P also has three principles. First, states must protect their own populations from mass atrocities. Second, the international community has a responsibility to help states do this. And third, if states fail to do this, the international community should intervene through coercive measures such as economic sanctions and, as a last resort, military involvement. Strategic Deployment strategy is a bridge between economic sanctions and direct military involvement. By focusing on developing and communicating the credible threat of military intervention, the UN could vastly improve its peacekeeping outcomes.

**Recommendation:**

The UN should emphasize R2P principles of protection, sanctions, and intervention rather than the Capstone Document tenets of consent, impartiality, and self-defense. It should also adopt the Strategic Deployment strategy as a bridge between economic sanctions and military intervention by highlighting the deterrent benefits of clearly communicating a credible threat of military intervention.

**Sources:**

This lesson is based the article "Peacekeeping: A Strategic Approach," by Max Blouin, Canadian Journal of Economics, Vol. 51, Issue 1, February 2018, pp. 41-63.

Lesson Author: Mr. Jack Dougherty, PKSOI Lessons Learned Analyst. Published in SOLLIMS 24 April 2019.

**From Liberal Peacebuilding to Stabilization and Counterterrorism**

*(Lesson #2724)*

**Observation:**

The global approach to intervention in fragile states has changed from a focus on liberal peacebuilding through the 1990’s to stability and counterterrorism by the 2010’s.
Discussion:

International peacebuilding efforts since the 1990’s have produced mixed results. Peacekeeping missions in Bosnia, 1992-95 and today’s South Sudan situation are examples. The state focus of UN efforts has generally hamstrung efforts to improve service delivery, political representation, and economic inclusion at local levels. Consequently, through the 2000’s, the UN began to focus more on Protection of Civilians (PoC) as the main rationale for peacekeeping operations. Concurrently, the United States and its Western allies emphasized counterterrorism in their fragile state engagements. This growing emphasis on stabilization and counterterrorism, rather than liberal peacebuilding, reflects two key trends. First, liberal peacebuilding has been more difficult than anticipated, fraught with challenges and confronted with a continuing difficulty of understanding local politics and dynamics. Second, host states have more frequently resisted liberal interventions and have pressed for mandates that more closely align with the self-interest of authoritarian governments.

Further, U.S. strategy has shifted from a peacebuilding promoting focus on populations to an emphasis on defeating the enemy. This represents a lowering of ambitions from addressing the root causes of violent conflict, such as lack of legitimacy, participation and inclusion, to focusing instead on the use of force to kill or capture enemy targets. Analysts argue that U.S. military doctrine has moved into an era of individualized warfare, defeating relatively small networks and targeting individual combatants rather than threat organizations.

Concurrent with this military strategy shift, U.S. government officials pressured bilateral and multilateral partners to take on a greater role in addressing global security challenges. Bruce Jones, a director at the Brookings Institute, put it bluntly: ‘[t]he right way to think about international peacekeeping is as a tool for sharing the burden of “manning the outer perimeter”’. Going forward, the United States has de-emphasized promoting liberal values such as democracy, civil rights, protection of civilians, and the rule of law. Instead, US military commanders lower down the chain of command have been given authority to attack members of a terrorist organization even if that person does not pose an immediate threat.

In keeping with this shift from peacebuilding to stabilization and counterterrorism, UN peacekeeping forces have been provided both the mandate and resources to more actively suppress armed groups. For example, the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) was reinforced with a Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) and given a peace enforcement mandate. Additionally, these UN missions, especially in Africa, are increasingly manned by personnel from neighboring nations that often have political and security stakes in the host nation beyond peacekeeping. These soldiers from nearby countries are not perceived as impartial by local populations, undermining UN credibility. Further, regional ad hoc groups, such as the Group of Five Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) have been allied to UN peacekeeping operations.

Analysts also argue that autocratic regimes with weak institutional capacity – a common situation in many conflict-affected states – are becoming counterterrorism ‘racketeers’ seeking to perpetuate rather than solve the counterterrorism problem. They are dependent on intervening nation funds to buy and maintain loyalties from opposing groups and to train and equip coup prevention forces. A destabilized environment is thus in their best interest. Western powers provide high levels of aid to autocratic states and turn a blind eye to their human rights violations as long as the regime is a loyal
partner in the Global War on Terror. This perversely leads to more attacks on Western interests by terrorists marginalized by the authoritarian regimes the West supports.

The examples of Mali and Niger are very helpful in understanding these changes. Mali was long portrayed by Western donors as a development aid success story. Marginalized and under-represented Tuaregs, however, eventually rebelled. France and FC-G5S intervened under the umbrella of The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUMSA). MINUSMA subsequently became one of the deadliest UN peacekeeping operations on record, suffering 104 fatalities from its inception in July 2013 to April 2018. MINUSMA is mandated “to enhance early warning, to anticipate, deter and counter threats, including asymmetric threats . . . [and] engag[e] in direct operations pursuant only to serious and credible threats.” MINUSMA is thus given wide latitude for counterterrorism activities and the use of lethal violence.

MINUSMA also has a very high regional state participation rate. By the end of February 2018, a total of 13,532 uniformed personnel were deployed in MINUSMA, 66% from West and Central Africa. MINUSMA is also the first UN peacekeeping operation deployed with a dedicated intelligence capability – the All-source Information Fusion Analysis Unit (ASIFU), based on Western intelligence fusion cell experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan. The ASIFU received raw data from dedicated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) companies deployed by Germany and Sweden. It has also developed “targeting packs” on groups and individuals considered a threat. Analysts were concerned that the sharing of these targeting packs with French counterterrorism forces in the region could cause MINUMSA personnel to become parties to the conflict, lose their protected status, and become lawful targets under international humanitarian law. ASIFU was discontinued in 2017 and merged with the U2 (intelligence) branch of the military component.

After Djibouti, Niger has emerged as the second most important country for US military counterterrorism operations in Africa. As the jihadist threat in the Sahel increases, France, the US, and other Western powers are increasing their cooperation with their African allies. France and the US operate a joint drone base in Niamey, Niger. In the summer of 2019, the US is scheduled to open another drone base just south of the Tuareg crossroad city of Agadez, in north central Niger.

**Recommendation:**

The shift towards stabilization and counterterrorism will potentially lead to more oppressive governments fomenting political unrest and encouraging recruitment by terrorist groups. By primarily providing military support to suppress what are defined as security threats, states like the US and France are not addressing root causes like weak and corrupt governance, marginalization, and lack of social cohesion. To be holistically effective, global engagement with fragile states should address peacebuilding issues as well as stabilization and counterterrorism.

**Source:**

This lesson is based on the article "From Peacebuilding to Stabilization and Counterterrorism" by John Karlsrud published online on 24 July 2018 in the journal *International Peacekeeping*. 
3. CIVIL-MILITARY COLLABORATION LESSONS

**Between NATO and UN: EU Strategic Culture and its Approach to Civil-Military Cooperation**

*(Lesson #2723)*

**Observation:**

The European Union's (EU) approach to civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) in crisis response incorporates two different strategic culture perspectives. The EU’s official concept is shaped by NATO’s military-centered vision and is subordinated to the achievement of military goals. In practice, however, the application of CIMIC in EU-led crisis response resembles the UN civilian-centered approach, aiming at supporting civilian environment and protection of humanitarian space.
Discussion:

Values, norms, ideas, patterns of behavior, geographic situation and historical context form an organization’s strategic culture and influences how it operates. The foundation of the EU’s strategic culture is support for democratic values, the rule of law, and equality. Further, it is built on the founding myth of reconciliation and peaceful integration after the experiences of two world wars and a subsequent desire to advance global security efforts. Thus, the EU initially constituted a civilian power, exercising its influence through economic strength, diplomatic cooperation, and supranational institutions.

Following the EU’s inability to respond effectively to the Yugoslavia crisis and the Rwanda genocide in the 1990s, however, it began integrating military capabilities into its structure, policy, and strategic culture in order to better protect its security and interests. Reflecting the EU’s increasing involvement in military operations, the organization’s 2 May 2018 budget proposal suggested a 22-fold increase in EU defense spending for 2021-2027.

Two additional concepts also undergird EU strategic culture: human security and the comprehensive approach. Thus, the responsibility to protect individuals and their human rights constitutes a legitimate reason for the use of force by the Union. The EU’s commitment to human security requires a wider range of capabilities beyond traditional, military-based protection of the state. The EU accomplishes this through a comprehensive approach to crisis response.

The comprehensive approach is the integration of security, governance, development and political capabilities in international peace and stability operations. This coherent method also includes cooperation with other actors involved in crisis response, such as international, national, and non-governmental organizations.

The foundational elements of EU strategic culture are thus the integration of civilian power with military capabilities, a focus on human security supported by a comprehensive approach to crisis response, and the valuing of democratic principles, human dignity, and the rule of law. In practice, this strategic culture supports EU crisis response efforts that emphasize protection of human rights, post-conflict reconstruction and development aid, and cooperation with local partners to find solutions.

The EU shares complementary goals and security priorities with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Thus, EU CIMIC has doctrinally prioritized a NATO-inspired focus on support to military operations. Additionally, the 2002 Berlin Plus arrangements obliged them both to develop and deliver military capabilities needed for crisis management in a reinforcing manner. Further, the agreement has enabled the exchange of classified information and given the EU access to NATO’s military planning and assets. Consequently, the EU’s official CIMIC concept harmonizes with the corresponding NATO doctrine outlined in Allied Joint Publication (AJP) 3.4.9, Allied Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Cooperation.

An additional influencer on EU CIMIC has been the EU’s partnering with the UN on missions such as those in Mali and Chad. Different from NATO, the UN’s approach to civil-military relations emphasizes the primacy of the civilian authority and humanitarian goals. The EU’s adoption of this
approach is evident in the recent EU-led military mission European Union Naval Force Mediterranean’s (EUNAVFOR MED) Operation Sophia, whose mission since 7 October 2015 has been to identify, capture and dispose of vessels and enabling assets used by migrant traffickers, in order to contribute to wider EU efforts to disrupt the business model of human smuggling networks in the Southern Central Mediterranean and prevent the further loss of life at sea. Since coordination with civilian organizations is critical to accomplishing this humanitarian mission, it is a fundamental part of EUNAVFOR Operation Sophia’s efforts.

**Recommendation:**

An organization is most effective when it operates in concert with its strategic culture. While the EU doctrinally prioritizes the military features of CIMIC to enable integration with NATO assets, the EU’s strategic culture emphasizes humanitarian aims. Thus, EU-led crisis response operations should be civilian directed to facilitate the ultimate peacekeeping and stability goals of the operations, viewing military capabilities as one of many tools. This would further integrate military and civilian efforts and promote greater coordination with outside actors.

**Implications:**

Adoption of this recommendation will facilitate EU PSO operation coordination with non-military agencies.

**Sources:**

This lesson is based on the article "Between NATO and UN: EU Strategic Culture and its Approach to Civil-Military Cooperation," by Agata Mazurkiewicza published online by the Czech website Obrana a Strategie on 6 May 2018. Lesson Author: Mr. Jack Dougherty, PKSOI Lessons Learned Analyst. Published in SOLLIMS 22 May 2019.

**Collaborative Planning and Implementation for Peace Operations**  
*(Lesson #2466)*

**Observation:**

While Operations Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Iraqi Freedom (OIF) were not “peace operations” as referred to by the United Nations (UN), many of the lessons learned during these missions can be applied to improve future UN peacekeeping operations. Collaborative planning and implementation is critical to the efficient creation of sustainable peace conditions. This lesson will use infrastructure development examples to highlight the importance of collaboration among stakeholders.

**Discussion:**

As the United Nations faces increasingly complex problems, collaboration with interagency and multinational partners, including the host nation, is essential to creating sustainable peace conditions.
Involving the host-nation in planning and executing reconstruction efforts is critical. Reviewing some recent infrastructure reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan helps highlight this point. As the U.S. military’s Joint Publication (JP) 3-07 Stability Operations points out, infrastructure construction is not an end in itself. Building or repairing infrastructure is a way to contribute to the host nation government’s ability to provide services to its population and contribute to stabilization and development. United Nations efforts must include input from the host-nation government on needs and prioritization of development efforts. JP 3-34 Joint Engineer Operations states that engineers conduct infrastructure repair “in support of the other U.S. government departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and the host-nation.” It would be prudent for mission planners to gather input from the host nation’s government and the local populace on needs and prioritization of efforts before expending resources to conducting development tasks.

To improve interagency coordination, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) created a Joint Program Integration Office (JPIO) under United States Forces Command – Afghanistan (USFOR-A). The JPIO managed Title 10 construction programs and linked USACE with the Combatant Command (U.S. Central Command), USFOR-A, Department of State (DoS), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and host nation partners. According to the Center for Army Lessons Learned USACE Overseas Contingency Operations Playbook, “The JPIO is critical for ensuring USACE’s role in the [host nation’s] reconstruction efforts is integrated with the roles of other stakeholders and interagency partners.” Unfortunately, the JPIO mainly synchronized the infrastructure program that used resources from the Afghan Infrastructure Fund (AIF), while the military engineers in the Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A) oversaw the Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF). The funding appropriated for the AIF equated to approximately $385 million while the ASFF totaled over $17 billion. This illustrates that the Department of Defense (DoD) controlled the vast majority of the infrastructure funding with limited coordination with the diplomacy and foreign policy experts in DoS and USAID, not to mention the host nation.

Other problems encountered during these operations stemmed, in part, from coalition planners not involving the local engineers in planning, decision making, and oversight of the construction programs early in the process. U.S. military leaders met with their Afghan counterparts to decide where to build military bases, but the American engineers in USACE, and their contractors, determined what types of facilities to build. While they did a tremendous job of managing massive construction programs, many of these projects were fraught with problems. For example, countless issues arose because of the type of construction materials contractors used to build new facilities.

The average Afghan soldier lived in “mud huts” or other facilities made of indigenous materials without consistent access to electricity and running water before joining the military. They did not know how to use the relatively modern facilities built by USACE contractors that included sinks, showers, and toilets, not to mention large generators, heating, and even air conditioning. This lack of familiarity caused issues with sustainment. Inspections of facilities that had been turned over to Afghan security forces revealed their inability to manage an operations and maintenance program without significant assistance from foreign contractors. Among the reasons for this were the inability of the Afghan government to hire enough local personnel for facility sustainment, the difficulty in finding trained and capable people to manage the type of facilities constructed, and difficulty in acquiring needed supplies for repairs or regular maintenance. Invoking Afghan engineers in the program from the start could have reduced costs and sustainment issues by simplifying designs, finding sources of
materials that were available locally, and producing facilities that Afghan soldiers knew how to use and maintain. Peacekeeping and stabilization missions must create sustainable development rather than dependence on foreigners for aid and assistance.

The UN encountered similar problems in Kosovo during the UNMIK mission’s attempted establishment of governance between 1999 and 2008. UNMIK had a daunting task of forming and managing the administration of Kosovo’s government. UNMIK and the United Nations as a whole lost legitimacy in Kosovo because the local population did not have a voice or ability to influence the structure or function of the newly formed government. By comparison, the UN missions in East Timor (UNAMET, UNTAET, and INTERFET) that also started in 1999 successfully completed their mandates within three years, largely due to the inclusion of local leaders in the formation of the government. While Kosovo formed a government and declared independence in 2008, UNMIK and its European Union counterpart mission (EULEX) continue to negotiate recognition of Kosovo’s independence and normalization of relations today.


3Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), USACE Overseas Contingency Operations Playbook, Special Study Number 16-01, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, October 2015), 31.


6Ibid.


**Recommendation:**

1. The first recommendation is for multinational interagency partners to improve collaboration during “shaping” or the beginning of a campaign (called Phases 0 and I by the U.S. military). The goals of this collaboration should be to determine needs in the host nation, determine appropriate ways to solve those needs (such as construction standards and materials), and to ensure planning for the transition of development programs to the host nation government later in the operation (what the
U.S. military calls Phases IV and V). Mission planners must identify the team of stakeholders involved in the mission. These stakeholders should then come to agreements on the goals, the strategic center of gravity, and the lines of effort for the operation. Relating this to infrastructure development efforts, planners must decide if UN contributions will be used to build new infrastructure or if the focus will be on repairing what was damaged during the conflict. The team must also decide what to build and prioritize those efforts. Construction efforts can focus on building facilities for security forces, such as barracks, as well as infrastructure that impacts economic development, such as roads, markets, or ports. Guidance must direct how to prioritize efforts among different types of infrastructure to help achieve the desired goals. Engineer planners should then advise mission leadership on designs, the type and source of materials, appropriate contractors, and construction codes. The USACE Overseas Contingency Operations Playbook states “USACE personnel should advise customers on project efficacy, usefulness, and linkage to the overall campaign strategy, as well as engineering concerns.” These factors will significantly impact the host nation’s ability to sustain their infrastructure and to continue to develop.

In accordance with lessons learned in OIF and OEF, engineers should consider the criteria of feasibility, acceptability, and suitability when deciding what to build and how to build it. To be feasible, designs must be within the capabilities of the contractors operating in that location. The infrastructure must satisfy the requirements of the host nation end-users to be acceptable. Suitability tests plans to ensure buildings will be sustainable for the end users and takes into consideration the type of infrastructure that will most benefit the host nation, thus contributing to development. Not satisfying these three criteria risks wasting considerable resources on inadequate infrastructure that will not contribute to the local government’s legitimacy and stability.

An assessment of strategic risk should include consideration of gaps between the construction strategy and other supporting efforts, and their ability to support the achievement of the strategic objectives for the mission. Such gaps could come from building what the locals cannot sustain, not having the funds to build the type, quantity, or quality of infrastructure needed by the locals, or a contractor’s inability to complete projects on time or in accordance with plans. Engineers must figure out how to use designs that more closely match local practices. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) advocated this concept, stating engineers should “Design projects in accord with the host-nation’s capacity to maintain and sustain them.” Simply installing locally made toilets instead of Western models could save the host-nation significant amounts of sustainment funds and frustration. American contractors installed U.S. standard heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in some facilities in Iraq and Afghanistan. Most local engineers did not know how to maintain or repair these systems, and they could not easily find repair parts. For these reasons and to increase stimulation of the local economy, UN efforts should maximize use of local contractors, infrastructure designs, and materials. This practice contributes to economic development and overall stability and security in the host nation.

Using local contractors can complicate safety and complying with internationally accepted construction codes. To mitigate this risk, UN engineers should be responsible for reviewing designs. They could adjust local designs to ensure UN funded facilities are safe for the end-users while still using locally available materials.
2. The second recommendation is to involve the host nation in planning, prioritizing, and overseeing reconstruction efforts. Involving local engineers in planning will help develop a good construction strategy that will support achieving the desired end states of the operation. This will help build host nation capacities and capabilities as well as giving the local government a sense of ownership in stabilization and reconstruction efforts. Host nation partners will provide important input to the construction strategy and help determine acceptability and suitability as described above. Local engineers must be able to maintain, sustain, and continue to improve their infrastructure after the departure of the UN mission.

As discussed above, engineers should favor hiring local national contractors as much as possible for construction projects. When this is not possible, contracting officers can seek out regional companies. As a last resort, engineers can hire larger international firms with local national sub-contractors to construct infrastructure. USACE did this for a portion of the programs in Afghanistan and in Iraq, but Western companies built far more projects than local contractors. Contracting offices should help local companies learn how to submit bids so they have a better chance of winning contracts. The goal of engineers should be to develop the host nation’s ability to manage a reconstruction program themselves, instead of doing it for them. Recent experience has illustrated the need to inject significant amounts of funding for infrastructure construction, but it also showed that locals are capable of building infrastructure on their own if resources are available.

Another aspect of involving the host nation in the process is deliberately planning transitions. Much like military units normally do during deployment rotations, the UN mission should transition the reconstruction program to the local government. The majority of the program may initially be executed by the UN mission staff, but when the local government has the capability, the transition should begin. Involving local engineers in the planning and prioritization of projects from the start will make the transition easier. When the local engineers gain sufficient understanding of the program, execution should become a combined effort. With established milestones, the local engineers should take control of the program with UN mentorship and funding until that assistance is no longer needed. The goal should be to build the host-nation’s ability to manage its own infrastructure program. Involvement and transition will also help the locals to plan for and manage the sustainment of their infrastructure. U.S. joint military doctrine labels Phase V of stability operations "Enable Civil Authorities." Enabling civil authorities is something that should start at the beginning of the mission and becomes an increasingly larger portion of joint activities later in the mission.

Military leaders may find it difficult to surrender control of development programs to local personnel, but this must be done to enable UN forces to withdraw. This will also help ensure the continued success of the host-nation government after their departure. U.S. Army planners in Afghanistan, for example, could have decided to build fewer types of facilities under the United States managed construction program, while providing funding to the Afghans to manage a portion of the program with relevant construction. Operating in this manner would have likely required American oversight and assistance but would give the host nation government a sense of ownership for the program.

Interagency and multinational planners must jointly define the scope of reconstruction before the United Nations begins a new mission. The team of stakeholders must also include host nation engineers and leaders in the planning and execution of development programs, building host nation
capacity, and deliberately transitioning the program to the local government well in advance of the conclusion of the mission.

\footnote{1\textit{CALL, USACE OCO Playbook, 33.}}


\footnote{3\textit{SIGAR, SIGAR-15-40-SP, 9-11.}}

\footnote{4\textit{U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, \textit{Joint Operation Planning}, Joint Publication 5-0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 11, 2011), III-44.}}

**Implications:**

Failing to include the host nation government or the local population in determining development needs and prioritizing efforts will likely lead to wasted resources or unsustainable results.

**Sources:**

This lesson is based on the references cited. It was prepared for USAWC PKSOI elective course PS2220 - Peace Operations.

Lesson Author: COL Andre Balyoz, U.S. Army Forces Korea. Published in SOLLIMS 1June 2016.
Planning Considerations for Military-Political Engagement in Afghanistan

(Lesson #669)

Observation:

In developing the military-political campaign for Afghanistan, what matters most is engagement with locals - and conducting this engagement within their own cultural frame of reference. In order to engage within that frame, military commanders and governmental administrators need to garner local allies/forces. Moreover, in order to engage successfully, military commanders and governmental administrators need a means to understand the social systems of the various communities and tribes, and also a way to understand and predict how military initiatives may affect those social systems.

Discussion:

The challenge presented by the population of Afghanistan to the military-political campaign plan is the plethora of ethnic groups, tribes, sub-tribes, clans, village rivalries, criminal networks, local bandits, nomads, strongmen, warlords, and merchant families. The challenge is exacerbated by intricate
and complex alliances (social, political, and security alliances) and by internationally-networked ele-
ments influencing bazaars and trade. This challenge is also compounded by the fact that many
communities lack authoritative leadership, may have no cohesive identity, and can tend to shift alle-
iances.

To meet the challenges posed by the Afghan socio-political environment, tenets to aid campaign
planners are: (1) military commanders and government administrators should not attempt to solve
the problems of the social groups and networks, but should instead strive to manage "frontier condi-
tions", (2) military commanders and governmental administrators will always require local allies, and
(3) military commanders and governmental administrators should work to shape, manipulate, and
control the local populations.

The ultimate objective in the military-political campaign - gaining the support of communities, vil-
lages, and their political structures and leaders - is a daunting task, particularly in a nation such as
Afghanistan. However, several common strategies have been employed and have gained various
measures of success. Four of these common strategies are: (1) choosing a side (regardless of its
previous, perhaps unsavory, conduct), (2) playing off one side against another, (3) patronizing a
given side/leader, and (4) a combination of these methods.

Within these four strategies, numerous "frontier tactics" have been, and will continue to be, utilized
by military and governmental organizations. Frequently employed "frontier tactics" are: weakening
a given community or tribe, isolating a given community/tribe, attacking-attracting a given commu-
nity/tribe, co-opting a given community/tribe or its leader, and attempting to integrate a given com-
munity/tribe/leader into a larger socio-political group or structure. These "frontier tactics" have been
/ can be executed singly or in combination with others. How these tactics are employed, however,
needs to vary according to local conditions and target audiences. Addressing this variance (in local
conditions and target audiences) is often a central issue in the campaign planning process.

A proposed means to address this variance, and to help understand the social systems of the various
communities and tribes, is the following template (for planners):

(1) Map out the social structure (around the community, group, or village).

(2) Describe the behavioral rules within the social structure.

(3) Dissect each village separately (personalities, leaders, communicators).

(4) Identify the land-owners and the implications of their ownership/position/status.

(5) Determine how the village distributes communal property.

(6) Map out the alliance networks.

(7) Understand community "policing systems" (Arbakai systems, militias, others).

(8) Develop Priority Information Requirements.
**Recommendations:**

- Military-Civilian Campaigns: Planners should attempt to address the variance in local conditions and target groups throughout the area of operations. An 8-step template presented above provides a recommended framework/tool for planners' consideration.

- Military Civilian Campaigns: Planners should attempt to include/tap local sources in the planning process.

**Implications:**

- If planners fail to address the variances in local conditions and target groups, the "frontier tactic(s)" selected to influence many of the target groups may prove to be inappropriate and ineffective. Instead of gaining the support of the target groups, the exact opposite may occur.

- If local sources are not used/consulted during the planning process (or at least secondary sources with some knowledge of the local conditions and groups), then significant information gaps may result, many of which will present risks to conduct of operations.

- Besides the 8-step template provided, further tools will need to be developed - to help identify possible key pieces of information (or "golden nuggets") as the template is filled out. The template’s data may be voluminous; tools to allow planners to hone in on the critical pieces will no doubt help to gain efficiencies.

- Although Priority Information Requirements (PIR) are simplistically listed as a step in the template, they demand an associated collection plan. Likewise, a mechanism for routing the answers of the PIR back to the planners and to the decision-makers needs to be established. Otherwise, key information needed to confirm or complete plans might not be acquired or used.

- The template provided above is just that - a template. It is not a one-fits-all planning guide. Nonetheless, it does identify several key planning factors for military-civilian campaigns in a complex environment like Afghanistan - with its myriad of diverse communities, tribal groups, networks, and influencers.

**Source:**

This observation is based on the article "Some Considerations for Planning and Executing a Military-Political Engagement in Afghanistan," by William S. McCallister in SMALL WARS JOURNAL, May 3, 2010.

Lesson Author: Mr. David Mosinski, PKSOI Lessons Learned Analyst. Published in SOLLIMS 18 August 2010.
Disinformation and Strategic Planning for PSO

(Lesson #2725)

Observation:
Disinformation potentially undermines the effectiveness of Peacekeeping and Stability Operations (PSO).

Discussion:
Disinformation is simply false information spread deliberately to deceive. It undermines peacekeeper trust and legitimacy and threatens the rule of law crucial to stabilizing fragile areas. To be effective, PSO planners must understand disinformation and plan to counter its potential ill effects.

Disinformation is not new, originating in 1923 with Joseph Stalin’s creation of the “Special Disinformation Office” in the Soviet Union KGB’s Black Propaganda Department. The unprecedented availability of information on the internet today, even in fragile states, poses special challenges for PSO planners. Much of the available information is unverified, un-curated, and unfiltered. Further, many people in fragile states lack the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate the available information’s validity, making them even more vulnerable to disinformation.

This multitude of information sources, many of them untrustworthy, has several implications. The most important of these is the loss of shared facts. Without shared facts, humans cannot have a rational discussion and solve challenges.

“Facts” objectively exist in reality, regardless of belief, culture, or other consideration. They cannot be logically disputed. “Truth,” on the other hand, is made up of facts, but can be influenced by beliefs and interpretation. As such, two people can draw two different “truths” from the same set of facts.

The current era of information overload is a moment of heightened struggle between competing truths. If truth can be subjective, and even the understanding of basic facts is no longer commonly shared, the question becomes whose truth is correct. As people react to the overload of information by narrowing the sources that they trust, they become vulnerable to the bias of those sources and to those who seek to manipulate them for their own ends with weaponized narratives. (Watts, p. 7)

The best response to these weaponized narratives, therefore, is to embrace the competition of ideas and confidently generate counter-narratives. The most powerful story is not necessarily the one that holds the most truth, but the one that is most meaningful. Meaningful narratives are those that retain authenticity and credibility, so truth and facts must be central to the development of effective narratives. However, truth and facts are not sufficient to ensure effectiveness. Moreover, what is meaningful for one population may hold little meaning for another. Irregular groups such as ISIS, for example, have been effective in part because of their ability to micro-target specific demographics with
tailored, meaningful-to-them messages. Peacekeepers seeking to combat disinformation and harmful narratives must be equally attuned and agile if their narratives are to prevail.

Peacekeepers need to have confidence in their values and the truth of their perspectives. Effectively combating disinformation campaigns and hostile narratives requires a narrative strategy that understands the importance of meaning and identity to the targeted audiences. (Watts, p. 15)

An effective response requires a holistic strategy that broadly addresses four aspects: the message, the messenger, the market, and the mode. The message must be a consistent narrative composed of facts. Messengers must come from all levels of society and be authentic and credible. Further, outsiders will never have as much authenticity as those native to the community undergoing stabilization, particularly when the external commentators are from a different social, cultural, political, or religious group. Critically, PSO planners need to craft their narrative responses and compete aggressivley within the marketplace of ideas to ensure they provide the most compelling narrative founded on fact and truth. Finally, PSO planners should understand that the most important mode of communication, social media, is uniquely different from previous commercial communication platforms. Facebook, Google, You Tube, and Twitter use sophisticated algorithms tied to monetized incentives to determine what people see and don’t see. Nations supporting PSO should continue to incentivize social media giants to purge fake accounts, verify information sources, and limit the spread of misleading content. PSO planners must understand evolving social media norms, etiquette, and laws to ensure such platforms support their operations. (Watts, p. 17)

The explosion in the quantity and diversity of available information and concurrent loss of shared facts has led to the challenging of commonly held truths. In the past, the general public had limited sources of information, which were managed by professional gatekeepers who were held accountable for the veracity and validity of the information they shared. Today’s gatekeepers lack the accountability and consequences to deter the spread of false information. This opens the door to manipulative disinformation that PSO planners must account for.


Recommendation:

Peacekeeping and stability operations planners should understand and plan for the threats of disinformation. They must understand the role of the message, the messenger, the market, and the mode play in crafting an effective disinformation counter-narrative.

Implications:

For an opposing view that finds the available evidence strongly suggests that the strategic effects of disinformation are greatly exaggerated, see Alexander Lanoszka’s article in the European Journal of International Security.
Source:

This lesson is based on Whose Truth: Sovereignty, Disinformation and Winning the Battle of Trust by John T. Watts published online by the Atlantic Council 19 September, 2018. It is based on discussions at the 2018 US Special Operations Command Sovereign Challenge Conference.

Lesson Author: Mr. Jack Dougherty, PKSOI Lessons Learned Analyst. Published in SOLLIMS 26 June 2019.

Syrian children walk home from a full day of school in Al-Hasakah Province, Syria, Feb. 12, 2019. Continued efforts of the Coalition and its partners maintain peace and stability in the region. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Ray Boyington)
Organized Crime and PSO Strategic Planning

(Lesson #2726)

Observation:
Organized crime (OC) activities (primarily trafficking in weapons, drugs, and humans) continue to adversely affect peacekeeping and stability operations (PSO) and are not adequately addressed by strategic planners.

Discussion:
OC is present in almost three quarter of the countries where United Nations (UN) conducts PSO. It causes instability in post-conflict and fragile states, particularly when it co-opts state institutions at the local and national levels. Indeed, corruption is the lifeblood of OC. Further, terrorists and other spoilers resort to OC activities and cooperation to finance their efforts.

PSO planners must address OC early in the operation. OC thrives in unstable, post-conflict areas and strengthens its symbiotic relationships with corrupt local political elites and ties to transnational criminal networks most effectively during this period.

PSO planners face limitations when addressing OC. PSOs are usually finite, and plan to end before the transformation of economic and political power structures necessary to combat OC are complete. OC, on the other hand, can take a more long-term approach because its participants are indigenous to the affected area. Anti-OC efforts also suffer because PSOs have competing priorities like supporting political processes and the restoration of state authority. Additionally, high personnel turnover in PSO leadership hinders anti-CO operations. PSOs are also usually limited geographically, reducing their ability to effect transnational OC activities. PSOs’ limited supra-national intelligence resources and legal frameworks also hinder their anti-transnational OC efforts. Further, exposing OC activity also potentially increases the security threat to PSO personnel from vindictive criminals. Lastly, host nations will often not consent to investigating OC networks because it would uncover links to their own corrupt government officials.

Currently, PSO planners focus narrowly on building police capacity and developing a law enforcement approach to combatting OC because of the complexity of the issue and a lack of strategic guidance clarity. A more holistic approach is required.

Recommendations:
- Conduct a detailed assessment of interests and stakeholders to determine political obstacles to engagement.

- Adopt a long term approach including continuous engagement with the local population to assess their situation and agile, iterative, adaptive CO information gathering and analysis focused more on citizen security than state security.
-Minimize PSO leadership personnel turnover.

-Adopt an integrated approach to combatting OC that links security and economic development concerns, not simply just improving host nation law enforcement, judicial, and corrections efforts.

-Address state corruption at the macro level before taking any action at the operational level. Otherwise, corrupt security and political institutions that are part of the problem rather than the solution may be strengthened. At the local level, PSO’s should build communities’ resilience particularly where the state is weak.

-Focus Security Sector Reform (SSR) initially on the needs of individuals and communities rather than government structures to avoid inadvertently supporting corrupt officials connected to OC. This would set the conditions to build local confidence in national institutions and deter people from relying on alternatives provided by criminal or armed groups.

-Develop better information collection and analysis capacities focused on OC. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) NATO-standard All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU) brought unprecedented analytical capabilities to the UN mission. However, the effort was not well integrated into the mission’s existing information and intelligence infrastructure. The AFSIFU’s focus on military intelligence methodologies had incompatibilities with criminal intelligence and political economy analysis required to combat criminal networks. A more effective approach may be to develop mission-wide OC analytical capacities so that various staffs within the mission such as the Joint Mission Analysis Center (JMAC), the political affairs and mediation section, the civil affairs office, the police department, and the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) cell are able to collect and analyze relevant information in liaison with regional offices to factor in cross-border issues. Such information should then be centralized—ideally within the JMAC, which combines civilian, police, and military personnel—to produce forward-looking strategies to mitigate CO threats.

-Emphasize law enforcement capacity building approaches that are incentive-based, local community-focused, and non-repressive.

-Develop a more strategic and proactive global approach to counter transnational crime and trafficking.

Source:


Lesson Author: Mr. Jack Dougherty, PKSOI Lesson Learned Analyst. Published in SOLLIMS 26 June 2019.
Repetitive Messaging for Successful Information Operations
(Lesson #2488)

Observation:

During the December 2009 to December 2010 timeframe in Iraq, 1st Armored Division found that repetitious delivery of messages was key to successful execution of Information Operations (IO).

Discussion:

To fulfill the aim of repetitive messaging in IO, 1st Armored Division made a concerted effort to overcome four pitfalls identified by one of its senior officers:

1. Too many IO themes and messages.
2. Too little time dedicated to disseminating them.
3. Little or no unity of effort when delivering messages.
4. Lack of processes or feedback mechanisms to ensure that messages are being delivered accurately, routinely, and repetitiously.

Actions taken to address each of these pitfalls are discussed below:

1. IO Themes and Messages. 1st Armored Division initially developed an IO plan around 5 themes and 6-8 supporting messages per theme, which meant disseminating 30-40 supporting messages to several different audiences. However, the Division quickly learned that based upon the finite number of dissemination options available, it could not gain sufficient repetition to achieve desired IO effects. Therefore, the Division took two actions to reduce the messaging requirements. First, it prioritized the themes that it wanted the Division leadership and units to focus on – reducing the number from 5 to 3. Then, the Division reviewed the supporting messages for each of these themes and selected the best 2-4 messages per theme that would resonate with the target audiences. By taking this approach, the Division reduced its messaging requirements from 40 down to 12, thus creating a condition that allowed it to reach target audiences multiple times with its limited dissemination assets.

2. Time Spent Disseminating the Messages. 1st Armored Division found that in order to reach its target audiences multiple times with the key themes and messages, it had to deliver them over a period of months – not days or weeks. The Division used its full complement of delivery assets – senior leader engagements with key Iraqi officials, press engagements, billboard and handbill advertisements, radio spots on local stations, television commercials, and various other means. For each of the 3 key themes, supporting messages were delivered multiple times by different means of delivery so that the target audience was getting the information from various directions. For example, when the 1st Armored Division was seeking to enhance the image of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in the eyes of Iraqi citizens, it would ensure that key leaders included supporting messages for this theme in their conversations with Iraqi officials. The Division would also incorporate...
these same supporting messages depicting ISF security successes in handbills and billboard advertisements, as well as radio and television advertisements that aired several times a day across multiple radio and TV stations. After several months' time spent on this effort, 1st Armored Division had a high level of confidence that the target audiences' belief system and attitudes had been affected.

(3) Unity of Effort. To facilitate unity of effort for IO, 1st Armored Division stood up a Communications Strategy (COMSTRAT) Working Group. This group was comprised of members from the Division IO section, Civil-Military Operations section, Public Affairs Office, and Military Information Support Operations section. The Division Commander assigned a flag officer to chair its sessions, which were held weekly. The primary purpose of the weekly meeting was to synchronize IO activities across all units in the Division. Key agenda items included: assessments of the quality of the messages, when to change or update messages, when to transition from one theme to another, synchronization of IO activities and assets, and organizational compliance with message delivery.

At the conclusion of each meeting, the Division was able to ensure that all of its IO assets were being employed in a coordinated and synchronized manner designed to achieve message saturation with target audiences.

(4) Feedback Loop. Initially many subordinate units of the Division did not give sufficient priority to IO. To address this shortcoming, the Division created a set of detailed feedback mechanisms designed to track the execution of IO tasks by subordinate units, as well as by divisional staff sections. Each week, the COMSTRAT Working Group would review a series of IO activity performance measures that units/sections were required to execute. Examples of these measures included: feedback from all every brigades on the monthly press conference they were required to hold; confirmation that handbills with specific messages were delivered to their intended audiences and billboard advertisements were displayed in the intended areas; confirmation that senior leaders had conducted key leader engagements with the right people, the right messages, and the right frequency; and, confirmation that IO measures were taken to discredit insurgent groups that had caused civilian casualties by their recent actions. These feedback mechanisms ensured that all subordinate units were prioritizing execution of their IO activities in accordance with the Division Commander's guidance.

**Recommendations:**

1. Limit the number of IO themes and messages.

2. Allocate sufficient time to deliver messages – i.e., months.

3. Establish a system / working group to ensure unity of effort for IO – such as the Communications Strategy Working Group.

4. Develop feedback mechanisms to track the delivery of messages by subordinate units.

**Implications:**
If a command does not focus on the repetitious delivery of messages to the intended audiences – optimized through a handful of themes/messages, a significant investment in time, a working group focused on IO unity of effort, and feedback mechanisms – then the command might fail to adequately influence the attitudes and behaviors of those audiences, with potential adverse effects for the overall stability mission.

Source:

Lesson Author: Mr. Dave Mosinski, PKSOI Lessons Learned Analyst. Published in SOLLIMS 8 September 2016.

This lesson was previously published in SOLLIMS Sampler (Nov 2016) - Strategic Communication / Messaging in Peace & Stability Operations.

5. PKSOI Lesson Reports and SOLLIMS Samplers (2014-2019)

2019
- Conflict Prevention
- SSR & DDR

2018
- Transitional Public Security
- Foreign Humanitarian Assistance: The Complexity of Considerations
- Stage-setting and Right-sizing for Stability
- Complexities and Efficiencies in Peacekeeping Operations
- Inclusive Peacebuilding: Working with Communities
- Monitoring & Evaluation for Peace and Stability

2017
- Lessons on Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)
- Operationalizing Women, Peace, and Security
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2016
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• Lessons from the MSF Hospital (Trauma Center) Strike in Kunduz
• Investing in Training for, and during, Peace and Stability Operations
• Building Stable Governance
• Lessons Learned – Peacekeeping Operations in Africa
• Shifts in United Nations Peacekeeping

2015
• Foreign Humanitarian Assistance: Concepts, Principles and Applications
• Foreign Humanitarian Assistance [Foreign Disaster Relief]
• Cross-Cutting Guidelines for Stability Operations
• Lessons on Stability Operations from USAWC Students
• Security Sector Reform

2014
• MONUSCO Lesson Report
• Reconstruction and Development
• Veterinary Support, Animal Health, and Animal Agriculture in Stability Operations
• Women, Peace and Security
• Lessons on Stability Operations from USAWC Students
• Overcoming “Challenges & Spoilers” with “Unity & Resolve”
• Improving Host Nation Security through Police Forces

Lead Author Information: Mr. Jack Dougherty is currently the Lessons Learned Analyst for PKSOI. His previous positions include Transition and Assessment Manager with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Armed Forces Joint Staff, Academic Advisor at the UAE Joint Staff College, Advisor to the Commandant at the Republic of Georgia’s National Defense Academy, Operations Officer at JIEDDO’s Training Center of Excellence, Operations Officer at the Saudi Arabian National Guard Modernization Program, Associate Professor of History at UNLV, Assistant Professor of Military Science at Boston University, Assistant Professor of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and Assistant Professor of History at the U.S. Military Academy.