



Australian Defence Force JOURNAL

Journal of the Australian Profession of Arms

Military Mental Health: from shell-shock to PTSD and beyond
Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin, AC, Chief of the Defence Force

A Warning from the Crimea: hybrid warfare and the challenge for the ADF
Captain Nicholas Barber, Australian Army

Rebalancing What, Exactly? Analysing the United States' Pacific Pivot
Colonel Tim Law, British Army

The Case for an Offensive ADF Cyber Capability: beyond the Maginot mentality
Colonel Michael Lehmann, CSC, Australian Army

Thoughts on Generalship: lessons from two wars
Major General Stephen Day, DSC, AM, Australian Army

Australia and Solomon Islands: what next after 14 years of regional assistance?
Dr Stephanie Koorey, Deakin University

Counter-Network Operations: insights into the application of complexity theory
Major Andrew Maher, Australian Army

The Abuse of Power and Institutional Violence in the ADF: a culture transformed?

Anne Goyne, Department of Defence, and
colleagues at the Centre for Defence Leadership and Ethics

Everyone's Accountable: how non-state armed groups interact with
international humanitarian law

Lieutenant Colonel Tim Rutherford, Australian Army

Issue No. 198
2015

Board of Management

Ian Errington, AM, CSC (Chair)
Captain Michael McArthur, RAN
Colonel Andrew Hocking, CSC
Group Captain Peter Wood, CSM
Professor Michael Evans
Dr Nigel McGinty
Kathryn Hitchings
Dr Bob Ormston (Editor)

Copyright

Copyright © Commonwealth of Australia 2015

This work is copyright. It may be downloaded, displayed, printed and reproduced in unaltered form, including the retention of this notice, for personal, non-commercial use or use for professional purposes. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, all other rights are reserved. To replicate all or part of this document for any purpose other than those stipulated above, contact the editor by email at publications@defence.adc.edu.au

Disclaimer

The papers included are the sole opinion of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Defence Force or the Department of Defence. The Commonwealth of Australia will not be legally responsible in contract, tort or otherwise, for any statement made in this publication.

National Library of Australia
ISSN 1320-2545

Published by the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies
Australian Defence College
PO Box 7917
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610
<<http://www.defence.gov.au/adc/cdss/>>

Australian Defence Force JOURNAL

ISSUE No. 198, 2015

CONTENTS

CHAIR'S COMMENTS	2
FORTHCOMING SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES	3
ARTICLES	
Military Mental Health: from shell-shock to PTSD and beyond Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin, AC, Chief of the Defence Force	4
A Warning from the Crimea: hybrid warfare and the challenge for the ADF Captain Nicholas Barber, Australian Army	11
Rebalancing What, Exactly? Analysing the United States' Pacific Pivot Colonel Tim Law, British Army	23
The Case for an Offensive ADF Cyber Capability: beyond the Maginot mentality Colonel Michael Lehmann, CSC, Australian Army	31
Thoughts on Generalship: lessons from two wars Major General Stephen Day, DSC, AM, Australian Army	39
Australia and Solomon Islands: what next after 14 years of regional assistance? Dr Stephanie Koorey, Deakin University	49
Counter-Network Operations: insights into the application of complexity theory Major Andrew Maher, Australian Army	58
Abuse of Power and Institutional Violence in the ADF: a culture transformed? Anne Goyne, Department of Defence, and colleagues at the Centre for Defence Leadership and Ethics	69
Everyone's Accountable: how non-state armed groups interact with international humanitarian law Lieutenant Colonel Tim Rutherford, Australian Army	76
BOOK REVIEWS	83
READING LISTS	93

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to Issue No. 198 of the *Australian Defence Force Journal*.

For this issue, the Board again had an impressive range of prospective articles, which continue to demonstrate the experience and insights of ADF practitioners in Australian defence and security issues, and broader geostrategic issues of the Indo-Pacific region. The Board particularly appreciates the contribution from the CDF, and his ongoing support to the *Journal*.

In discussing the selection of articles, the Board confirmed that the *Journal's* focus should be on the 'profession of arms' in Australia, especially relating to the planning and conduct of joint operations in contemporary and future environments in which Australian forces are likely to operate.

It seemed particularly appropriate, therefore, to award the 'best article' prize to Captain Nicholas Barber for his article on hybrid warfare and the challenges it presents to the ADF. In recognition of his contribution, and as an incentive to future contributors, he will be presented with a certificate personally signed by the CDF and Secretary of Defence.

The Board also discussed other ways to increase the *Journal's* contributor base and its readership, particularly given the competition from other sources and the ready availability of on-line opinions and commentary on a range of professional topics. The Board has undertaken to address these issues as a matter of urgency, and is aiming to implement some dynamic changes, ideally to coincide with the 40th anniversary and 200th issue of the *Journal* in 2016.

In the meantime, the March/April 2016 edition will be a 'general' issue and contributions should be submitted to the Editor, at the email address above, by mid January. Submission guidelines are on the *Journal's* website: see www.adfjournal.adc.edu.au

Before closing, I would like to thank Group Captain Peter Wood, CSM, for his valued contribution as a Board member over the past two years. His replacement on the Board will be Group Captain Mark Green, the incoming Director of the Air Power Development Centre.

I hope you enjoy this edition and would encourage your contribution to future issues.

Ian Errington, AM, CSC
Principal
Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies
Chair of the Australian Defence Force Journal Board

FORTHCOMING SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

7 December 2015

Lowy Institute, Sydney

Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, AO, CSC, RAN

'Interdependence, Alliance and the Winning Edge'

12-1pm

<http://www.lowyinstitute.org/events/event-vice-admiral-tim-barrett-ao-csc-ran>

NOTE

To advertise forthcoming seminars and conferences in future issues of the *Journal*, please email details to the Editor

publications@defence.adc.edu.au

Military Mental Health: from shell-shock to PTSD and beyond ¹

Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin, AC, Chief of the Defence Force

The topic is painful; perhaps one of the saddest of the many grievous aspects of the War. But a condition exists at present which is immeasurably more painful—the exaggerated and often unnecessary distress of mind in many of the sufferers and their friends, which arises from the manner in which we, as a nation, have been accustomed to regard even the mildest forms of mental abnormality.²

Those words, from Professor Grafton Smith and his colleague Tom Pear, capture Australia's long-held attitude toward mental health issues and the battle we face to remove the stigma associated with mental illness. What makes these words even more insightful is that they were written in 1917.

I begin with this quote because it highlights the very issue we face in addressing mental health in the ADF today. How do we break the nexus between seeking assistance for the psychological scars of military service and the perception that this is somehow a sign of weakness? The question is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago, when the first wounded Diggers of the Gallipoli campaign began to return to Australia.

For much of the past century, psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health professionals have struggled to understand the complex consequences of military service on the human psyche. Everyone who goes to war is changed by the experience. Extreme fatigue and stress, combined with sustained attack or threat, can have a dramatic effect on a person's mental health and overall wellbeing.

These stressors are not just confined to land battles or even combat. They apply equally to air and maritime operations, as well as non-warlike operations where exposure to the devastating effects of natural disaster or human suffering can be equally onerous for military personnel. Historically, commanders have faced a dilemma—preserve manpower or preserve the man—and, in the current context, woman. That is the tension between the need to maintain a fighting force and the desire to look after an individual's welfare. It is a vexed question and one that at different times and under different circumstances will produce a different answer.

In the immediate thrust of battle and under attack, a unit's collective ability to fight off the enemy and defend itself will likely override any one individual's needs. But in a long game, the individual soldier, sailor, airman or woman's welfare must come first. This has not always been the case, particularly during the First World War when shell-shocked soldiers who succumbed to their psychological distress were branded as weak and cowardly.

World War 1 was characterised by trench warfare. Troops were continually subjected to shelling with little to no respite from the frontlines. The term 'shell-shock' was commonly used to describe soldiers who, having sustained concussion from the impact of a shell, were believed to have disrupted their brain. The shell-shocked soldier would emerge in a dazed and often disoriented state. Treatment was usually administered in casualty or clearing stations where soldiers were given a few days rest, frequently under sedation. The soldiers were fed and reassured that their reaction to the shelling was normal and that things would disappear after a few days.

This frontline care served the military objective to preserve manpower while also sending a clear message to the troops that shell-shock was not a fast track home. But perhaps most importantly, commanders, medical officers and medics recognised the importance of treating shell-shock as soon as possible after symptoms emerged. Left untended, the symptoms would become resistant to treatment. This theory became the precursor to what we know today as 'critical incident response'.

However, despite understanding the need for rapid treatment, the military viewed shell-shock as a disciplinary problem in that those who displayed symptoms simply lacked the willpower necessary to manage fear in battle. Some medical professionals doubted the condition's legitimacy and saw those who were suffering as malingerers.

By the time the first wounded ANZACs returned to Australia on the hospital ship *Kyarra* in July 1915, Australia was mourning the growing number of men killed at Gallipoli. The overwhelming number of Australians killed and wounded in action in the Dardanelles overshadowed the psychiatric damage endured by those who survived. Those who came home were considered the 'lucky ones'—lucky to survive the horror to return to their families. Sadly, behind the fanfare and the tickertape parades, those who were too distraught or disfigured were stretchered straight to hospital—hidden from the view of the potential candidates that recruiters were attempting to enlist.³

As Australian families continued to welcome home changed men, much of the veterans' practical and emotional care fell to mothers, wives or sisters who adopted a patriotic stoicism to care for them in their own homes. The shame metered out to shell-shocked soldiers on the battlefield followed them home. Veterans who returned with physical wounds were revered for their honourable sacrifice, while those who came home with mental scars were, at times, humiliated and scorned as failed ANZACs. Families who could not cope with the burden of caring for a shell-shocked veteran in the home turned to institutional care but, for many, this created a new quarrel as they fought for appropriate recognition and care.

In the years after World War 1, Australia felt an obligation to care for the nation's repatriated soldiers and a two-tier mental health system emerged—civilian lunatics who were locked away in asylums and segregated from mentally-ill veterans who were admitted to repatriation hospitals. Civilian asylums were overcrowded, and with insufficient staff or resources, patients were routinely sedated or restrained.

By contrast, military institutions provided a much higher standard of care with better quality food and staff, as well as day trips and other organised activities. Families desperately fought for the best possible care with the least stigma. To many, segregating veterans from the civilian population was seen as recognition that their soldiers were damaged, not insane.

Yet the government continued to take the view that those who suffered from shell-shock had some hereditary pre-disposition and, with a shortage of beds in military hospitals, that meant families had to build an argument to demonstrate to the Repatriation Department that the soldier's condition was a result of his service.⁴ This was, and remains, far more complex than for physical injuries. At the time, each state was responsible for institutional care which resulted in inconsistent assessments. For example, in 1927, Victoria had almost 1300 cases of war neurosis recorded while NSW documented less than 400.⁵

Toward the end of World War 1, Smith and Pear, the British doctor and academic quoted earlier, published a paper titled *Shell Shock and its Lessons*.⁶ They favoured the term 'war strain' over shell-shock, and defined the condition as 'those mental effects of war experience which are sufficient to incapacitate a man from the performance of his military duties'.⁷ They rightly, and insightfully, also wrote about the 'absolute necessity of obtaining and understanding the patient's past history before and during the war'.⁸

Smith and Pear agreed with the assessment of frontline doctors and medics who advocated the need for early treatment for war strain. The rationale for such an assessment will be all too familiar to many but particularly for those of us who have lost a colleague on operations or in training. Smith and Pear argued that left untreated, we will continue to play out the 'what if I ...' question inaccurately in our minds. This, combined with the natural human tendency to try to conceal our troubles beyond the family unit, can lead to a delay in seeking help as we try to battle on until the situation becomes intolerable.

This British duo was among a growing chorus calling for greater research, more education and better treatment for mental health issues arising as a result of military service, believing that 'the strongest man when exposed to sufficiently intense and frequent stimuli may become subject to mental derangement'.⁹ This view that *all* military personnel were vulnerable to battle fatigue also gained momentum in the US during World War 2, where the US Army adopted the official slogan 'Every man has his breaking point'.¹⁰

Despite an increased focus on weeding out the less resilient during the recruitment phase, the notion that we are all vulnerable means no matter how rigorous our selection processes, we can never completely

avert the risk of psychological injury as a result of exposure to traumatic events.¹¹ There was also a growing consensus throughout the medical profession that anyone exposed to trauma, even those with no previous history of mental health issues, was vulnerable to combat exhaustion. This marked the start of a fundamental shift in the way clinicians viewed military mental health. The focus switched from 'problems of the abnormal mind in normal times' to 'problems of the normal mind in abnormal times' to question why a soldier *did not* succumb to anxiety rather than why he did.¹² Unfortunately, the clinical progress did not automatically transfer to the military ranks.

Throughout the Second World War, mental health conditions remained highly stigmatised and those who broke down were still considered weak in the eyes of peers who saw the lack of mental strength as a lack of masculinity. During that period, the Royal Air Force introduced the term 'lack of moral fibre'. It was an administrative label rather than a medical or psychological term used to describe airmen accused of cowardice, who were unfairly deemed to be more concerned with their own survival than the cause. To put that in context, these men served in Bomber Command at a time when they took off for each mission knowing there was a 1 in 2 chance they would not return—yet the stigma attached to a perceived 'lack of moral fibre' was such that the fear of being branded a coward was more terrifying than enemy night-fighters.¹³

Back home in Australia, the two-tier mental health system that emerged in the shadow of the First World War continued to widen the gap between military and civilian care. However, mental health care became a casualty of the Great Depression and the financial burden of World War 2. Institutions fell into an appalling state of disrepair and patients who were subjected to substandard conditions lost all human dignity. Sadly, this only fuelled the stigma associated with mental health conditions and increased competition for beds in repatriation hospitals as families fought for the best possible care for veterans who returned with what was then known as 'combat exhaustion'.

As an unintended consequence, Australia owes many of its advances in mental health to the psychological casualties among those who returned from the First and Second World Wars and the increased demand for more effective care. The lessons learned from previous war-time experiences also informed a more strategic approach to counter the stressors and trauma as Australian troops entered Vietnam alongside the US. From the beginning, the US deployed trained psych officers with each battalion and, based on their World War 2 experience, soldiers were restricted to a 12-month tour with periods of rest and recreation scheduled into the deployment. Australia did the same. These preventative measures resulted in fewer reported incidences of combat stress during the conflict but the post-war experience told a very different story.

In the early years, Australians generally accepted our participation in the Vietnam War. However, by the early 70s, opposition grew with the rising number of conscripts being deployed and killed.¹⁴ The anti-war sentiment in Australia at the time meant our Vietnam veterans were predominantly reviled rather than celebrated as their forebears had been, returning to an often hostile reception from anti-Vietnam activists who spat at and abused the veterans, branding them baby-killers and murderers for simply doing what their country, and their Government, had asked of them.

Compounding their angst, as a community we had largely reverted back to World War 1 thinking, that is, that a veteran's mental health issues must arise from a pre-existing condition rather than originate as a result of any trauma experienced in service. This had a significant knock-on effect. The shame associated with mental health conditions increased dramatically and very little attention was directed toward post-war care. Consequently, the delayed onset of psychological trauma—which typically emerged from nine months to two-and-a-half years after a deployment—was largely ignored, leaving veterans and their families to battle the demons on their own. As a nation, we should be ashamed at how our Vietnam veterans were treated and the stigma they were forced to endure.

Following World War 1, shell-shocked veterans received the same pension status as those who returned with physical injuries. In order to claim a war pension after the Second World War, veterans with psychological wounds had to prove their condition was the result of war service and not a hereditary predisposition.¹⁵ Yet after all that we had learnt, Vietnam veterans had to wait until 1980 for acknowledgment that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was a legitimate mental illness, caused by the cumulative effects of exposure to the trauma and hardships of war.¹⁶

Australia failed our Vietnam veterans. We took too long to recognise the enduring effect the conflict had on those who were sent to fight. Officially, 521 Australian servicemen were killed and more than 3000 were wounded but a recent study provides a sobering insight into the true cost of the war. This study examined the pension entitlement records of every Australian who deployed to Vietnam—all 60,228 ground troops, Air Force and Navy personnel. Over a 43-year period, a sobering 47.9 per cent of those who served in Vietnam had an accepted claim for a mental health condition.¹⁷

For me, as the Chief of the Defence Force, that figure underscores the critical importance of ensuring we provide first-class mental health care for every person who serves under my command. I, the Vice Chief and the three Service Chiefs have a duty to provide the best possible mental health treatment and support programs available. We also have a responsibility to continue our research while implementing the lessons learned from previous conflicts and operations.

Vietnam triggered a new wave of studies into military mental health too numerous and too complex for me to adequately mention. I will instead focus on what the ADF has learned and implemented as a result of our wartime experience, as well as the challenges we face in caring for the current and future generations of veterans.

Unlike First and Second World War veterans who took a sea passage home, many of our personnel flew directly from Vietnam to Australia. Their struggle to reintegrate from the battlefield to the backyard taught us the value of 'decompression' immediately following deployment and prior to returning home. The horrific experience of the Australian Medical Support Force who witnessed the slaughter of thousands of people on the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda reminded us of the potentially-damaging effects of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. Our operations in Cambodia, Somalia and Bougainville during the 90s were the catalyst in 1998 to introduce standardised mental health screening for every person after every deployment, including humanitarian and disaster relief missions, or training incidents and later border protection operations. And our experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan are the driver behind our determination to more fully understand all factors that impact on the mental health of our people.

In the past six years, we have invested an additional \$146 million to enhance our mental health care programs and services. We have almost doubled the number of mental health positions in our workforce. Additionally, we have taken steps to strengthen our resilience training to help people cope better with the unique risks of military service, and we are leading the way with world-class research to help us understand the nature and rate of mental health conditions among our military population.

Our research clearly demonstrates that exposure to trauma increases a person's risk of developing a mental health disorder such as PTSD. For some, that traumatic exposure will occur on operations, while others may experience traumatic events outside a deployment. So deployment, while significant for some, is not necessarily the sole determinant for all. We also know that a mental health condition may result from a single incident or develop with cumulative exposure to multiple events over time and, regardless of its nature, the effects of such exposure may be immediate or may take years to manifest.

Importantly, as the evidence attests, the majority of ADF personnel will not develop PTSD. The 2010 *ADF Mental Health Prevalence and Wellbeing Study* showed that one in five (22%) of the ADF population had experienced a mental disorder in the previous 12 months, which was similar to the rate of the Australian community (20.7%).¹⁸ The same study found around 8.3 per cent of ADF personnel experienced PTSD (4169 of the ADF's population of 50,049 in 2010), with 50 per cent of those reporting having received treatment in the previous 12 months.

We are acutely aware that one of the major barriers preventing people from seeking treatment is the misbelief that a diagnosis of a mental health disorder such as PTSD will mean the end of their career in the ADF. Unfortunately, the problem is that the longer someone hides their symptoms and avoids treatment, the greater the risk for this to occur. We are gradually seeing examples where people who have undertaken rehabilitation are returning to work in the ADF. From July 2013 to June 2014, a total of 813 people undertook the ADF Rehabilitation Program after being diagnosed with a mental health condition, such as depression or anxiety disorders, including PTSD. Of those, 421, or 52 per cent, successfully returned to work in the ADF.

Yet the perception of weakness and shame associated with asking for help remains the greatest barrier preventing access to care and treatment for mental health issues—not just in the ADF but in the Australian community at large. Sadly, it is rare to see one of the many successful recovery stories in the media. Further, I believe ill-informed commentary that criticises our care, combined with a lack of knowledge or understanding of the support services available to our personnel, only adds to the stigma and sense of helplessness that further deters people from getting the essential help they need. Which brings me back to the century-old quote I began with, and the sad reality that too many in the ADF still shun treatment and suffer alone because of the stigma that we, as a nation, assign to even the mildest mental health condition—just as we did 100 years ago.

So where do we go from here to ensure we meet the challenges facing our contemporary veterans who may experience symptoms for decades to come?

Firstly, if the Vietnam War has taught us anything, it is that the health and wellbeing of our people is paramount and there is no place for politics or point scoring from anyone in dealing with military and veteran mental health. We must be responsive to the specific needs of our people and their families. We will help those under our command to build and maintain a level of resilience throughout their military career. We will ensure they are encouraged to seek help as early as possible, no matter what the cause of their mental health condition and when they do, we remain committed to providing them with the best evidence-based care and rehabilitation available that supports their recovery.

Fundamental to strengthening resilience and supporting recovery is accepting that the individual member, commanders and health care professionals have a shared responsibility for ensuring a person's health and wellbeing. Mental fitness is just as important to the ADF's capability as our physical fitness, and we need a holistic approach to address the issue. We cannot simply brand it as a health issue and rely on a clinical response. Understanding mental health is a critical part of our command and leadership training and a key consideration in our personnel management.

This is somewhat complicated by the *Privacy Act* which currently applies a uniform standard for service personnel and civilians in determining who has access to an individual's personal health information. While we proactively seek an ADF member's consent to release this information to family or commanders, any decision regarding the disclosure of a mental health condition rests with the individual. That said, there are still things commanders and colleagues can do. We have to learn to look out for each other, not just on the battlefield or on operations, but in our day-to-day interactions and our social circles. And we must continue to develop a family-sensitive approach to ensure they too are included in the mental health and rehabilitation services we offer to ADF personnel.

The current suite of evidence-based treatment, rehabilitation and awareness programs available to ADF members are among the best in the world. These are administered and provided by Joint Health Command as well as each of the Services. We are well aware there is no 'one size fits all' formula, which is why we employ multiple, targeted programs to develop a tailored recovery plan to suit each individual person and their family. The ADF 'Arts for Recovery' initiative, for example, uses music, drama, creative writing and visual arts to aid recovery.¹⁹ It follows the highly-successful ADF theatre project 'The Long Way Home' that exposed a whole new audience to the anguish of PTSD many of us experience as a result of the difficult and often dangerous work we do.²⁰

I believe there has never been a time, in the history of the ADF, when we have invested so much energy and so many resources into understanding and improving the mental health and welfare of our people. There is much we have learned that can benefit similar organisations such as the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Border Force. Additionally, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge work undertaken by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) over many years and the lessons learnt from the needs of past veterans to better meet the emerging needs of our current serving members, veterans and their families.

Defence and DVA have worked hard in recent years to build a more collaborative relationship that is helping us to create a more integrated approach to supporting the care and transition of Defence personnel at the end of their military career. Of course, there is also the work being undertaken by traditional ex-service organisations and the new community-based welfare groups that are offering

innovative rehabilitation and psycho-social recovery programs that complement and enhance our own Defence-based treatment and rehabilitation programs.

All of this is not to say the job is done—far from it. There will always be more we can do and we should continue to strive for improvement. Further research, including longitudinal studies, are required to ensure we do not underestimate the risk or cost to our personnel, and we need to work collaboratively beyond the ADF to build a greater understanding of military mental health. Defence is currently working closely with DVA to examine and understand the impact of military service on the mental, physical and social health of current and ex-serving personnel who have deployed to contemporary conflicts.

To update our knowledge following on from the 2010 study, the ‘Transition and Wellbeing Research Program’ is part of a new shared-research agenda between the two departments, with approximately \$5 million being invested in the program over three years.²¹ It will also be profiling, for the first time, the impact of service on the mental health and wellbeing status of reservists as well as that of Defence families. By understanding the impact of military service, deployment experiences and the associated health outcomes of serving and ex-serving personnel and their families, I believe more effective policy and programs can be developed and health providers will be able to better meet the needs of serving members and contemporary veterans alike.

Finally, and most importantly, we will continue to look beyond medical circles and our international Defence counterparts to address mental health. This issue is bigger than us. It is a community issue. Our first responders—police, ambulance and emergency service personnel—are suffering too and Australia must accept that when we ask ordinary people to do extraordinary things on our behalf we owe them a duty of care. But more than that, we owe them a debt of gratitude and compassion. There is no shame in seeking help and until we, as a community, change our thinking to accept and acknowledge that, even the best mental health treatment programs in the world will fail because this is an issue for our nation, not just those we rely on to protect us.

Air Chief Marshal Binskin's service commenced in 1978 with the RAN. On completion of flying training, he was posted to fly A-4G Skyhawk aircraft. In 1982, he was selected as the first RAN pilot to undergo an exchange with the RAAF, flying Mirage III aircraft. On completion of this exchange and with the disbanding of the Navy's fixed wing capability, he joined the RAAF.

Air Chief Marshal Binskin's other flying tours include No 2 Operational Conversion Unit and No 77 Squadron at Williamtown, flying Mirage and F/A-18 aircraft; training on F/A-18 aircraft with the US Navy at Lemoore, California; instructing on F-16C aircraft with the US Air Force at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona; and No 75 Squadron at Tindal, Northern Territory, flying F/A-18 aircraft. His flying qualifications include Fighter Combat Instructor and Tactical Reconnaissance Pilot. Additionally, he has served as the RAAF F/A-18 Hornet Demonstration Pilot. He has over 3,500 hours in single-seat fighter aircraft.

Air Chief Marshal Binskin's command appointments include Commanding Officer of No 77 Squadron at Williamtown, Commander of Air Combat Group and later as Air Commander Australia. He has served in various joint staff positions, including Staff Officer to the Chief of the Defence Force and in the Defence Materiel Organisation as Officer Commanding the Airborne Early Warning and Control System Program Office. During Australia's 2003 contribution to the war in Iraq, Air Chief Marshal Binskin served as Chief of Staff at Headquarters Australian Theatre. Following this, he served as the Director of the US Central Air Force Combined Air and Space Operations Centre, where he was responsible for the conduct of coalition air operations in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

Air Chief Marshal Binskin is a graduate of the Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program, the Australian Institute of Company Directors and RAAF Command and Staff Course, where he was awarded the Chief of Staff's Prize for Professional Excellence. Air Chief Marshal Binskin was Chief of the Air Force from 2008-11, Vice Chief of the Defence Force from 2011-14 and was appointed Chief of the Defence Force on 30 June 2014.

Notes

- 1 This is an edited and updated version of a speech delivered as 'The Order of Australia Oration' in Canberra on 20 July 2015, available at <<http://video.defence.gov.au/play/Q4a2Zkdjo16Aw-2rlikVaK8DPAnfOF7#>>
- 2 G.E. Smith and T.H. Pear, *Shell Shock and Its Lessons*, Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1917.
- 3 M. Larsson, 'Unsung Healers: Anzacs and their family caregivers', *Memento* [National Archives of Australia], Issue 38, 2010, pp. 13-5.
- 4 M. Larsson, *Shattered Anzacs: living with the scars of war*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, 2009.
- 5 The reported figures were 1286 and 395 respectively.
- 6 Smith and Pear, *Shell Shock and Its Lessons*.
- 7 Smith and Pear, *Shell Shock and Its Lessons*, Chapter 1.
- 8 Smith and Pear, *Shell Shock and Its Lessons*, Chapter 1.
- 9 Smith and Pear, *Shell Shock and Its Lessons*, Chapter 4.
- 10 See, for example, Erica Goode, 'When Soldiers Snap', *New York Times* [website], 7 November 2009, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/08/weekinreview/08goode.html?_r=0> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 11 A. McFarlane, 'One Hundred Years of Lessons about the Impact of War on Mental Health: two steps forward, one step back', *Australasian Psychiatry*, 3 June 2015.
- 12 R. Grinker and J. Spiegel, *Men Under Stress*, Blakiston: Philadelphia, 1945.
- 13 T. Wilkins, 'Lacking in Moral Fibre', *Defence of the Realm* [blog], 2 May 2015, available at <<https://defenceoftherealm.wordpress.com/2015/05/02/lacking-in-moral-fibre-lmf/>> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 14 See, for example, 'Australia and the Vietnam War', *Department of Veterans' Affairs* [website], available at <<http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/>> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 15 K. Muir, 'The Predisposition Theory, Human Rights and Australian Psychiatric Casualties of War', *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2007, pp. 198-215.
- 16 A. McFarlane and D. Forbes, 'The Journey from Moral Inferiority to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder', *The Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol. 202, No. 7, 2015, pp. 348-9, available at <<https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2015/202/7/journey-moral-inferiority-post-traumatic-stress-disorder>> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 17 P.M. Clarke, R. Gregor and J.A. Salomon, 'Long-Term Disability Associated with War-Related Experience among Vietnam Veterans: retrospective cohort study', *Medical Care*, Vol. 53, No. 5, May 2015, pp. 401-8, abstract available at <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25768060>> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 18 A.C. McFarlane, S.E. Hodson, M. Van Hooff and C. Davies, *Mental Health in the Australian Defence Force: 2010 ADF mental health and wellbeing study: Full report*, Department of Defence: Canberra, 2011, available at <<http://www.defence.gov.au/Health/DMH/Docs/MHPWSReport-FullReport.pdf>> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 19 Department of Defence, 'ADF ARRTS Program', *Department of Defence* [website], available at <http://video.defence.gov.au/play/BmazhtdTqei_cjpnXpzWHeDJK3EjKLE#> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 20 Department of Defence, 'The Long Way Home: rehabilitation through the arts', *Department of Defence* [website], available at <<http://www.defence.gov.au/annualreports/13-14/features/feature-the-long-way-home.asp>> accessed 12 August 2015.
- 21 Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), 'Transition and Wellbeing Research Programme', *DVA* [website], available at <<http://www.dva.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing/research-and-development/social-research/transition-wellbeing-research>> accessed 12 August 2015; also Department of Defence, 'Mental Health Research and Evaluation', *Department of Defence* [website], available at <<http://www.defence.gov.au/Health/DMH/ResearchSurveillancePlan.asp>> accessed 12 August 2015.

A Warning from the Crimea: hybrid warfare and the challenge for the ADF ¹

Captain Nicholas Barber, Australian Army

Introduction

Russia's annexation of Crimea was like a magician sawing a woman in half: mysterious, orchestrated and cunning. President Putin's illusion began on 20 February 2014, after several months of protests threatening the government of then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, and culminated in the pro-Kremlin leader fleeing Kiev for Moscow. As opposition protestors seized control of the Ukrainian Parliament and voted for a new direction for Ukraine, Putin led his audience through tales of misinformation, diverting their attention away from the realities of the magic box at the centre of his act.

The audience watched in awe as 'volunteers' from the crowd—referred to by many as 'little green men'—helped the young lady clamber into Putin's magic Crimean box.² Some in the audience began to question if the 'little green men' were indeed Putin's associates—in fact, online commentators observed that they appeared to be elite Russian Special Forces, *Spetsnaz*, with their identifying insignia removed.³ Yet Putin denied he knew the men or had tampered with the Crimean box.

In the darkness of 27 February 2014, the audience observed the 'little green men' saw the Crimean box in two—securing key government infrastructure in Simferopol on one side, and isolating Ukrainian military bases on the other.⁴ Amazingly, the young lady remained alive. As quickly as she was sawn apart, she was soon back together—but oddly, she had replaced her Ukrainian legs for Russian ones.

The audience was shocked. Some believed Putin's magic; some knew all along it was a trick; and some were Putin's cronies paid to lead the applause. In the fragile situation, Ukraine and NATO did not respond militarily to Russia's actions. Weeks later, Putin would acknowledge that he had indeed supported the 'little green men'.⁵ Regardless, the illusion was complete, Putin was still in control, and Russia was again the centre of global attention. The stunned audience simply asked—how did he do it?

'Non-linear warfare', 'ambiguous warfare' and 'special war' have all been labels applied to Russia's method of seizing the Crimea and destabilising eastern Ukraine.⁶ Another term is 'hybrid warfare', which has been described as a complex blend of conventional and unconventional warfare techniques, combined with firepower, deception, misinformation and cyber attacks.⁷

Like its allies, Australia cannot ignore the challenges posed by hybrid warfare. Indeed, while it is unlikely that Australia will ever be engaged in combat against Russian military forces or their proxy fighters in Ukraine, the success of hybrid warfare may indicate that its application in other parts of the world, including the Asia-Pacific, is not far-fetched.

This article aims to stimulate discussion as to whether Western militaries are appropriately structured to respond to hybrid warfare. It is divided into three components: the threat, the challenge, and Australia's response. Firstly, the article defines the hybrid threat by use of a model that emphasises how hybrid warfare converges regular and irregular warfare methods. In examining the challenge, it contends that hybrid warfare effectively exploits vulnerabilities in Western political and military decision-making. The article concludes that the ADF should invest in its ability to understand complex operating environments and empower subordinates to seize opportunities and build tempo to counter hybrid modes of war.

The threat

Hybrid warfare, like all forms of war, is an instrument of policy and exhibits the characteristics of danger, uncertainty, friction and chance. Indeed, Williamson Murray and Peter Mansoor have already argued that hybrid warfare is 'nothing new'.⁸ Reflecting on the effectiveness of Hezbollah's use of hybrid warfare

against Israel, Frank Hoffman has argued that this blurred character of conflict would severely confront Western conceptions regarding classifications of war, contending that:

[T]he convergence of various types of conflict will present us with a complex puzzle until the necessary adaption occurs intellectually and institutionally.⁹

Arguably, Hoffman’s warning has gone unnoticed—and this is perhaps why the Western response to events in Crimea was so clumsy and deserves examination. Indeed, there are two key reasons why the West cannot ignore Russian hybrid warfare. Firstly, the events in Crimea illustrated how a nuclear-enabled re-emerging superpower chose non-state actors, reinforced by state-based capabilities, to secure physical territory instead of employing traditional conventional warfare techniques. Secondly, the threat of Russian hybrid warfare remains, with Ukrainian military forces struggling against Russian hybrid adversaries in eastern Ukraine at the time of writing.

Phillip Karber has created a useful model of Russian hybrid warfare, which compares levels of warfare intensity with the degree of state responsibility (see Figure 1).

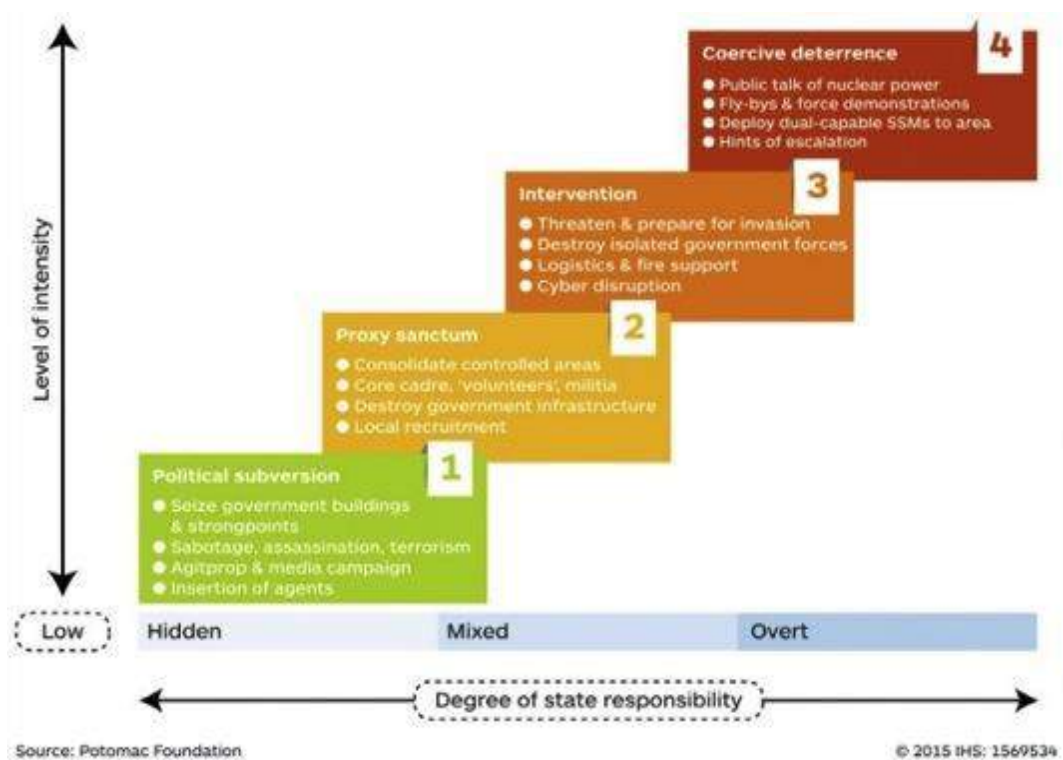


Figure 1: A model of hybrid warfare¹⁰

The best feature of this model is that it highlights the hybrid threat’s diverse character—and that there is no enemy hybrid template. However, the model does not illustrate how a belligerent converges regular and irregular warfare techniques to overwhelm their opponent, which is a key factor underlying the success of hybrid warfare. Moreover, Russia’s hybrid warfare model in Crimea boasted at least five unique elements of national power: economic pressure; information operations; conventional military posturing; unconventional destabilisation; and political activities, which are now discussed further.

Economic pressure

Underpinning all Russian military action in Ukraine was overwhelming Russian regional economic pressure. Energy dependence on Russian state-owned giants aimed to limit Ukraine's strategic response, as well as compel Europe to exhaust diplomatic options in the first instance.¹¹

Information operations

The principal objective of Russian information operations, which are activities designed to affect the attitude and behaviour of a target audience, was to establish plausible deniability.¹² Messaging was principally facilitated through state-owned media agencies, such as *Russia Today*, which then cleverly facilitated redistribution of the narrative through social media networks. Russian themes centred on threats to ethnic Russians in Crimea, opposition ideological links to neo-Nazism, and Kiev's broken promises to Yanukovich.¹³

Russia also used electronic warfare and cyber attacks to isolate the Crimea and disrupt Kiev's immediate response to the situation. For example, unknown forces severed telecommunication lines between Ukraine and the Crimea, while Russia blocked Internet sites and social media accounts linked to Ukrainian opposition groups.¹⁴ Reportedly, cyber attacks were less prevalent than the previous Russian invasions of Estonia and Georgia, although the full extent of cyber activity in Crimea is unknown.¹⁵

Following the establishment of a credible political alternative, Russia used direct coercion of Ukrainian military forces stationed in Crimea in order to compel their defection/surrender/withdraw.

Conventional military posturing

In late February 2014, Putin ordered snap combat readiness drills of military forces in the western and central Russian military districts, involving over 150,000 soldiers.¹⁶ The exercises provided Russia with concealment for any additional military movements to the Crimea, as well as communicating a significant diplomatic message to Kiev that the Russian military was ready to respond to any Ukrainian actions in the Crimea.

Unconventional destabilisation

The centrepiece of Russian intervention in Crimea was the presence of the 'little green men'. While Russia consistently claimed that pro-Russian militants in Crimea were 'self-defense' squads, initial reporting indicated that *Spetsnaz* operatives had entered Crimea.¹⁷ These well-trained and well-equipped operatives likely raised and led local militia to seize government facilities. Regular Russian military forces also supported destabilisation activities. In particular, the employment of armoured vehicles to deter media and international observers was denied by Russian officials, who claimed that armoured vehicles were permitted as part of the military force supporting the Black Sea Fleet.¹⁸

Political activities

Establishing a political alternative was the decisive point, when Russia's focus could switch from achieving plausible deniability to providing full political support. The process commenced with the expedited issue of Russian passports to ethnic Russians in order to establish the pretext that Russia was defending the rights of its citizens abroad. Subsequently, pro-Russian militants actively supported Sergey Aksynov in assuming leadership in the Crimean Parliament, in a clear display of deliberate and aggressive political intervention, even though Aksynov's 'Russian Unity' party had only received four per cent of the vote in the previous election.¹⁹

However, hybrid warfare is not simply a collection of these five elements of national power. Janis Berzins has highlighted that the key attributes are planned strategically and converge across the spectrum of conflict while balancing two important considerations.²⁰ Firstly, a significant action that is not sequenced correctly can undermine the purpose of adopting a hybrid approach. Secondly, effects are best distributed widely in order to aid the appearance of a 'bottom-up' revolution and overwhelm any Western ability to accurately identify and counter the source.²¹

A conceptual model of the hybrid threat is at Figure 2. The model compares the convergence of the five elements of national power across six phases. Importantly, it is only in phase 6 that Russia’s political control and influence became overt. The model highlights Putin’s ability to balance the considerations mentioned above. Firstly, Putin deliberately employed broad phasing to develop plausible deniability and maintain positive control of the overall campaign. This ensured that Moscow could appropriately layer the cumulative effects of the hybrid approach.

Secondly, Putin decentralised his effects to create multiple dilemmas and overwhelm his adversary in phases 5 and 6. He likely achieved this through empowering state-directed actors to facilitate his intent through multiple subsidiaries which, in turn, replicated the effects through their associates. This approach meant that Putin’s intent would not be entirely clear nor his messaging always consistent—but arguably this is not a requirement in hybrid models.

The hybrid approach aims to promote ambiguity. Western political and military systems barely identified and responded to the first threat (such as military posturing in phase 3), when their confusion was compounded by subsequent considerations (unconventional destabilisation in phase 4). Overall, the confusion added time—through which Russia achieved political legitimacy and established political control (phases 5 and 6).

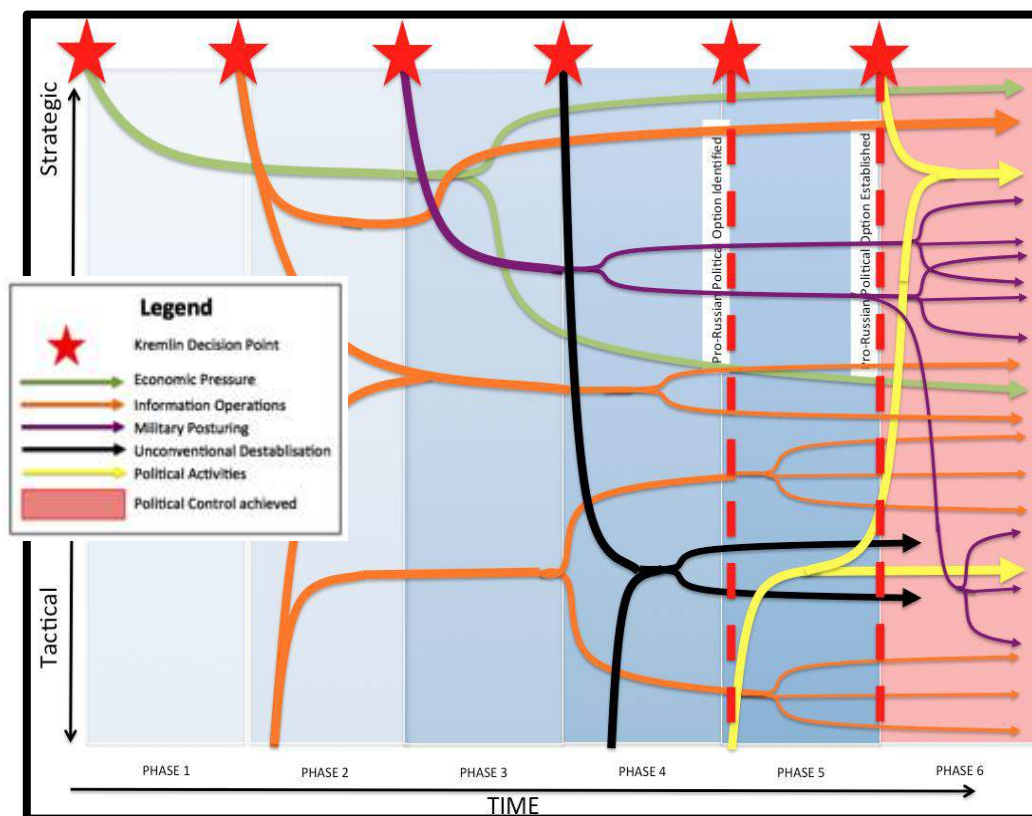


Figure 2: Russia’s hybrid warfare model
(as developed by the author)

It should be noted that the hybrid model was less effective in eastern Ukraine for a number of reasons. Perhaps most importantly, the rapid response of the Ukrainian military during phases 4 and 5 degraded the opportunity for political legitimacy to be easily established. Nevertheless, the Crimea is now in Russian hands, and one must ask why hybrid warfare was so effective.

The challenge

Over the past decade, Russian planners have cleverly developed an approach to exploit the vulnerabilities in current Western political and military systems. In hindsight, the remarks of Russia's Chief of the General Staff, Army General Valery Gerasimov, should have enlightened the world to Russia's impending approach to warfare, when he argued in February 2013 that:

The very 'rules of war' have changed. The role of non-military means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness.... All this is supplemented by military means of a concealed character, including carrying out actions of informational conflict and the actions of special-operations forces.²²

Russia's political aim in Crimea was simple: achieve political control without provoking an overwhelming military response from NATO.

Politically, Russian hybrid warfare was effective because it provided NATO with unclear options—a situation which allowed Western politicians to err on the side of diplomacy. Like the invasion of Georgia in 2008, Russia specifically targeted Ukraine because it assessed that NATO would not be politically and socially compelled to act.²³ Equally, Russia's denial of involvement in Crimea made it difficult to reach an international consensus regarding a response. While some stakeholders desired a full-scale response, others remained concerned about escalating the situation.

It was Western debate and disagreement that allowed Russia to install a political alternative and gather political legitimacy.²⁴ Russia achieved this effect through a focus on two temporal considerations: 'timing' and 'time'. 'Timing' simply refers to the 'when' for the hybrid actor. Western political and military decision makers were arguably preoccupied when Russian hybrid forces seized the Crimea. Political and public interest was focused on other priorities, including counter-terrorism, the military withdrawal from Afghanistan, unrest in Syria, and rising tensions in the South China Sea. Preoccupation with these issues allowed Russia to achieve strategic and operational surprise, which only enhanced intervention reluctance. Western debate ensued and established the conditions for the second consideration of 'time' to become decisive.

Western disagreement regarding intervention in the Crimea took time, and allowed Russia to consolidate political control. In fact, in the current global media environment, where politico-strategic decisions are scrutinised in an almost real-time manner, time becomes the most valuable resource for the hybrid belligerent.²⁵ A Western society with real-time media access demanded real-time diplomatic solutions, which could not be achieved as Western debate sought to understand hybrid chaos. As time progressed, a pro-Russian political alternative was established and overt Russian support made it even more unlikely that the Western political community would respond. Western societies observed this change, and accepted the new *status quo*. This relationship is conceptually evident in Figure 3.

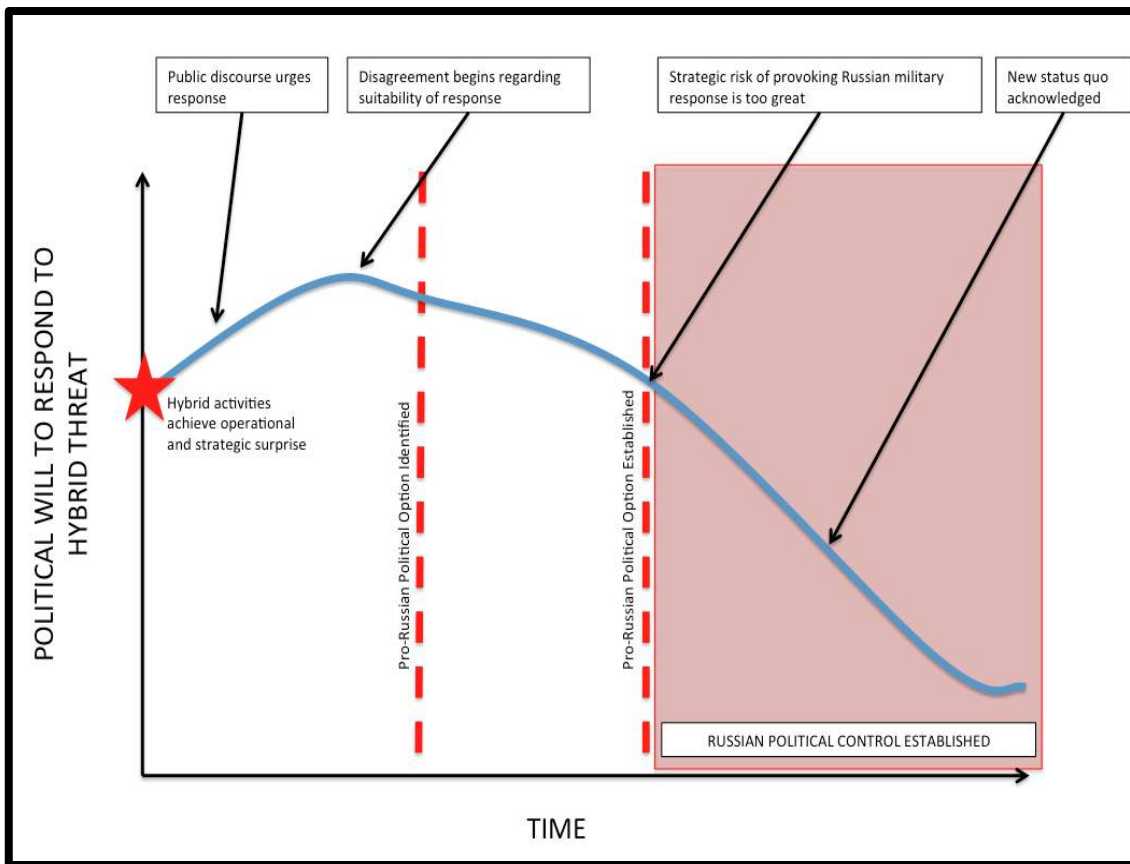


Figure 3: The effect of hybrid warfare on political will to respond
(as developed by the author)

In the event that political consensus is reached, the hybrid model is also designed to disrupt the military response. However, hybrid warfare does not boast of its ability to destroy military units—an acknowledged consequence of adopting irregular warfare is the degraded ability to mass combat power against a regular counterpart.²⁶ Instead, hybrid warfare exploits the unresponsiveness of Western military decision-making to non-traditional methods of war in two areas: identifying and understanding the threat; and deciding and executing a plan.²⁷

As articulated by David Alberts and Richard Hayes, ‘understanding’ is the basis for sound decision-making, as the situation informs the relevance, completeness, accuracy, timeliness and confidence of one’s choice.²⁸ Hybrid threats are difficult to identify and understand. Hybrid threats do not declare war, answer to a clear chain-of-command or wear identifying insignia. Despite recent Western military experience in identifying threats in complex environments, a hybrid threat can have the unique advantage of state-based capabilities to aid its concealment. Distinguishing a threat will be difficult for a soldier confronted with the combined effect of numerous unconventional stakeholders, extensive misinformation and state deniability.

Furthermore, if an element of hybrid warfare is identified, making sense of this entity or action in the wider context is an even greater challenge. Russia’s decentralisation of effects was central to this problem. As subsidiaries were empowered to perpetuate Putin’s intent, non-uniform threat characteristics became evident across the battlespace. This heterogeneity made it difficult to recognise whether the threat was part of a larger, coordinated plan or simply an anomaly.

Additionally, hybrid warfare employs decentralised activities to overwhelm Western military hierarchical structures. Hierarchical military structures are designed to facilitate control and discipline of subordinate units, and have not evolved significantly from the professionalisation of militaries in the 19th century. A

by-product of this structure is that hierarchical systems are generally slower to respond to new circumstances—as each hierarchical level considers the situation and applies additional control measures particular to their subordinates. In comparison, the hybrid model uses unconventional, decentralised systems that are more difficult to control but can act and react significantly faster than their hierarchical counterparts.

Structural problems are exacerbated when Western militaries are confronted with ambiguity. Western militaries have increasingly imposed strict control measures and procedures on tactical activities because past actions have resulted in potent strategic consequences.²⁹ Self-imposed risk aversion has centralised responsibility for important decisions, meaning that higher headquarters are usually required to evaluate complex circumstances. Importantly, such restrictions are not only present in the physical environment but decision-making constraints in the information environment are even more demanding. A single ‘Tweet’ could take hours of research, development and approval, by which time it is no longer relevant.

All decisions when confronting a hybrid threat will be complex, and the time taken for a unit to seek and receive approval to act will usually mean that fleeting opportunities to disrupt a hybrid threat will be missed. Moreover, the hybrid threat will subsequently evolve as the effects perpetuate across more stakeholders. It is in the context of these challenges that Western militaries are considering how they should respond to hybrid warfare.

Australia’s response

Australia currently does not have an adequate response for dealing with the hybrid threat—and this is exactly why Australia’s future adversaries may adopt hybrid modes of war. Although ADF combat operations against Russian hybrid opponents in Ukraine are unlikely, security analysts have already highlighted the existing threat of ‘grey zone’ conflicts in Australia’s near region.³⁰ China already possesses many of the elements of national power utilised by Putin, notably overwhelming economic pressure and electronic/cyber warfare capabilities. Conventional military posturing is also occurring as China increases its anti-access/area denial and blue-water navy assets. But it is the expanding role of non-traditional military techniques that should be a cause for concern for countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

State technical and financial support for thousands of fishing entities in rival claimant areas, unprecedented land reclamation activities and the expansion of an increasingly-militarised Coast Guard are signs that China is possibly exploring the utility of irregular warfare methods. Taiwan and the East and South China Sea disputes all represent opportunities for China to employ hybrid warfare to counter the traditional strengths of Western militaries in the Asia-Pacific—and avoid provoking a full-scale conventional military response—while still achieving its strategic objectives. These scenarios are too grave for Australia to ignore, and a valid reason why reviewing Australia’s preparedness for hybrid warfare is of paramount importance.

Considering Gerasimov’s writings regarding the primacy of non-military means in the hybrid fight, Mark Galeotti has justly questioned the extent to which responsibility for hybrid warfare rests outside the military.³¹ This is a reasonable assessment, as a national effects-based approach is undoubtedly required to respond to any strategic threat. In combating hybrid warfare, friction in a whole-of-government framework will present a self-generated obstacle against an already-challenging opponent. Silos of excellence in intelligence agencies, foreign policy branches and security services will only contribute to confusion and disagreement in and among Western countries, thereby creating an opportunity for the hybrid threat to exploit.

A whole-of-government response requires clear direction and integration. Australian departments and agencies should war game hybrid-warfare scenarios in order to better appreciate the features of Australia’s response if confronted with a hybrid adversary. Moreover, Australia should promote similar scenario analysis with its regional allies. A better understanding of the opportunities and constraints of Australia’s response will only assist in degrading the temporal advantage of the hybrid enemy. Nevertheless, overcoming politico-strategic vulnerabilities to hybrid warfare may be the most profound challenge of all—which is beyond the scope of this article.

The ADF’s established and diverse capability will likely make it central to identifying the threat and providing response options to the Government in times of hybrid crisis. Indeed, in circumstances

dissimilar from Crimea, the ADF may already be in an area of unrest when a hybrid threat becomes clear. While widely acknowledged for leading Western analysis on complex operating environments in the past, the ADF has arguably struggled to deal with the hybrid challenge. Instead, the organisation has promoted a 'back to basics' approach and is currently reinvigorating its focus on foundation warfighting in order to prepare for combat against a peer threat.

In some respects, this approach is valid. But the ADF should not neglect the lessons from Russia's annexation of Crimea. Hybrid warfare exposes specific vulnerabilities in Western political and military decision-making—and rectifying these weaknesses will only complement training for 'a war'. Indeed, it is unlikely the next threat will employ an identical model to Russian hybrid warfare. But, more broadly, the ADF's ability to make faster and superior decisions than its adversaries is fundamental to the Australian approach to war. Consequently, intellectual and institutional reform in decision-making should be a priority.

European and Western militaries are already searching for the best method to respond to hybrid warfare, with a UK Defence Committee warning in July 2014 that NATO was 'not well prepared for a Russian threat against a NATO member-state'.³² In response, militaries are seeking to develop 'adaptable' force structures. However, adaptable manoeuvre groups are only part of a solution. In fact, they fail to address why hybrid warfare is so effective, given that hybrid warfare targets decision-making not combat forces. Adaptable force structures are limited unless they are accompanied by a more responsive decision-making framework.

Reducing the susceptibility of ADF decision-making to the hybrid threat is not only important for the military but can also form a central component of a larger strategic response to hybrid warfare. Because hybrid belligerents converge all attributes to achieve their political end-state, even a small tactical event can have strategic ramifications. This is not an unfamiliar concept for the ADF—most soldiers would be aware of the 'strategic corporal'.³³ However, the 'strategic corporal' concept is normally negatively depicted: an Australian small team leader must be conscious of the media and legal implications of warfare in order to avoid damaging national objectives. Against a hybrid threat, the strategic corporal may be the ADF's most powerful weapon.

The MH17 incident in eastern Ukraine highlighted that a single tactical failure can severely disrupt the effectiveness of a campaign designed to promote plausible deniability and ambiguity. If presented with a similar situation, an Australian 'corporal' who not only secured the crash site but acted strategically—informing their chain-of-command, engaging with the local community, isolating and back-loading evidence, publishing media all before their hybrid adversary could respond—will effectively disrupt the orchestration of their opponent's illusion. Alone, these events are not decisive but his/her actions can be complemented by similar occurrences by other 'corporals' across the air, sea and land domains. Small tactical victories 'buy' time, gather evidence and build momentum for a larger strategic response to prevail.

Empowering strategic corporals appropriately for hybrid warfare will require intellectual and institutional reform to address the two military challenges, namely identifying and understanding the threat; and deciding and executing the plan.

Firstly, access to information will not be the problem that constrains the ADF's ability to understand the hybrid threat. Over the past decade, Western militaries have significantly increased the number of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms that can 'sense'. Regardless, military sensors will likely be of no greater utility than many civilian systems in the hybrid fight. In fact, a majority of information will likely be available through open-source media.

Civilian journalists, passionate citizens and hybrid activists will all be active in the virtual space and every article, post, video, Tweet and blog becomes a valuable source of information in understanding hybrid activities. For example, the first report of Russian Special Forces entering Crimea emerged in a Ukrainian newspaper almost three days prior to the 'little green men' storming Parliament.³⁴ The ADF should harness the ISR capability of the millions of eyes and ears that are active in the battlespace.

The greater challenge for ADF ISR will be the ability to process this information into usable intelligence. Analysis of hybrid complexity will always require intelligent people. However, it is becoming increasingly

clear that smart humans alone cannot efficiently achieve the fusion of all information in hybrid warfare into actionable intelligence. Processing volumes of military and civilian information in a timely manner requires investment in automated analytics that search and process unordered data from all sources in order to direct intelligence staff to key areas of interest.³⁵ Intelligent people will subsequently be able to understand the hybrid threat and reduce the complexity of the situation to aid the commander's decision-making process.

Building frameworks that promote responsiveness in decision-making and action will be equally as important. Improved battle management systems and processes are not the only answer to this challenge—in fact, they are a superficial remedy to a more fundamental problem. The centralised hierarchical military structure generates friction, and friction slows decision-making in time-sensitive situations. The ADF should be aiming to reduce friction in decision-making in order to build tempo and overwhelm its adversary. This must be achieved in two areas: between levels of command, and internally to command.

Firstly, friction must be reduced between levels of command. Given the increased interconnectedness of soldiers, sailors and airmen in a battlespace, the practicalities that drove the foundation of command structures prior to the information age are less relevant. The ADF should at least explore opportunities to decentralise power in organisational structures and reduce unnecessary friction between levels of command.³⁶

This concept is not unfamiliar to the ADF—indeed, it already espouses the theory of 'mission command'. However, mostly mission command is applied to physical manoeuvre and is rarely practised when the environment is complex and strategic implications are foreseeable, such as media or legal matters. But as Russian hybrid warfare has illustrated, the environment will always be complex and the inability to respond quickly to a given situation will be detrimental as the hybrid threat perpetuates further over time. Consequently, mission command in hybrid warfare must establish clear parameters to allow decentralised units to make decisions quickly and seize fleeting opportunities in the physical, human and informational spaces.

Some will argue that there is increased risk in empowering the strategic corporal. For example, consider the strategic consequences when a corporal inadvertently publishes the wrong narrative. This risk is not insurmountable; in fact, it can be overcome through education and clear articulation of a higher commander's intent. It is strange that the ADF allows a soldier to decide to fire their weapon at an adversary but does not allow the soldier the same capacity to autonomously 'Tweet', engage or train with indigenous security forces or promote local engagement strategies. Decentralisation will promote faster decision-making and the collective ability to disrupt the hybrid threat will be increased. The alternative is that the ADF remains unresponsive—and the hybrid threat is simply overwhelming.

The second area to reduce friction is internal to command. To respond to the totality of hybrid warfare, commanders must be selected for their ability to influence all stakeholders within the operating environment, rather than their skill in tactically manoeuvring combat formations. If nothing else, hybrid warfare has reminded the world that warfare remains a contest of human will. Influence is not messaging and media but is the combined effect of all actions to change perceptions and behaviours. Proficiency in traditional warfighting skills will be necessary. But there will be an increasing requirement for commanders to have at least a basic understanding of the human sciences to inform their human and informational effects.

Additionally, commanders will need an increased understanding of the virtual domain to apply offensive and defensive cyber tactics. Importantly, such skills will be essential for all commanders, from the strategic corporal engaged in the 'Three Block War' to the general commanding the joint interagency task force. Candidates who only focus on finding and destroying 'red force' will be simply unsuitable—they will generate friction against the mission.

To assist commanders in achieving influence, the ADF should explore whether the current staff system is appropriate. The staff system has been developed over centuries of industrial warfare and promotes information silos. Hence, its applicability in the information age should be examined. Headquarters are becoming cumbersome organisations. Every staff branch and supporting organisation entrenches a hierarchical structure of staff officers, embeds liaison officers and maintains watchkeepers for 'situational

awareness'. Rather than promoting better decisions, current staff structures allow officers to 'run interference' for the key decision-maker.

In the time-sensitive and complex environments characteristic of hybrid warfare, this interference is counter-productive and will only degrade the capacity of the commander to make decisions that will influence the environment.³⁷ As an alternative, regular military forces should seek inspiration from other decision-making frameworks, such as the headquarter models practised by Special Operations Command or innovative corporate frameworks, such as Google, which promote passage of information, reduce friction and allow faster and better decisions.

Conclusion

Russia's annexation of Crimea is a warning that future conflict may not neatly fall within Western categorisations of conventional and unconventional war. Hybrid warfare converges regular and irregular warfare techniques, and the Kremlin's actions in Ukraine demonstrated how the clever use of the hybrid approach can exploit vulnerabilities in Western political and military decision-making. The success of hybrid warfare in Europe should concern Australia, as the possibility of similar conflict in the East and South China Seas has already been raised. For the ADF, responding to hybrid warfare will require much more than the acquisition of new fighter jets, submarines, battle management systems or indeed training against a peer threat in foundation warfighting.

The ADF will need to enhance its ability to gather information and understand the hybrid threat. Exploitation of open-source information and refined automated analytics will likely assist the ADF in comprehending an adversary that promotes ambiguity. The ADF will also require structural reform. Most importantly, the ADF must decentralise decision-making in complex environments in order to become more responsive. Empowering the 'strategic corporal' to command and influence the physical, human and informational environments will be necessary to build tempo against a hybrid adversary. Faster and better decisions will disrupt the hybrid illusionist—his magic exposed, his trick incomplete—and contribute to the restoration of peace and security in the international system.

Captain Nicholas Barber is an intelligence officer at the 1st Intelligence Battalion, Australian Army. He deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Australian Artillery Mobile Training Team in 2012. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Politics from the University of New South Wales. He recently completed a fellowship with Global Voices, in partnership with the Department of Defence, which included his attendance at the 2015 Shangri-La Dialogue and the 2015 Global Security Conference in Bratislava.

Notes

-
- ¹ This is an edited version of a research paper developed by the author during his fellowship with Global Voices. Global Voices is a youth-led organisation, with an ongoing partnership with the Department of Defence, which currently sends two delegates each year to attend international defence and security forums as part of a leadership development program: see <<http://www.globalvoices.org.au/>>
 - ² Michael Cecire, 'The Russian Invasion of Ukraine', *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, [website], March 2014, available at <<http://www.fpri.org/articles/2014/03/russian-invasion-ukraine>> accessed 14 October 2015.

-
- 3 Peter Felstead and Georg Mader, 'OSCE evidence lifts lid on "little green men" in Crimea', *IHS Jane's Defence Weekly*, 14 March 2014.
- 4 William Booth and Will Englund, 'Gunmen's seizure of parliament building stokes tensions in Ukraine's Crimea', *Washington Post*, 27 February 2014.
- 5 'Putin acknowledges Russian military servicemen were in Crimea', *Russia Today News*, 17 April 2014.
- 6 Mark Galeotti, 'The "Gerasimov Doctrine" and Russian Non-Linear War', *In Moscow's Shadows* [website], 6 July 2014, available at <<https://inmoscowsshadows.wordpress.com/2014/07/06/the-gerasimov-doctrine-and-russian-non-linear-war/>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 7 Reuben F. Johnson, 'Russia's hybrid war in Ukraine "is working"', *IHS Jane's Defence Weekly*, 26 February 2015; John Schindler, 'We're Entering the Age of "Special War"', *Business Insider*, 25 September 2013.
- 8 Williamson Murray and Peter R. Mansoor (eds.), *Hybrid Warfare: fighting complex opponents from the ancient world to the present*, Cambridge University Press.
- 9 Frank Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: the rise of hybrid wars*, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies: Arlington, 2007.
- 10 Phillip Karber, 'The Russian Military Forum: Russia's hybrid war campaign: implications for Ukraine and beyond', *Center for Strategic and International Studies* [website], 10 March 2015, available at <<http://csis.org/event/russias-hybrid-war-campaign-implications-ukraine-and-beyond>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 11 Putin emphasised his dominant position in this dependent energy relationship when he threatened to cut gas supplies to the Ukraine in April 2014: Natalia Zinets, 'Ukraine looks to Europe for gas as Russia ups pressure', *Reuters*, 11 April 2014.
- 12 Pierre Vaux, 'Provocations, Proxies and Plausible Deniability', *The Interpreter* [website], 24 June 2014, available at <<http://www.interpretermag.com/provocations-proxies-and-plausible-deniability/>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 13 NATO, 'Analysis of Russia's Information Campaign against Ukraine', *Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence* [website], available at <<http://www.stratcomcoe.org/analysis-russias-information-campaign-against-ukraine>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 14 The Associated Press, 'Russia Blocks Web Pages Linked to Ukraine Protests', *Moscow Times*, 4 March 2014.
- 15 Robin Hughes, 'Ukraine braces for cyber offensive', *Janes International Defence Review*, 5 March 2014.
- 16 Similar activities occurred prior to the invasion of Georgia in 2008: see 'Russia reminds the world it still has a military', *STRATFOR* [website], 27 February 2014, abstract available at <<https://www.stratfor.com/sample/geopolitical-diary/russia-reminds-world-it-still-has-military>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 17 'Russia pulls in Sevastopol and Ukraine's border troops – Tyagnibok', *NB News*, 24 February 2014.
- 18 'Movement of Russian armored vehicles in Crimea fully complies with agreements – Foreign Ministry', *Russia Today*, 28 February 2014.
- 19 Simon Shuster, 'Putin's Man in Crimea is Ukraine's Worst Nightmare', *Time*, 10 March 2014.
- 20 Janis Berzins, 'Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: implications for Latvian defense policy', *European Leadership Network* [website], 14 October 2014, available at <<http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/russian-new-generation-warfare-implications-for-europe-2006.html>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 21 Roger McDermott, 'Myth and Reality – A Net Assessment of Russia's 'Hybrid Warfare' Strategy Since the Start of 2014', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 11, Issue 184, 17 October 2014.
- 22 Valery Gerasimov, 'The Value of Science in Prediction', *Military-Industrial Courier*, 27 February 2013.
- 23 Russia's use of hybrid warfare did not invoke NATO Article V and thereby avoided NATO's requirement to respond: see UK Defence Committee, *Towards the next Defence and Security Review: Part Two – NATO*, UK House of Commons: London, 31 July 2014.
- 24 Nadia Schadow, 'The Problem with Hybrid Warfare', *War on the Rocks* [website], 2 April 2015, available at <<http://warontherocks.com/2015/04/the-problem-with-hybrid-warfare/>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 25 Philip Seib, *Real-Time Diplomacy: politics and power in the social media era*, Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2012.

-
- 26 David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: fighting small wars in the midst of a big one*, Oxford University Press: New York, 2009, pp. 22-6.
- 27 Sascha-Dominik Bachmann and Hakan Gunneriusson, 'Hybrid Wars: 21st century's new threats to global peace and security', *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 1, 2015, pp. 5-6, available at <<http://www.journals4free.com/link.jsp?l=26559277>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 28 David Alberts and Richard Hayes, *Understanding Command and Control*, CCRP Publications: Washington DC, 2006, pp. 144-6.
- 29 Fred Wieners, 'Operation Enduring Freedom Preliminary Lessons', Air War College: Maxwell Air Force Base, 25 October 2002, cited in Richard Gomez, 'Centralised Command-Decentralised Execution', Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, 2003, available at <<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/awc/gomez2003.pdf>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 30 Linda Sieg, 'Japan, US differ on China in talks on 'grey zone' military threats', *Reuters*, 9 March 2014; Ken Jimbo, 'Maritime Security Challenges in Asia: implications for Japan and Australia', *Lowy Institute* [website], 30 October 2014, available at <<http://www.lowyinstitute.org/news-and-media/audio/maritime-security-challenges-asia-implications-japan-and-australia-dr-ken-jimbo>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 31 Mark Galeotti, 'NATO and the new war: dealing with asymmetric threats before they become kinetic', *In Moscow's Shadows* [website], 26 April 2014, available at <<https://inmoscowsshadows.wordpress.com/2014/04/26/nato-and-the-new-war-dealing-with-asymmetric-threats-before-they-become-kinetic/>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 32 UK Defence Committee, *Towards the next Defence and Security Review*.
- 33 Lynda Liddy, 'The Strategic Corporal', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Autumn 2004, pp. 139-48.
- 34 'Russia pulls in Sevastopol and Ukraine's border troops – Tyagnibok', *NB News*, 24 February 2014.
- 35 Neil Couch and Bill Robins, 'Big Data for Defence and Security', Occasional Paper, Royal United Services Institute: London, September 2013, abstract available at <<http://apo.org.au/research/big-data-defence-and-security>> accessed 14 October 2015.
- 36 Such structures are already under consideration by US Army Special Operations Command, *Counter-Unconventional Warfare*, White Paper, September 2014, pp. 15-6, available at <<https://info.publicintelligence.net/USASOC-CounterUnconventionalWarfare.pdf>> accessed 14 October 2015; Hoffman, 'Hybrid Warfare and Challenges', p. 38
- 37 Gary Luck, *Joint Operations: Insights and Best Practices*, 2nd Edition, Joint Warfighter Center – US Joint Forces Command: Suffolk, July 2008, pp. 21-2.

Rebalancing What, Exactly? Analysing the United States' Pacific Pivot ¹

Colonel Tim Law, British Army

Thus far, the US 'rebalance' to Asia is more like a slogan than a concrete strategic plan.²

A near neighbour is better than a distant cousin.³

Nearly six years into Obama's presidency, America has failed to back up its rhetoric while tensions in Asia have become higher and higher.⁴

Introduction

Ever since the US announced a strategic rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region, debate on its value has excited a substantial global following. In a conversation in which semantics matter, the bulk of academic literature measures rebalancing activity in absolute terms.⁵ This article attempts a different strategy: judging the value of US efforts relative to those it has made elsewhere in the world and, perhaps more importantly, relative to those of China in the region.

It will argue that regardless of the wealth of evidence that can be and has been used to demonstrate US intent, the Asia-Pacific region appears to be of limited real importance to the current Administration. Furthermore, it will argue that the gains which have been made through US strategic activity in the region are generally counter-balanced by those of the Chinese—arguably the US' target in creating its strategy in the first place.

Thus, while acknowledging that measurable activity is evident in all six aspects of the rebalancing strategy announced by then Secretary of State Clinton in 2011,⁶ it will conclude that—when measured in terms relative to US efforts elsewhere and China's counter-balancing efforts in the region—the strategy is a failing concept, ridden with strategic risk. In terms of methodology, the strategy will be analysed through the diplomatic, economic and military lenses of the 'DIME' construct.⁷ US activity since 2011 in each of these areas will be compared with its efforts elsewhere in the world, and then with China's own activity within the Asia-Pacific region.

The rebalancing strategy

Following Clinton's call for the US to 'pivot to new global realities through increased engagement in East Asia', President Obama announced a turning of 'attention to the vast potential of the Asia-Pacific region ... to play a larger and longer-term role and to advance security, prosperity and human dignity'.⁸ The pivot's premise was apparently primarily economic, the region being the US' principal destination for exports and a substantial home for US foreign direct investment. The contention was that 'the lion's share of the political and economic history of the 21st century will be written in the Asia-Pacific region'.⁹

The rebalancing contained six sub-strategies: the deepening of working relationships with emerging powers; engagement with regional multilateral institutions; expansion of trade and investment; advancing of democracy and human rights; strengthening of bilateral security alliances; and development of a broad-based military presence.¹⁰ Described by proponents as a 'low-cost, durable, fundamentally sound, and strategic policy based on the national interests of the US', its most difficult aspect, however, has been the maintenance of cordial relations between the US and China.¹¹ At most risk is the balance of regional power.

Indeed, the rebalancing is largely viewed, especially by China, as a means by which the US proposes to maintain its regional hegemony in the light of China's rising influence and assertion in its immediate periphery. Suggestive of an inability to focus its attention on more than one region at once, Michael Mazza contends that the 'pivot is beset by a problem of perception'.¹² Thus, the 'pivot' became a 'rebalancing',

and even a 'reinvigoration'.¹³ With the US beset by a range of simultaneous crises and financial challenges, the strategy's sustainability has even been questioned within the US Administration itself. In March 2014, for example, Assistant Secretary of Defense McFarland said that 'owing to budgetary constraints, right now the pivot is being looked at again because, candidly, it can't happen'.¹⁴

The eyes of the region are therefore firmly on the US to energise its strategy and demonstrate its capacity. The consequences of not doing so could be catastrophic for US hegemony. Indeed, if the strategy was designed to counter China's rise in the region, it might already be said to have failed.

Diplomacy

The deepening by the US, since 2011, of working relationships with emerging regional powers has been evident through a range of both bilateral and multilateral engagements. The US has established standing 'Strategic Security and Economic Dialogues' with China, improved relations with India, Indonesia and Vietnam, enhanced its partnerships with New Zealand and Singapore, and signed a series of defence cooperation agreements in the region.¹⁵

Engagement has also increased with Asia-Pacific multilateral institutions. The US has become the first non-member to open a permanent mission to ASEAN. It has also joined the East Asia Summit and ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus mechanism, and has participated in the annual Pacific Island Forum.¹⁶ Importantly, US Government rhetoric has consistently sought to downplay suggestions of a struggle for regional hegemony, however it may appear from China's perspective.

Analysis of the movements of key leaders, though, demonstrates the region's low priority in comparison to others. When appointed Secretary of State in January 2013, for instance, John Kerry's inaugural trip was to Europe and the Middle East.¹⁷ Since January 2014, he has travelled overseas on 35 occasions, visiting East Asia just three times, Southeast Asia twice and Oceania once. He has been to Paris 11 times in the same period.¹⁸

Similarly, since 2009 and up to March 2015, analysis of President Obama's overseas travel demonstrates that of eight countries visited more than twice in total, the only Asia-Pacific nations among them were Japan (three visits) and South Korea (four).¹⁹ Although Presidents Xi and Obama have met five times, the relationship has been described by US aides as 'not close', contrasting with Xi's other major-power relationship with Russia's President Putin.²⁰ In addition, President Obama's annual speeches over the past four years to the UN General Assembly have lacked any particular focus on the Asia-Pacific region.²¹

A recent study on the plethora of bilateral and multilateral international security agreements made by the US commented that 'the smaller number of agreements signed by PACOM nations [those within the geographical area of responsibility of US Pacific Command, encompassing East Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania] is surprising given the strong US commitment to countries in this region'.²² Of the US' top ten partners, only one is from the region (Japan). And despite agreements with Asia-Pacific nations being on the rise, so too are agreements with nations covered by the US military's European and Central Commands.

In a shift that has major ramifications for the Asia-Pacific region, as well as for future US-China relations, 'China has [conversely] moved from a focus on "great power" diplomacy ... to prioritizing "neighbourhood diplomacy"'.²³ Its declared foreign policy priority has become the development of economic, cultural and security ties with its Asian neighbours, in particular 'advancing the Silk Road Economic Belt and Maritime Silk Road', China's vision for regional integration and a 'community of common destiny'.²⁴ Otherwise termed 'One Belt, One Road', this has been seen as representing China's own Asia pivot.²⁵

Like the US, China has also used regional multilateral organisations to advance its strategic diplomatic goals. The two it increasingly favours are those within which it has most influence, namely the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia.²⁶ At the latter, for example, President Xi proposed a 'new regional security cooperation architecture... [involving] a new Beijing-led security mechanism to replace the current US-centered alliance structure'.²⁷ China has also developed the Boao Forum for Asia into an important event in the regional geopolitical calendar, with President Xi opening it in 2015 with a speech advocating 'a community of common destiny

and a new future for Asia'.²⁸ Finally, trilateral discussion between Russia, China and India continues to be seen as important.²⁹

Despite plenty of evidence of increased US diplomatic engagement in the Asia-Pacific region since 2011, its efforts cannot be described as uniquely focused. Its status as a global hegemon has increasingly diverted its attention elsewhere, not least with the competing priorities represented by a resurgent Russia and the rise of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. Conversely, China's foreign policy has become increasingly attuned to its immediate region. Seeking to develop its role within existing forums and multilateral organisations, it has increasingly sought to advance its partnerships in the region, establishing new mechanisms for the encouragement of debate.

Trade and investment

The expansion of trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region is a key goal of the US rebalancing strategy. Negotiations remain ongoing, however, on the region's single most important project: the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which excludes China.³⁰ The partnership is likely to assist US allies to reform and strengthen their economies, while allowing signatories to 'diversify their economic relationships, becoming less dependent on an unpredictable China'.³¹ Successful conclusion of a comprehensive agreement could also boost US income by \$77 billion annually.³² If objections from the US Congress continue to stall progress, however, the collapse of talks could 'compound the narrative of US dysfunction ... and make it easier for China to push its own trade arrangements in ways that exclude the US'.³³

Taking place concurrently with negotiations to finalise arrangements for the Trans-Pacific Partnership are talks between the US and the EU on establishing a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.³⁴ Although these, too, appear to be faltering, considerable effort is being made both sides of the Atlantic to conclude an agreement.³⁵ Meanwhile, it should be noted that the Trans-Pacific Partnership itself has a much more substantial membership within the Americas than it does in continental Asia. Of the 12 negotiating nations, only five are from Asia: Japan, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam. It is also worth noting that the US announced its intention to participate two years prior to announcing its rebalancing strategy.³⁶

Concurrently, China is negotiating another Asia-focused trade agreement with a more substantial group of nations: the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.³⁷ Indeed, during the November 2014 APEC meeting, China proposed 'the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific ... [which would be] a Chinese alternative to the Trans-Pacific Partnership'.³⁸

China is also continuing to pursue its Silk Road infrastructure fund initiative with central Asian economies and has been instrumental in leading a New Development Bank (known colloquially as the BRICS bank) and, most recently, development of an Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.³⁹ China has proposed the latter as an alternative to the US/Japan-dominated Asian Development Bank, aimed at meeting what it sees as a substantial gap in infrastructure funding. At risk, however, is the emergence of 'two blocs of economic influence in Asia: one led by China and the other by the US and Japan'.⁴⁰

Despite having a greater level of ambition than the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership has fewer Asian members and is, in any case, being stalled by Congressional refusal to grant President Obama the authority needed to negotiate trade promotion. With few Asian nations currently negotiating membership, it is in any case difficult to see how this project could indeed be considered the linchpin of a seeming hollow rebalancing strategy, especially when set against the efforts China is making to encourage trade and investment in the region.

Military adventurism

Examples of tangible US-led military developments in the Asia-Pacific region are many. They include investment in port facilities in Guam, Japan and South Korea; a new defence pact with The Philippines, allowing the US to deploy troops and equipment on local bases; a memorandum of understanding on defence cooperation with Vietnam; joint military exercises with Japan, focusing on island defence; expanded war games with South Korea; an agreement with Singapore, allowing for US Navy deployment of littoral combat ships; and the signing of an agreement with Australia to forward-deploy a US Marine Air-Ground Task Force in Darwin, to be fully operational by 2016.⁴¹

US Navy Chief, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, spoke recently of the future redeployment of forces, contending that the pivot was central to the decision to ‘increase the presence of the US Navy’s fleet in the Asia-Pacific from 50 to 60 per cent by 2020’, as well as 60 per cent of the US Air Force’s overseas-based forces.⁴² And new Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, recently returned from Japan and South Korea, reasserted that ‘the Pacific remains “the defining region” for America’s future, despite the ongoing challenges in the Arabian Gulf and European regions’.⁴³ Emphasising the acquisition of new technologies consistent with the doctrine of Air-Sea Battle—such as the long-range strike bomber and new anti-ship cruise missiles, and the importance of keeping the F-35 program on track—Carter also unveiled proposals for a new trilateral information-sharing arrangement between the US, Japan and South Korea.⁴⁴

Balancing this, however, is the deployment of additional US resources under Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE to Eastern Europe, a return on combat missions to Iraq and commencement of them in Syria, additional support for capacity-building in Iraq, retention of more substantial troop numbers than planned in Afghanistan, and a requirement to assist in tackling Ebola in West Africa.⁴⁵ Assurances that 60 per cent of the Navy would rebalance to the Pacific belies the fact that many would be littoral combat ships and that the Pacific Fleet is liable to provide assets for operations in the Persian Gulf.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, China maintains unabated ‘substantial procurement programmes across the services’ and a continuation of annual double-digit growth in defence expenditure.⁴⁷ In particular, ‘the PLA [People’s Liberation Army] is undertaking mass production of destroyers, frigates and corvettes to build a navy sufficient in numbers to patrol its near seas and project power into the Pacific and Indian Oceans’.⁴⁸ Following increased participation in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and a couple of non-combatant evacuation operations, Shannon Tiezzi contends that ‘China is making its case that a global military presence is beneficial for the world’.⁴⁹

In terms of regional alliances, China hosted two major exercises with Shanghai Cooperation Organisation partners in 2014, namely *Peace Mission-2014* in Inner Mongolia, which was the largest joint and multinational land exercise since 2005; and *Joint Sea-2014* with Russia, taking place in the disputed East China Sea.⁵⁰ In addition, its modernisation program is paying economic dividends in that China replaced Germany as the third-largest arms exporter from 2010 to 2014, being previously ranked ninth.⁵¹

Thus, although it is in the military sphere that US rebalancing is most evident, conflicting priorities elsewhere have had at least as much weight. And much of its proposed future activity is reversible under a change of administration. When compared to China’s military modernisation in the region, US rhetoric may ultimately be insufficient to persuade wavering Asia-Pacific nations to remain aligned.

Conclusion

Although there is plenty of tangible evidence of activity commensurate with the US desire to demonstrate strategic effectiveness in the Asia-Pacific region, its attention has been clearly diverted elsewhere. As demonstrated within this article, it is measurement of the US’ relative efforts that matter.

This shows comprehensively that it has delivered at least as much breadth to its relationships outside the Asia-Pacific region as it has within it. And when contrasted with China’s own efforts in the region, which have also been both tangible and substantial, there is considerable danger that if its rhetoric is not matched by reality, the US will soon find its regional hegemony usurped.

Of particular interest in analysing China’s own pivot to its immediate region is that it is increasingly ‘placing relatively less of a premium on keeping the US-China relationship steady at all costs’.⁵² Certainly, when viewed in relative terms, China’s pivot appears much more substantial than that of the US—and its ‘shift to a more active leadership role is clearly on display... a change of attitude [that] is positive, and one that needs to be encouraged’.⁵³ Indeed, with increasing assertiveness in Chinese foreign policy, it has been argued that ‘if the pivot’s purpose was to dissuade Chinese aggression by proving American staying power, it failed’.⁵⁴

A more realist interpretation of the situation under a new US Administration could lead to a raising of the strategic stakes between China and the US, and draw other nations to a point where they may feel they have to make a choice.⁵⁵ Although conflict is possible if relations are mismanaged, especially ‘if leaders in Washington and Beijing indiscriminately cast China and the US as tragic actors condemned to re-enact the

Peloponnesian War', there is actually much potential for accommodation of both US and Chinese interests in the region.⁵⁶

Whatever its next approach, the US needs to deliver on its strategy in a way that is credible to allies and partners in the region but also avoids the trap of making China the target, as opposed to the central component, of its policy. As it stands, its strategy is not convincing.

Colonel Tim Law was commissioned into the Royal Regiment of Artillery in 1993. Following operational experience in the Balkans, he left to pursue other opportunities in central government agencies, but rejoined in 1999. Highlights in a broad range of appointments include two stints of sub-unit command, operational service in Iraq and Afghanistan (the latter twice), command of a Germany-based field artillery regiment, the award of a Queen's Commendation, an assignment in military strategic commitments and a leadership post within the UK's Defence Academy. His most recent staff assignment was as the British Army's lead for conceptual force development and head of AGILE WARRIOR experimentation.

Colonel Law has Masters degrees from both Cambridge and Cranfield Universities, and is studying for a third in politics and policy at Deakin. He is a longstanding fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a keen traveller. He is currently attending the Defence and Strategic Studies Course at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies at the Australian Defence College, and will return to the UK to become secretary of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Disclaimer

This work is the sole opinion of the author, and does not necessarily represent the views of the ADF or the British Armed Forces. Neither the Commonwealth of Australia nor the Government of the United Kingdom will be legally responsible in contract, tort or otherwise, for any statement made in this publication.

Notes

-
- ¹ This is an edited version of an essay, with the same title, submitted by the author while attending the Defence and Strategic Studies Course at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies at the Australian Defence College in 2015.
 - ² Yasuhiro Matsuda, 'How to Understand China's Assertiveness since 2009: hypotheses and policy implications', CSIS [Center for Strategic and International Studies] [website], April 2014, p. 15, available at <http://csis.org/files/publication/140422_Matsuda_ChinasAssertiveness.pdf> accessed 12 March 2015.
 - ³ Taken from a recent op-ed in *Xinhua*, explaining China's diplomatic priorities: see Shannon Tiezzi, 'How China Seeks to Shape its Neighbourhood', *The Diplomat* [website], 10 April 2015, available at <<http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/how-china-seeks-to-shape-its-neighborhood/>> accessed 20 April 2015.

- 4 Zihao Liu, 'Pivot to Asia is Defunct', *The Diplomat* [website], 18 December 2014, available at <<http://diplomacist.org/articles/2014/12/11/pivot-to-asia-in-defunct>> accessed 21 April 2015.
- 5 Michael Mazza, 'US in the Asia-Pacific: toward a more effective Asia strategy', *American Enterprise Institute* [website], 30 January 2015, available at <<http://www.aei.org/publication/u-s-asia-pacific-towards-effective-asia-strategy/>> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 6 Hillary Clinton, 'America's Pacific Century', *Foreign Policy*, 11 October 2011, p. 1.
- 7 An analytical construct related to the levers of national power: diplomatic, identity, military and economic.
- 8 Clinton, 'America's Pacific Century', p. 1. President Obama, 'Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament', Canberra, 17 November 2011, *White House* [website], available at <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 9 Kurt Campbell and Brian Andrews, 'Explaining the US Pivot to Asia', *Chatham House* [website], August 2013, p. 2, available at <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/Americas/0813pp_pivottoasia.pdf> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 10 Amitai Etzioni, 'The US Retreat from the Middle East and Pivot to the Far East is likely to Intensify', *Defense and Security Analysis*, Vol. 30, No. 4, 2014, p. 305, abstract available at <<http://www.herzliyaconference.org/eng/?CategoryID=513&ArticleID=2536>> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 11 Scott W. Harold, 'Is the Pivot Doomed? The Resilience of America's Strategic Rebalance', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 4, p. 86; also International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), *2014 Strategic Survey: the annual review of world affairs*, Routledge: London, 2014, pp. 75-9.
- 12 Mazza, 'US in the Asia-Pacific'.
- 13 Etzioni, 'The US Retreat from the Middle East and Pivot to the Far East is likely to Intensify', p. 306; also Fred Dewes, 'Pivot, Rebalance or Reinvigorate? Words Matter in US Strategy toward Asia', *Brookings* [website], 21 April 2014, available at <<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/brookings-now/posts/2014/04/pivot-rebalance-reinvigorate-words-matter-us-strategy-toward-asia>> accessed 12 March 2015.
- 14 Harold, 'Is the Pivot Doomed? The Resilience of America's Strategic Rebalance', p. 85; also Zachary Fayer-Biggs, 'DOD Official: Asia pivot can't happen due to budget pressures', *Defense News*, 4 March 2014.
- 15 IISS, *2014 Strategic Survey*, pp. 75-9; also Campbell and Andrews, 'Explaining the US Pivot to Asia', p. 4.
- 16 Campbell and Andrews, 'Explaining the US Pivot to Asia', p. 5.
- 17 *Time*, 'Secretary of State John Kerry's First Overseas Trip', *Time* [website], 28 February 2013, available at <<http://swampland.time.com/2013/02/28/secretary-of-state-john-kerrys-first-overseas-trip/>> accessed 18 March 2015.
- 18 Extracted from *US State Department* [website], available at <<http://www.state.gov/secretary/travel/>> accessed 21 April 2015.
- 19 Analysis derived from Wikipedia, 'List of Presidential Trips Made by Barack Obama', *Wikipedia* [website], available at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_presidential_trips_made_by_Barack_Obama> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 20 Evan Osnos, 'Born Red: how Xi Jinping ... became China's most authoritarian leader since Mao', *The New Yorker* [website], 6 April 2015, p. 19, available at <<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/04/06/born-red>> accessed 20 October 2015; President Xi met Russian President Putin seven times between March 2013 and September 2014 alone. Relations are said to be at an all-time high, even if China has not offered positive support in favour of Russia's Ukraine strategy: see Yu Bin, 'China-Russia Relations: navigating through the Ukraine storm', *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 16, No. 2, September 2014, pp. 123-41, available at <<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lang=en&id=185570>> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 21 See, for example, President Obama, 'Remarks by President Obama in Address to the United Nations General Assembly', 24 September 2013, *White House* [website], available at <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/24/remarks-president-obama-address-united-nations-general-assembly>> accessed 15 April 2015.
- 22 Jennifer Kavanagh, *US Security-Related Agreements in Force since 1955*, RAND: Santa Monica, 2015, p. 6.
- 23 Tiezzi, 'How China Seeks to Shape its Neighbourhood'.
- 24 Tiezzi, 'How China Seeks to Shape its Neighbourhood', p. 2.

- 25 Zheng Wang, 'China's Alternative Diplomacy', *The Diplomat* [website], 30 January 2015, available at <<http://thediplomat.com/2015/01/chinas-alternative-diplomacy/>> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 26 The Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia was formed in 1999 with 15 member states. Participants and observers now account for the majority of Asian nations from across the continent. China is in the chair from 2014 to 2016. The US has observer status.
- 27 President Xi called on Asian countries to pursue 'common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security based on peace, development and win-win cooperation': see Richard Weitz, 'Beijing Expands its Multinational Toolkit at CICA Summit', *The Jamestown Foundation* [website], 31 July 2014, available at <http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=42692&cHash=e741793745f90ba42e06c9f4f9e1e886#.VTVu2SGqkq> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 28 The Boao Forum for Asia is a non-profit forum modelled on the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, and attended by a range of world leaders (15 in 2015); see also the speech by President Xi Jinping to the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2015, 28 March 2015, available at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/topics_665678/boao_665692/t1029405.shtml> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 29 Bin, 'China-Russia Relations', pp. 123-41.
- 30 Editor's note: this article pre-dated broad-ranging agreement reached on the Trans-Pacific Partnership in early October 2015: see, for example, Krista Hughes and Kevin Krolicki, 'Officials Reach Deal on Trans-Pacific Partnership', *Huffington Post* [website], 5 October 2015, available at <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/tpp-deal-reached_561267dae4b0dd85030c7933> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 31 Michael A. Levi, 'China will React with Displeasure if America tries to Weaponise Trade', *Council on Foreign Relations* [website], available at <<http://www.cfr.org/china/china-react-displeasure-if-america-tries-weaponise-trade/p36433>> accessed 13 April 2015.
- 32 Peter Petri, Michael Plummer and Fan Zhai, 'The TPP, China and the FTAAP: the case for convergence', *New Directions in Asia-Pacific Integration*, East-West Center: Honolulu, 2014, abstract available at <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2438725> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 33 Joshua Meltzer, 'Pass Trade Promotion Authority and enable conclusion of the TPP Negotiations', *Brookings* [website], 9 April 2015, available at <<http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2015/04/09-trade-promotion-authority-trans-pacific-partnership-negotiations-meltzer>> accessed 9 April 2015; also Levi, 'China will React with Displeasure if America tries to Weaponise Trade', p. 1.
- 34 *The Economist*, 'Ships that pass in the Night', *Economist* [website], 13 December 2014, available at <<http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21636061-trade-deal-america-would-be-good-everybody-yet-it-still-may-not-happen-ships-pass>> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 35 See European Commission and US Government trade websites: <<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/ttip/>> and <<https://ustr.gov/ttip/>>
- 36 US Government, 'Overview of the Trans-Pacific Partnership', *Office of the US Trade Representative* [website], available at <<https://ustr.gov/tpp/overview-of-the-TPP>> accessed 4 May 2015.
- 37 This group includes all ASEAN nations, plus Japan, ROK, Australia, New Zealand and India. Significantly, it excludes the US: see Meltzer, 'Pass Trade Promotion Authority and enable conclusion of the TPP Negotiations', p. 5.
- 38 Wang, 'China's Alternative Diplomacy'.
- 39 Paola Subacchi, 'The AIIB is a Threat to Global Economic Governance', *Foreign Policy*, 31 March 2015, p. 4, available at <<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/31/the-aiib-is-a-threat-to-global-economic-governance-china/>> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 40 Subacchi, 'The AIIB is a Threat to Global Economic Governance'.
- 41 US Secretary of Defense Speech, 'Remarks on the Next Phase of the US Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific', McCain Institute, Arizona State University, 6 April 2015, available at <<http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1929>> accessed 20 April 2015. Note, though, that recent talks between Secretary of Defense Ash Carter and Japanese counterparts sidestepped a substantial looming issue in that the newly-elected Okinawan governor is opposed to the US base relocation plan on the island: see Euan Graham, 'Ashton Carter's Northeast Asia visit looks south', *Lowy Interpreter* [website], 13 April 2015, available at <<http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2015/04/13/Ashton-Carter-s-Northeast-Asia-visit-looks-south.aspx?COLLCC=4116900588&>> accessed 15 April 2015; and Vince Scappatura, 'The US Pivot to Asia, the Chinese Specter and the Australian-American Alliance', *The Asia-Pacific*

-
- Journal*, Vol. 11, Issue 36, No. 3, 9 September 2014, p. 1, available at <<http://japanfocus.org/-Vince-Scappatura/4178/article.html>> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 42 Open-access speech by Admiral Greenert at the Australian National University, 10 February 2015, attended by the author. From 58 capital ships in 2015 to 64 in 2020, although further budget cuts in future Quadrennial Defense Reviews may, of course, see the *absolute* number actually based in the Pacific reduce; also Aaron Mehta, 'SecDef Carter reasserts US Pacific Vision', *Defense News* [website], 6 April 2015, available at <<http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/2015/04/06/carter-pacific-pivot-japan-korea/25369219/>> accessed 15 April 2015.
- 43 Mehta, 'SecDef Carter reasserts US Pacific Vision'.
- 44 In the light of China's development of capabilities associated with the denial of operational access, the Air-Sea Battle concept is discerned by many to have a 'counter-China' emphasis, encouraged by the many briefings and writings that predominantly identify China as the rationale for Air-Sea Battle. Such writings include that by David C. Gompert, 'Responding to China's Anti-Access Strategy', available at <http://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Gompert_Testimony1.30.14.pdf> accessed 20 October 2015, and Richard A. Bitzinger, 'The Challenge of Strategic Ambiguity in Asia', *RSIS Commentary*, No. 48/2014, 13 March 2014, p. 2.
- 45 Part of the US' European Reassurance Initiative, containing a number of substantial confidence-building measures: see US Government, 'European Reassurance Initiative and Other US Efforts in Support of NATO Allies and Partners', *White House* [website], 3 June 2014, available at <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/03/fact-sheet-european-reassurance-initiative-and-other-us-efforts-support->> accessed 15 April 2015.
- 46 IISS, *The Military Balance*, Routledge: London, 2015, pp. 30-2.
- 47 IISS, *The Military Balance*, p. 213.
- 48 IISS, *The Military Balance*, p. 213.
- 49 Shannon Tiezzi, 'China makes its Case for a Global Military', *The Diplomat* [website], 7 April 2015, available at <<http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/china-makes-its-case-for-a-global-military/>> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 50 Bin, 'China-Russia Relations', pp. 123-41.
- 51 Pieter D. Wezeman and Siemon T. Wezeman, 'Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2014', SIPRI Fact Sheet, March 2015, available at <<http://books.sipri.org/files/FS/SIPRIFS1503.pdf>> accessed 20 October 2015.
- 52 Tiezzi, 'China makes its Case for a Global Military', p. 2.
- 53 Wang, 'China's Alternative Diplomacy', p. 2.
- 54 Jake A. Douglas, 'The Paper Tiger Myth: how America is under-estimating China's resolve and power', *Strategist* [website], 4 February 2015, available at <<http://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-paper-tiger-myth-how-america-is-underestimating-chinas-resolve-and-power/>> accessed 20 April 2015.
- 55 Sebastian Heilman and Dirk H. Schmidt, *China's Foreign Political and Economic Relations*, Rowman & Littlefield: Plymouth, 2014, p. 171.
- 56 Karl Eikenberry, 'Thucydides Trap', *American Review* [website], undated, available at <<http://americanreviewmag.com/stories/Thucydides-Trap>> accessed 20 April 2015.

The Case for an Offensive ADF Cyber Capability: beyond the Maginot mentality

Colonel Michael Lehmann, CSC, Australian Army

As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew.

President Abraham Lincoln, 1862 ¹

Introduction

Australia faces a military technological environment arguably more challenging than at any time since World War 2. Asian economies are growing rapidly, albeit with temporary but painful setbacks, and are closing on Australia's. This shrinking economic gap brings with it potential increases in military expenditure, allowing Asian military forces to field advanced technology. China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) is the most obvious example of this trend, developing powerful conventional military capabilities, such as the J-31 fighter aircraft, the much-touted DF-21D 'carrier killer' missile, and its first aircraft carrier. As importantly, the PLA is training to use these new capabilities as systems in a networked, joint environment.² The PLA is a harbinger of what political will and money can achieve.

While Australia still believes it has a conventional military edge in its region—and is spending big on air, maritime and ground systems to maintain this edge—population-driven economics suggest that Australia will lose its comparative purchasing advantage over the long term. If Australia's future security depends at least partially on a military edge, then trying to outspend Asia is likely to be a dead-end strategy. One area where new technological opportunities and a privileged relationship with the US potentially coincide is offensive cyber 'weaponry'. Examining these factors, this article contends that the ADF should, indeed must, move rapidly to field an offensive cyber capability as an integral part of a truly joint force.

The logic of the dollar

For over 30 years, Australia's Defence White Papers have painted a picture of a military which could comfortably assume a technological edge over potential adversaries, largely due to our relationship with the US and access to its technologies. While regional militaries were something for the government to consider, they were not regarded as peers, possessing '[modest] capabilities appropriate to national defence and internal security'.³ It was not until 2009 that a Defence White Paper raised substantial concerns, fretting that while Australia's technology advantage gave the ADF a 'war-winning edge', its sustainability was under 'increasing challenge'.⁴

This concern is based on economic near certainty. By 2030, Australia's economy is projected to slip from 19th to the 23rd largest in the world, slightly smaller than Thailand's, neck-and-neck with Malaysia's and The Philippines', and eclipsed by an Indonesian economy 18 ranks above it and over three times its size.⁵ Assuming that the military expenditure of regional countries grows along with their economies, the existing technology gap will inexorably shrink. Australia's response needs new thinking and new actions.

The logic of cyberspace

To preserve Australia's military edge, the 2009 Defence White Paper placed considerable faith in the ADF's ability to use its technologies better. It foresaw a networked system whose sensors and data would give 'information superiority over an adversary so that our people can make critical decisions on the battlefield more quickly'.⁶ This tantalising possibility is the world of a supercharged 'Boyd cycle', fuelled by digitalised information, pumped through secure and practically-unlimited communications pipes, filtered and presented by smart technologies, and exploited by technologically-savvy military staff.⁷ The logic of the future dollar, however, suggests that a networked military will be affordable for regional countries as well. However, a networked military is also vulnerable to cyber attacks against that network,

causing potentially cascading disruption, where the corruption of one element of the system ripples through its interdependent whole.

But is this threat more than academic hype? Publicly-available evidence suggests so. In its dry bureaucratic language, the 2015 US *Cyber Strategy* notes that its offensive cyber capabilities are designed to inflict ‘unacceptable losses’ on an attacker.⁸ It goes on to say that US cyber targets include ‘command and control networks, military-related critical infrastructure, and weapons capabilities’.⁹ More specifically, the *Cyber Strategy* highlights the potential vulnerability of weapons systems to cyber attack by saying that the US must ‘mandate specific cybersecurity standards for weapons systems’.¹⁰ This strongly suggests the US believes that weapons systems are able to be defeated by cyber attacks.

While speculative, this would presumably include any software-driven weapons function, such as target acquisition, external and onboard guidance systems, arming functions and fail-safes, and digital fly-by-wire control systems. These potential vulnerabilities are inherent to all so-called Fifth Generation platforms, such as Australia’s new F35 Lightning II. This cutting-edge aircraft is the host for ‘millions of lines of code’ in ‘an incredibly integrated design’ which meshes its capabilities with others across the battlespace.¹¹

Additionally, a significant strength of Fifth Generation platforms comes from shared databases, such as Intelligence Mission Data which, among other things, distinguish between friends, foes and civilians..¹² Although protected, Fifth Generation platforms highlight the potential for cyber attacks to target networked military systems and achieve cascading effects. By killing the code or corrupting data, incredibly expensive platforms may be rendered useless.

Coincidentally, apart from its concern over the sustainability of Australia’s technological advantage, the 2009 Defence White Paper also raised cyberspace as an issue for national security, noting that the ADF had an ‘increasing reliance on networked operations’.¹³ However, no Defence White Paper has looked at these two concerns as an opportunity. Modernising regional militaries are also exposed to the inherent vulnerabilities of networked systems. Here lies the potential for continued military advantage if the ADF is bold enough to seize it.

The cyberspace race

Everybody is moving towards developing offensive cyber capabilities.

General Keith Alexander, Commander US Cyber Command, June 2014¹⁴

With widespread reports of the Chinese using cyber attacks to steal the political, economic and security secrets of Western nations, with Russia alleged to have synchronised cyber attacks with military operations in Georgia, and the US and Israel said to have used the Stuxnet virus against the Iranian nuclear program, it is little wonder that a considerable number of nations are interested in offensive cyber capabilities. While claiming that ‘everyone’ is doing so is doubtless an exaggeration—and acknowledging that there are critics of the hype associated with ‘cyberwar’¹⁵—a former US Deputy Secretary of Defense has stated publicly that over 30 countries are developing military cyber capabilities, some of which are offensive.¹⁶

The US appears to regard Russia as being the most advanced cyber threat it faces, rating it in early 2014 as ‘more severe than we have previously assessed’.¹⁷ China is also regarded as an advanced threat, followed by the ‘lesser’ capabilities of North Korea and Iran.¹⁸ In the Indo-Pacific region, it is uncertain which countries have offensive cyber capabilities. Indonesia, for example has recently moved to set up both military and national cyber organisations but—at least publicly—their remits are defensive.¹⁹ Regardless, it is logical that the more technologically advanced a country is, the more likely it is to have at least some offensive cyber capabilities.

US and Chinese offensive cyber capabilities

It is reasonable to ask, however, if offensive cyber capabilities have practical military use beyond digital espionage, information operations and niche disruption? If cyber attacks actually threaten modern

military systems and offer an appreciable operational advantage, then there should be doctrinal and practical evidence of this? There is. The Chinese and American militaries possess some of the world's most advanced warfighting capabilities, and their intellectual and practical investments in offensive cyber capabilities suggest that ignoring the place of cyber weaponry in 21st century joint warfare is akin to ignoring the place of the tank in combined arms operations nearly a 100 years ago.

The US position is based on the recognition that cyber weapons will be used against it in the future and 'assumes that a potential adversary will seek to target US or allied critical infrastructure and military networks to gain a strategic advantage'.²⁰ The US also intends to fight back and actively wage war in cyberspace. In April 2015, it stated that the Department of Defense's three cyber missions were defending military networks; assisting the US respond to cyber attacks against non-defense interests; and providing 'offensive cyber options'.²¹ General Alexander had previously confirmed that the US Cyber Command was prepared to conduct 'full spectrum military cyber-space operations' against adversaries.²² He went further and said that possessing the 'best' cyber weaponry is as important to battlefield success as having the 'best' tanks, artillery and infantry.²³

The US is backing its words with resources, moving quickly to establish a substantial cyber force with both defensive and offensive capabilities. The Department of Defense's expansive cyber vision sees it establishing a 6200-person 'Cyber Mission Force' by 2018, comprising 133 cyber teams, of which 81 would have a primarily defensive role, 27 an offensive role, and 25 would be employed in analytical and planning roles.²⁴

Within the US Army, serious efforts to institutionalise cyber capabilities have been taking place since at least 2010, when the Army directed the establishment of an Army Cyber Command. These efforts have only accelerated over the past few years with the Army in the process of fielding 62 cyber teams, aiming to have them fully operational by the end of September 2017. The regular Army's 41 teams will have both offensive and defensive capabilities, while the Reserve teams will be focused on 'cyber protection'.²⁵

The US Navy has taken a similar approach, trying to mainstream cyber capabilities in an Information Dominance Corps, publishing a cyber *Strategic Plan 2015-2020*, and committing to the establishment of 40 cyber teams by 2017.²⁶ Like their counterparts in the Army, some of these Navy teams will have the dedicated offensive role of delivering cyber warfighting effects as part of Navy's integrated fires. Navy's plan for these cyber teams appears ambitious, as it has committed to increasing their effectiveness by 75 per cent, against unknown internal benchmarks, by mid-2016.²⁷

The US Air Force's long-term strategy is more coy on its plans for offensive cyber capabilities, while acknowledging that cyberspace promises a 'true breakthrough in our approach to Air Force core missions' and may offer 'more attractive (non-kinetic) options' to commanders to strike adversaries.²⁸ However, greater insight is offered in a 2008 US Air Force strategic cyber vision which says that it will use cyber attacks to disrupt sensors and command and control systems, manipulate data, and degrade weapon systems.²⁹ These plans are more than aspirational. The 24th Air Force has demonstrated the ability to deliver cyber 'payloads' from aircraft, from space, and by 'traditional means'.³⁰ So practical cyber weaponry exists.

One of the notable aspects of the US approach to building its cyber capabilities is its urgency. The fielding of the US Army's first 1200 cyber soldiers in its three new cyber specialties is being done before the Army has the courses or facilities to train them, in a learning-by-doing approach.³¹ Similarly, the US Navy's strategic cyber plan implicitly recognises the embryonic nature of its cyber force, using words and phrases like 'create', 'establish and mature', 'institutionalize', and 'develop' in its goals. These approaches mirror those of the US Department of Defense, with its Secretary outlining plans for substantial growth in military cyber forces even while noting that 'we're just beginning to build and imagine this cyber force'.³²

Indeed, the foundations for this cyber force are not fully set, with the Department acknowledging that its legal and policy authorities are not yet finalised, its structures are not yet mature, its career paths not yet fully viable, its training requirements undefined, and its teams not yet integrated into the Department.³³ Yet instead of being seen as a failing, risky as it may be, this approach is bold, agile and future focused. The US cyber vision is one of a force that is not limited by the domain-constrained thinking of individual Services; a force that is aggressively modern, that embraces risk, that seeks change, and goes beyond joint to be truly national.

The US emphasis on offensive cyber operations as part of an integrated modern force is also shared by the PLA. The Chinese embrace of offensive cyber operations is explicitly stated in its 2013 near-doctrinal *The Science of Military Strategy*, which has a chapter on cyber warfare, including cyber attack.³⁴ The conceptual antecedents of this thinking can be clearly seen in the PLA's goal of being able to 'win local wars under conditions of informationalisation'.³⁵ They are also discernible in the even earlier writings of Chinese strategists who predicted that cyberspace would become a warfighting domain and that cyber attacks were a necessary 'new concept' weapon.³⁶

Like the US military, the Chinese have moved beyond words to actions. Doctrinally, the PLA has elevated cyberspace to the same status as the other domains of land, air, maritime and space. Practically, to operate in this new domain, the PLA fields extensive defensive and offensive cyber forces. While their structure and numbers are uncertain, it is believed that the PLA's Fourth Department is probably responsible for cyber attack, along with its more traditional electronic warfare mission.³⁷

Additionally, the PLA's Third Department has 'one of the largest and most sophisticated ... [signals intelligence] and cyber collection infrastructures in the world', which may include the ability to conduct cyber attacks in addition to its cyber espionage role.³⁸ Finally, there are PLA cyber elements known as Technical Reconnaissance Bureaus in the seven Military Regions and in the Army, Navy, Air Force and the strategic missile force (the Second Artillery). These bureaus are known to have cyber security and collection roles but any offensive role is only inferred from doctrine.

The Australian perspective on cyber attacks – prevention without cure?

Given these exemplars, how should Australia respond? What should it think? What should it do?

To this point, Australia's approach to military power in cyberspace has been largely that of a victim. The preponderance of government policy and public discussion has focused on protecting internet-facing systems and data against attack, while often acknowledging that such efforts cannot be absolute and may well be quixotic. An example is Marcus Thompson's article 'The Cyber Threat to Australia', which lays out Australia's strategic and military vulnerability to cyber attacks but—with the exception of one sentence—is focused on prevention.³⁹ Similarly, a recent call for an update to Australia's 2009 *Cyber Strategy* almost exclusively assumes that cyber security is defensive.⁴⁰

There is no question that Australia's cyber interests need comprehensive, integrated and world-class defensive capabilities. But the risk in limiting the discussion of cyber security to defensive measures is that this strategy advocates, probably unthinkingly, a cyber 'Maginot line', ceding the initiative to any attacker beyond the reach of law enforcement. There is no cyber deterrent and there are no options for government in such an approach.

However, some have begun to call for Australia to develop cyber offensive capabilities. In a 2013 article, Nick Rose wrote about US concepts for offensive cyber operations and suggested that military planners should consider incorporating cyber reconnaissance and attacks into their thinking.⁴¹ In mid 2014, ADF doctrine suggested that offensive cyber operations had a place in Information Operations, providing a tantalising glimpse of what a resourced offensive cyber capability might achieve, while limiting the vision of what these capabilities could do in a networked future by subordinating them to existing military thinking.⁴²

More recently, in early 2015, Rory Metcalf argued that Australia should seek 'asymmetric security advantages' to meet the challenges of a networked, uncertain world, and called for significantly greater investment in emerging military capabilities, including cyber.⁴³ Similarly, former ASIO chief David Irvine echoed the need for a 'huge' resourcing of cyber capabilities and, notably, advocated for offensive capabilities as part of this mix.⁴⁴

An ADF offensive cyber capability

So if an ADF offensive cyber capability would be a potential warfighting edge for Australia, what should it look like and how should the ADF go about trialling it? The first thing that Australia needs is an ongoing debate on the place of cyber weaponry in ADF operations, including the legal and policy guidelines for the

accountable and principled use of such capabilities. While specifics of cyber capabilities may be highly classified, the ubiquity of the internet and the issues surrounding offensive cyber attacks for military purposes warrant frank and inclusive discussion.

However, the legal, policy and conceptual issues around military cyber attacks should not prevent the ADF from immediately establishing a prototype offensive cyber unit. The purpose of this unit would be to develop and evaluate a trial offensive cyber capability to support ADF operations, providing decision makers with an agile and cutting-edge 'laboratory' to assess the desirability and practicality of a longer-term investment in this area.

The formation of this unit would need to be supported by a unique approach to finding personnel with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude for cyber warfare. The cyber attack unit should be staffed by a mixture of people from the Services, the Reserve, contractors, secondees from private industry and, possibly, academia. An Australian cyber unit should draw its people from wherever expertise, enthusiasm and security clearance requirements coincide.

Additionally, to remove the cyber unit from the possibility of existing parochial interests, it should be under the command of the Vice Chief of the Defence Force, reflecting that cyberspace appears to be a genuinely new domain. This would also establish the capability as truly and inarguably joint, provide a senior 'champion' to drive it, and remove the capability from capture by existing interests. But this should not be done in a way that effectively isolates the unit from existing knowledge and experience. In particular, the ADF must leverage the extensive cyber security expertise of the Australian Signals Directorate, including its familiarity with legislative and policy compliance.⁴⁵

Finally, if the ADF is to develop an effective offensive cyber capability, it should approach the US to leverage off its military programs. This would appear to be a half-open door. The US has noted that it cooperates in cyber defence with 'Five Eyes' nations and it has incorporated partnerships into the fabric of its cyber future by including them as one of its five strategic goals.⁴⁶ Perhaps tellingly, the first photograph in the US *Cyber Strategy* features two uniformed ADF personnel working with US counterparts.

However promising this may be, US willingness to go beyond cyber security cooperation is unclear. Although there is some evidence that the US has worked with partners in delivering offensive cyber effects, there is no specific mention of partners in any of the *Strategy's* language on offensive capabilities.⁴⁷ Regardless, Australia has relied considerably on privileged access to US technology and this could reasonably be expected to continue for cyber weaponry.

Conclusion

The air-sea gap is irrelevant to Australia's cyber security. Australia has multiple cyber 'borders' interfacing with the globe in ways that no-one truly understands. What is clear, however, is that modern military systems whose effectiveness depends on their networked nature are potentially vulnerable to cyber attacks. Leading militaries have already wrapped cyber attacks into their military operating concepts and are investing heavily in cyber forces.

For Australia, which relies on technology to maximise the capability of its small military, there is both a threat and an opportunity in these developments. There is no question that the ADF needs world-class defensive capabilities. However, as it is for any military capability, it is not enough that the ADF be able to take a punch. The ADF should, indeed must, move rapidly to field offensive cyber capabilities as an integral part of a truly joint force.

In the era of a new Defence White Paper and fiscal constraint, this is undoubtedly a challenge for Defence's leadership. The comfort of investing in familiar capabilities that see more, go faster and shoot further is likely to be misleading in a networked future. The question for the ADF is one of vision. Can the ADF marry a new opportunity with new thinking and new action?

Colonel Mick Lehmann has served in a variety of staff, command and operational positions in Australia, overseas and on operations. He is a graduate of the Defence and Strategic Studies Course, has three Masters degrees and is currently the Senior Military Advisor in the Office of NATO's Senior Civilian Representative in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Notes

- 1 From his Second Annual Message, delivered to the Senate and House of Representatives in December 1862, available at <<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29503>> accessed 9 September 2015.
- 2 Jonathan Holslag, 'Trapped Giant: China's military rise', *Adelphi Papers*, Vol. 50, No. 416, 2010, pp. 40-1 and 63-5.
- 3 Department of Defence, *The Defence of Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, March 1987, p. 13.
- 4 Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030 (Defence White Paper 2009)*, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, 2009, pp. 67 and 131. These concerns are also echoed in Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Australia in the Asian Century White Paper*, Australian Government: Canberra, October 2012, pp. 7 and 226, albeit that document has subsequently been 'archived' by the current government.
- 5 Price Waterhouse Coopers, 'The World in 2050: will the shift in global economic power continue?', *PricewaterhouseCoopers* [website], February 2015, p. 8, available at <<http://www.pwc.com.au/consulting/assets/publications/World-in-2050-Feb15.pdf>> accessed 6 June 2015.
- 6 Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century*, p. 131.
- 7 Boyd's key concept was that of the decision cycle or [OODA \(observe, orient, decision, action\) loop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Boyd_(military_strategist)), the process by which an entity (either an individual or an organisation) reacts to an event: see, for example, 'John Boyd (military strategist)', available at <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Boyd_\(military_strategist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Boyd_(military_strategist))> accessed 9 September 2015.
- 8 US Department of Defense, *The Department of Defense Cyber Strategy*, April 2015, p. 11, available at <http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0415_Cyber-Strategy> accessed 8 May 2015.
- 9 US Department of Defense, *The Department of Defense Cyber Strategy*, p. 14.
- 10 US Department of Defense, *The Department of Defense Cyber Strategy*, p. 21.
- 11 Cheryl Pellerin, 'Kendall: F-35 marks US-Australia milestone', *DoD News* [website], 25 July 2014, available at <<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122756>> accessed 17 May 2015.
- 12 US Department of Defense, 'Management of Intelligence Mission Data (IMD) in DoD Acquisition', Directive No. 5250.01, *Department of Defense* [website], 22 January 2013, available at <www.dtic.mil/whs/directive/corres/pdf/525001p.pdf> accessed 17 May 2015.
- 13 Department of Defence, *Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century*, p. 83.
- 14 Christopher Joyce, 'Interview transcript: former head of the NSA and commander of the US cyber command, General Keith Alexander', *The Australian Financial Review* [website], 8 June 2014, available at <www.afr.com/Page/Uuid/b67d7b3e-d570-11e3-90e8-355a30324c5f> accessed 8 May 2014.
- 15 Examples of the arguments of critics can be found at Thomas Rid, 'Cyber War Will Not Take Place', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1, February 2012, pp. 5-32; and Martin C. Libicki, 'Don't Buy the Cyberhype: how to prevent cyberwars from becoming real ones', *Foreign Affairs* [website], 14 August 2013, available at <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2013-08-14/dont-buy-cyberhype>> accessed 6 June 2015.

- 16 William J. Lynn III, 'The Pentagon's Cyberstrategy, One Year Later', *Foreign Affairs* [website], 28 September 2011, available at <www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/68305/william-j-lynn-iii/the-pentagons-cyberstrategy-one-year-later> accessed 19 August 2014; also Ash Carter, 'Rewiring the Pentagon: charting a new path on innovation and cybersecurity' Drell Lecture at Stanford University, 23 April 2015, available at <<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=5621>> accessed 25 April 2015.
- 17 Tony Capaccio, 'Iran behind cyberattack of Las Vegas gambling juggernaut, US says', *The Canberra Times* [website], 27 February 2015, available at <<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act/it-pro/security-it/ian-behind-cyberattack-of-las-vegas-gambling-juggernaut-us-says-20150227-13q7xa.html>> accessed 2 March 2015.
- 18 Capaccio, 'Iran behind cyberattack of Las Vegas gambling juggernaut, US says'.
- 19 Prashanth Parameswaran, 'Indonesia's cyber challenge under Jokowi', *The Diplomat* [website], 21 January 2015, available at <<http://the.diplomat.com/2015/01/indonesias-cyber-challenge-under-jokowi/>> accessed 22 January 2015.
- 20 US Department of Defense, *The Department of Defense Cyber Strategy*, p. 2
- 21 Carter, 'Rewiring the Pentagon'.
- 22 Joyce, 'Interview transcript'.
- 23 Joyce, 'Interview transcript'.
- 24 US Department of Defense, *The Department of Defense Cyber Strategy*, p. 6.
- 25 David Vergun, 'Cyber chief: Army cyber force growing "exponentially"', *US Army* [website], 5 March 2015, available at <http://www.army.mil/article/143948/Cyber_chief_Army_cyber_force_growing_exponentially> accessed 5 March 2015.
- 26 US Fleet Cyber Command/10th Fleet, *Strategic Plan 2015-2020*, available at <<http://www.navy.mil/strategic/FCC-C10F%20Strategic%20Plan%202015-2020.pdf>> accessed 10 September 2015.
- 27 US Fleet Cyber Command/10th Fleet, *Strategic Plan 2015-2020*, pp. 3 and 16.
- 28 US Air Force, 'America's Air Force: a call to the future (30 year strategy)', *Department of the Air Force* [website], July 2014, p. 17, available at <http://airman.dodlive.mil/files/2014/07/AF_30_Year_Strategy_2.pdf> accessed 7 June 2015
- 29 Air Force Cyber Command, *Strategic Vision*, February 2008, p. 12, available at <www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA479060> accessed 7 June 2015.
- 30 24th Air Force Public Affairs, 'Integrated operations hit cyber bull's-eye', *Air Force Print News Today* [website], 5 November 2014, available at <www.24af.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123430672> accessed 7 June 2015.
- 31 Fort Gordon Public Affairs Office, 'Army Cyber branch offers soldiers new challenges, opportunities', *US Army* [website], 24 November 2014, available at <http://www.army.mil/article/138883/Army_Cyber_branch_offers_Soldiers_new_challenges_opportunities> accessed 17 March 2015.
- 32 Carter, 'Rewiring the Pentagon'.
- 33 US Department of Defense, *The Department of Defense Cyber Strategy*, pp. 7 and 17.
- 34 See, for example, Steven Aftergood, 'Secrecy News: China's Science of Military Strategy (2013)', *Federation of American Scientists* [website], 3 August 2015, available at <<https://fas.org/blogs/secrecy/2015/08/china-sms/>> accessed 10 September 2015.
- 35 Information Office of the State Council, 'The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces', April 2013, p. 3, available at <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-04/16/c_132312681.htm> accessed 22 April 2013.
- 36 Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare*, PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House: Beijing, February 1999, pp. 68-9 and 24-6 respectively, available at <<http://www.c4i.org/unrestricted.pdf>> accessed 10 September 2015.
- 37 Peter Mattis, 'The Analytic Challenge of Understanding Chinese Intelligence Services', *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 56, No. 3, September 2012, p. 50.
- 38 Bryan Krekel, Patton Adams and George Bakos, *Occupying the Information High Ground: Chinese capabilities for computer network operations and cyber espionage*, Northrop Grumman: Falls Church, 7 March 2012, p. 47; Mark A. Stokes, Jenny Lin and L.C. Russell Hsiao, 'The Chinese People's Liberation Army Signals Intelligence

-
- and Cyber Reconnaissance Infrastructure', *Project 2049 Institute* [website], 11 November 2011, p. 4, available at <http://project2049.net/documents/pla_third_department_sigint_cyber_stokes_lin_hsiao.pdf> accessed 28 April 2013.
- 39 This is not meant as a criticism of the article nor its conclusions but as an example of the nature of professional discussion on cyber capabilities: see Marcus Thompson, 'The Cyber Threat to Australia', *Australian Defence Force Journal*, No. 188, 2012, p. 63.
- 40 Chris Brookes, 'Cyber Security: time for an integrated whole-of-nation approach in Australia', *Indo-Pacific Strategic Papers* [website], March 2015, available at <[http://www.defence.gov.au/ADC/Publications/IndoPac/150327%20Brookes%20IPS%20paper%20-%20cyber%20\(PDF%20final\).pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/ADC/Publications/IndoPac/150327%20Brookes%20IPS%20paper%20-%20cyber%20(PDF%20final).pdf)> accessed 10 September 2015.
- 41 Nicholas Rose, 'Shaping the Future Battlespace: offensive cyber warfare tools for the planner', *Australian Army Journal*, Summer edition 2013, Vol. X, No. 4, pp. 53-68.
- 42 Philip Dorling, 'Military backs cyber warfare against foes', *The Age*, 8 May 2014.
- 43 Rory Metcalf, 'Towards a New Australian Security: speech by Professor Rory Metcalf', *ANU* [website], 17 March 2015, available at <<http://www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news-towards-a-new-australian-security-speech-by-professor-rory-metcalf>> accessed 17 March 2015.
- 44 Mark Eggleton, 'Confronting the new face of war', *The Australian Financial Review*, 16 March 2015.
- 45 Dorling, 'Military backs cyber warfare against foes'.
- 46 US Department of Defense, *The Department of Defense Cyber Strategy*, pp. 4 and 8.
- 47 James R. Burleigh, 'Cyber goes to war', *Air Force Print News Today* [website], 7 December 2012, available at <www.24af.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123329133> accessed 7 June 2015.

Thoughts on Generalship: lessons from two wars ¹

Major General Stephen Day, DSC, AM, Australian Army

Introduction

'Generalship' is an intellectual endeavour; generals must understand the character of war and create a vision of success. They must be resolute in their commitment and bold in their execution to achieve this success. But they must also never let go of their humanity, their compassion for innocent civilians, their own soldiers and even the enemy. In the abstract, this seems straightforward. But on the ground, when you are exhausted, when information is confused and you are being shot at, even straightforward things are difficult.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, I experienced the challenges and rewards of generalship. And the scale of those wars dwarfed my early experiences in Africa and East Timor. The positions I held were senior and privileged; the Deputy Operations Officer of the Multi National Force-Iraq, a force in excess of 400,000, and Chief of Plans for ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) Joint Command in Afghanistan for a force in excess of 100,000. As part of a small group of generals who met each morning to plan and direct the progress of these wars, I share responsibility for their prosecution. The eight key lessons that are outlined in this article come from my experience of war in Iraq and Afghanistan—the good and the bad.

We had learnt to be bold. This day we were not. On 22 February 2006, al Qaeda in Iraq attacked the most important of Shia mosques: the Golden Mosque of Samarra. We knew that this attack would enrage the majority Shia population which would then seek its revenge. We also knew that violent disorder would follow. But we did nothing. This was a deliberate decision. We would take a cautious path; we would wait and see how the Shia responded. That first night, as we waited, the Shia responded. Over 100 civilians were killed in reprisals in Baghdad alone and 47 were kidnapped, never to be seen again. That night we took a significant step towards civil war; it would take us almost two years to recover—and that recovery would cost thousands of lives. This was a failure of generalship.

In war, the lives of soldiers and civilians turn on decisions made by generals. The one certainty is that the generals will not always make the right decision. While I worked with some talented generals and learnt from our successes, we also made mistakes. I learnt a great deal more from those. Because some of those lessons were paid for in the lives of others, I have an obligation to record them and ensure they are passed on to my successors. This article is written to fulfil that obligation.

This is not a paper about strategy—any village idiot can tell you that a general has to get the strategy right. And the right strategy will depend on circumstance. Nor is this article intended as a comprehensive assessment of the two wars in which I served, Iraq and Afghanistan. That task I leave for another time—perhaps. This article describes the eight most important lessons I took from my war experiences. The lessons are a consequence of both the successes we enjoyed and the failures we suffered.

The fundamental duty is to win

While our government and community expect much of their generals, all that really matters is to win the war. Failure is not and should not be acceptable. Therefore, like cooks, generals will be excused for flaws in temperament as long as success is delivered.

One of the strangest debates over the two wars has focused on the question of whether 'winning' is an appropriate term. Can a counterinsurgency campaign ever be 'won'? What does winning mean? Does anyone ever win? I confess that I find this debate deeply frustrating and regard it as an intellectual *cul-de-sac*.

War is a competition. If there is no-one competing with you to achieve your aim, then you are not in a war. In a competition you can win or lose—or the competing parties can both win or both lose together. If

you do not enter a competition determined to win, then you will almost certainly lose. In fact, if you do not intend to win a war, it begs the question of what the hell are you doing there. Of course, there is a significant challenge in defining precisely what winning is. I will come to that in a moment.

When I arrived in Iraq in 2005, the notion of winning was rarely discussed but 'exit strategy' was a common topic. The dominant strategic discussion in-theatre focused on the question of when to commence force reduction and by how much. The key task for the planning staff was to develop a glide path for reduction. They developed a timeline that provided options for suitable points to 'off-ramp' brigade combat teams.

For our Commander, these magnificent fighting formations were the basic building blocks of his force. When and where to accept the 'off-ramping' of brigade combat teams represented the generals' most difficult conversation in 2005. And, because it was such a focus, 'force drawdown' became the narrative. As a consequence, we were less willing to hunt, we reduced our profile and we mixed less with the populace—grave errors in prosecuting a war of counterinsurgency.

The effect of this mindset became clear to me in September 2005. Al Qaeda in Iraq raised its black flag over an Iraqi town for the first time, at least in the memory of any of us in-theatre. The town was Al Qa'im, located at the western extremity of the Euphrates valley, close to the border with Syria. This was a problem. It was a clear signal that al Qaeda in Iraq was growing in influence. Furthermore, in the following month the Iraqi people were to vote in a constitutional referendum and, two months after that, in a parliamentary election. Both of these were crucial steps for the nation and thus for our campaign. With the flag of al Qaeda in Iraq flying over the town, it was clear that people in that area were not going to be able to vote freely.

For several weeks, the division responsible for that area did nothing. The mindset of the exit strategy had taken hold. The lack of response and the upcoming elections prompted the Force Commander to visit the division and direct a westward clearance: to Haditha by mid-October and Al Qa'im by mid-December. This was sensible but the impact of the drawdown narrative on the prosecution of operations was unmistakable.

As we entered 2006, the force drawdown shifted from narrative to implementation. In February 2006, we had two fewer combat brigades than in December 2005. From a theatre-wide perspective, this reduction did not substantially limit our combat capability, particularly as the Iraqi army was growing in numbers and, albeit more slowly, in competence. But the momentum to reduce the force and our operational activity would be difficult to change, even if circumstances altered and dictated that this would be necessary.

Well, in that same month, February 2006, circumstances did change. Al Qaeda in Iraq launched an attack that was to become one of the defining moments of the war—an attack on the Golden Mosque of Samarra. The Mosque was elegant, ancient and, more significantly, one of the most important Shia religious sites in Iraq. The attack represented the most confronting and inflammatory action against the Shia since the war started. It triggered widespread sectarian violence, Sunni and Shia against one another, across the length and breadth of Iraq. The surge in violence and the dramatic shift in its nature from a predominantly-Sunni insurgency against us, to Sunni and Shia against one another, prompted us to consider reviewing our strategy. The Chief of Plans led a session to discuss that possibility. As was the practice, I attended the key planning sessions for the operations staff.

The review session was heated. Disagreement among senior officers is both normal and necessary given what is at stake—in fact, if there is no disagreement, you have a problem. The Chief of Plans and his key staff argued that no change to the plan was needed. They asserted that while the bombing had intensified the level of Iraqi-on-Iraqi violence, this did not represent a change in the character of the struggle. They argued that, for some time, the struggle had featured an element of sectarian violence as well as the insurgency, and that our current strategy accommodated this. I disagreed. I argued that a fundamental shift was underway; the struggle was changing to one between Iraqi ethnic and sectarian groups for the political and economic power of Iraq, and away from the fight against us. As a consequence, I concluded, we needed to adjust our strategy. At the session's conclusion, the Chief of Plans decided that a change in strategy was required and that he would so brief the Commander (and US Ambassador) the next day.

As I was the one who had convinced the Chief of Plans that we needed to change, he asked me to attend the briefing to the Commander and the Ambassador. But it clashed with a regular meeting with the Iraqi Joint Command that I usually attended as the most senior officer from the force, so I excused myself from the Chief of Plans' briefing. The briefing did not go well; the Commander and the US Ambassador categorically rejected the proposal for the development of a new strategy. There would be no change to our approach; the drawdown of forces would continue.

The Chief of Plans was angry with me. I had convinced him to change his position but was not there with him to put the case when it really mattered. He was right; I had attended the wrong meeting. I was never to repeat this mistake.

The telling realisation was that the mindset to win had been overshadowed by the mindset of the 'exit strategy' and this had blinded the leadership to the need to change our plan. Famously, in the following year, 2007, there was a change in plan—the surge. The force drawdown mentality was put to the sword and the need to secure a better outcome became the driving idea. Significantly, the surge concept was developed out of theatre and was executed with a new command team—the best way to change strategy is to change the generals.

Generals have no place in a war if they are not determined to win. They have no right to be leading soldiers and asking them to risk their very lives if they do not believe they can win. Napoleon put it this way: 'if you vow to take Vienna, take Vienna'.

You need to begin with the end—you need a vision for success

If you are to win the war, you need a clear concept of what winning is; so you need to start with the end. You need to understand with unambiguous clarity what it is you are striving to achieve. And your explanation must be both compelling and simple. If you do not have a clear understanding of what winning or success looks like, you risk defeat or a lazy meander. And a lazy meander will cost blood, which a general has a duty to minimise.

In 2005 in Iraq, we—the coalition generals—thought we knew what we were trying to achieve. We would say that we were protecting the political process; there was to be a referendum on the new constitution and a national election in the second half of 2005. We would say that we were improving security to create the space in which normality could be restored. And we would say that we were rebuilding the Iraqi Security Forces so that we could transition security responsibility to them and reduce our footprint.

But these three—protecting the political process, improving security and training Iraqis—were merely lines of activity. In other words, we knew the 'how' of our business but not the 'what', and had confused the two. So, while it was far from obvious at the time, we meandered in search of a successful outcome that we had not identified. What would have been the correct 'what'? The answer: to defeat the insurgency.

In 2012 in Afghanistan, what the coalition was trying to achieve was clear enough: deliver a sufficiently stable nation-state to prevent its use as a base for international terrorists. In looking at the requisite foundations for a nation-state in strife-torn Afghanistan, I was in no doubt that this was going to be difficult but not impossible.

This was a country without a long history of effective central government. Nor was there an encouraging history of supporting national institutions such as a bureaucracy, security forces or an education system. There was very little infrastructure and next to nothing on which to base a national economy. Drug money was the biggest income earner behind foreign aid. Simply put, 'nation-state' was not in the recent experience or psyche of the Afghan people. At least we knew what we were trying to achieve, even if it was going to be tough to deliver.

The vision for success is, of course, owned by the political class. The general's responsibility is to assist them to develop it and to provide frank advice on its achievability. The political leadership may decide on a vision for success that generals believe to be extremely difficult to achieve. So be it: the responsibility for what the war is attempting to achieve is owned by the political class. I am reminded of Abraham Lincoln's comments to a cautious Major General McClellan; 'if General McClellan does not want to use the

Army, I would like to borrow it for a time'. Generals may not agree with the vision for success but they must never depart for war without a clear understanding of what it is.

Understand the character of the war

As a junior officer, it struck me as odd that Clausewitz devoted so much effort—all of the first book of his *On War*—to discussion of the character of war. It seemed clear enough that the Napoleonic wars were state-on-state conventional conflicts, as were the two world wars, and that Vietnam was a counterinsurgency. Perhaps for some conflicts it is obvious from the beginning. No doubt some observers of both the Afghan and Iraq wars will argue that they knew the character of the struggle all along. But the in-theatre experience showed me that reading the character of a conflict is not always easy.

In Afghanistan in early 2012, as we planned for operations across the theatre, there was tension between us and our Afghan partners. Underpinning our (ISAF Joint Command) proposed plan for operations was our assessment that we were facing an insurgency based in the south.

I had problems persuading my Afghan counterparts to agree that our plan should focus its main effort in the south. They kept bringing the conversation back to a need to address the situation in the east. There was no doubt that there had been troubling activity in the east and the best trained of our opponents, the Haqqani network, operated from that area. But I felt that our Afghan partners were chasing the wrong issues. It just did not make sense to me to shift the main effort from the south to the east and risk losing Kandahar.

For several weeks, we made little progress on the plan and relationships became increasingly strained. I asked to speak privately with my Afghan counterpart and told him we had a problem. He said 'no, you have a problem; you have assumed that we see the war the same way you do'. He was right. We had not discussed our views on the character of the conflict with our partners, simply because of a subconscious assumption by us that they thought as we did. So then we engaged them in the discussion with which we should have opened our partnership.

Our Afghan partners regarded the conflict more as a conventional state-on-state struggle. They were confident that the Taliban in the south could be managed by tribal balancing, government programs and power-sharing. They were more concerned at the threat posed by Pakistan from the east. They were alarmed by regular Pakistani artillery fire into the provinces of eastern Afghanistan. The approaches to the capital, Kabul, from Pakistan are the shortest from the east and they believed that the Haqqani network, based in the east, was a tool of the Pakistani state being used to destabilise Afghanistan and keep the nation weak.

We assessed Kandahar as the centre of gravity for the insurgency in Afghanistan. It was the historical, cultural and psychological base for insurgents and without it they had no base from which to threaten Kabul. Deny the insurgents Kandahar and you denied them the capital. And, while the capital did not control the nation's economic and political power to the extent the capital of a well-established and coherent nation-state traditionally does, it remained the prize. It was the only location from which a government could influence both the north and the south of the country. Denying the insurgency the capital denied it the ability to exercise control across the nation.

While the conversation on the character of the war was difficult, without it we could never have arrived at a sensible plan to fight it. Our discussion revealed that our Afghan military colleagues were under political pressure from provincial governors in the east to do more in their provinces. We had always been conscious of the challenges in the east but we realised that we needed to be much more explicit in acknowledging them and in explaining what we were doing about them. Having had these conversations, we—the partnership—decided to retain the main effort in the south, with the east as a significant but supporting effort.

While the Iraq War began in 2003 as a conventional state-on-state conflict, one year on it had clearly changed. For those on the ground, 2004 was a point of inflection. Our enemy had concluded that their best course of action was to change the character of the war, and they decided on insurgent warfare. Our enemy had chosen the character of warfare that would dictate the next five or so years of war.

It took months of critical debate in-theatre, as the fighting intensified and coalition casualties mounted, for the generals to agree on the character of the war that was unfolding around them. And they did so in the knowledge that this was not a judgment that would be welcomed by the political leadership, which is principally why it took them so long to reach a decision. In 2003, it became apparent that an insurgency was developing but the political leadership in Washington eschewed the term. It would revive the ghost of Vietnam and mean a commitment measured in years; this was not the war they had signed up to fight. In 2004, the generals obtained reluctant political concurrence that they were fighting an insurgency and prepared the campaign plan accordingly.

Less than two years later, in the wake of the attack on the Golden Mosque of Samarra, widespread sectarian violence erupted pitting Sunni against Shia. For two months, in early 2006, while Iraqis fought among themselves, we restarted the debate on the character of the war. Were we now facing a civil war? We sought advice from military theorists and ambassadors. We reached back as far as the American Civil War and looked also at recent conflicts in Africa. We concluded that there had been a shift in the decisive struggle; the character of the war had changed. Inexcusably, it took us too long to adapt our approach.

Determining the character of the war in which you are involved may not be straightforward, and you must be alert to the possibility that it has changed during the campaign. Generals must commit time and intellect to its assessment and be prepared to meet political resistance to that assessment along the way. What is clear is that if you misunderstand the character of the war, the strategy you develop will be wrong and you will lose.

It's about the war, not the battle

Harry Summers was a distinguished US strategic thinker, although he is more famous for a conversation with a North Vietnamese Army officer during peace negotiations at the end of the Vietnam War. Summers asserted that US forces had never been beaten by North Vietnamese Army forces on the battlefield. 'That is true,' acknowledged the North Vietnamese officer, 'but it is also irrelevant'. The aim, he implied, was to win the war not the battles. The Americans had effectively won the battles but lost the war.

An early indicator that we had forgotten that conversation was the fact that the coalition prosecuted the invasion of Iraq without an adequately-formed plan beyond the defeat of Saddam Hussein's regime. The role of the force was narrowly conceived; the focus was fixed firmly on the fighting. Activity that looked different from military action, often categorised as 'nation building', was shunned.

Yet a key to building the support of the Iraqi people for our operations was to deliver basic services such as water and power. Our opponents knew that. So they frequently targeted water and power infrastructure to deprive the people of basic services and discredit our endeavours. While we understood that we needed to deliver basic services, we never decisively committed to this. It did not sit easily with our culture—primarily a culture of battle. The force was much more comfortable fighting and skirmishing up and down the Euphrates River valley against groups of insurgents. So that is what we did.

The word 'battle' dominated our mindset. In headquarters and operations centres, we no longer had 'duty officers' or 'watch officers', we had 'battle captains' and 'battle majors'. We no longer had operations updates—these were now battle updates. Headquarters no longer had daily routines, they followed 'battle rhythms'. Even our own national headquarters, HQ Joint Task Force 633, which was not directly involved in combat operations, had a 'battle rhythm'.

The first sitting of the freely-elected Iraqi Parliament on 16 March 2006 was a very important day in our campaign. We had talked a great deal about it. The parliamentary sitting would be the ideal counter to the deadly sectarian violence that had followed the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra.

So it was unfortunate that a brigade combat team was permitted to prioritise the battle over the war. The brigade launched a battalion air assault on the same day that parliament was to sit. The assault may well have gone unremarked except that it was accompanied by a very professional media plan. While there was no contact with the enemy, the images of assembled helicopters and battle-ready soldiers amid the dust and sand made great television. There were live crosses throughout the day from key networks.

The news of the sitting of parliament was swamped by the dust and media excitement of the air assault. Our political leaders were unhappy. Our Commander had to answer to President Bush. I was tasked to explain our actions to the Iraqi Prime Minister. He lectured me for an hour.

In 2012, the Afghan President was both vocal and public in his criticism every time our actions led to civilian casualties. And after each incident he called for restrictions on our use of firepower, particularly air-delivered weapons. One such incident occurred in Logar province in eastern Afghanistan just before dawn on 17 June.

Our forces were targeting a local Taliban commander and a small number of his Taliban fighters. They were holed up in a civilian housing complex. Our forces came under small-arms fire as they closed in and so called in air strikes on the fighters in the complex. When the dust settled, aside from the Taliban fighters, it became clear that 18 civilians, including seven children, had also been killed.

Our commander acted. He knew that the tragedy of this incident would drive Afghans against us, help our enemy's recruitment campaign, and further destabilise an already difficult relationship with the Afghan President. The commander issued a directive that banned us from calling in air-delivered munitions against civilian dwellings. He took plenty of push-back from within the force, including criticism that he was putting his soldiers' lives at risk. But he assessed that it would be better to pull back and go after the Taliban some other time rather than risk the lives of innocent civilians. His message to the force was that we had to prioritise the war over the tactical battle.

A general who thinks war is just about the fighting is destined to fail. Success rests on the outcome of the war, not the battles.

If you have a choice, take the bold option

In February 2006, at a place in Baghdad we called 'Spaghetti Junction', we had a problem. Lawlessness was keeping all but the unsuspecting away. Contractors would not traverse the area. Attacks against coalition and Iraqi security forces were launched from the area. An Iraqi divisional commander was killed by a sniper. And a week after the infamous Samarra Mosque bombing, the local population, a mix of Sunni and Shia, began to kill one another.

The Force Commander provided direction: he wanted a brigade of tanks to be deployed to the area overnight and to commence operations at dawn. I considered this unnecessarily risky. Commanders would not have time to properly reconnoitre the area and would be vulnerable to the enemy who had been ensconced there for some time. We would have to leave one of our vital supply routes vulnerable by taking a tank battalion from a route-security mission. And it was unnecessary. A combination of ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance), attack helicopters and infantry was available and could do the job.

The Commander listened, accepted my points, and ordered that the tanks be deployed anyway. Within 48 hours the enemy had been silenced, the locals calmed down and the press were congratulating us. This was a bold and successful decision, one that demonstrated the Commander's willpower, although no-one had supported his plan. In fact, all of us who spoke said it was unnecessarily risky.

This successful decision stands in contrast to that taken a week earlier in the wake of the attack on the Golden Mosque of Samarra. A couple of hours after the attack we—the operations staff—wanted to put emergency measures in place to protect the Sunni population from the likely Shia retaliation. We proposed an immediate vehicle ban, a curfew from last light, an increase in security forces in mixed Sunni/Shia areas in Baghdad, and the deployment of the theatre reserve. The Commander returned from his meeting with the Iraqi Prime Minister and advised that we would employ emergency measures cautiously. The population was tiring of them and we might risk losing further popular support. We would wait to see how the situation developed. In the days that followed and as we waited, over a thousand civilians were killed. The leadership had been too cautious, too risk averse; this was a significant failure.

Now, I could certainly find some examples of occasions when being cautious paid off. On the other hand, there was not a single occasion when we were bold and regretted that boldness. My message is that in war, if you have a choice, take the bold option—go hard.

Never let go of your humanity

War is a dehumanising experience for all concerned. All our civilising influences—family, the comforts of home, regular meals, routine rest, personal safety—are removed. Soldiers live and sleep rough. They see and are involved in unspeakable events. And the constant fear of danger can slowly drain one's inner strength. A soldier's humanity and compassion for fellow human beings can begin to erode. In this atmosphere, the wall of integrity and discipline that separates an honourable soldier from an armed thug is severely tested.

Some of us in uniform are frustrated by the inclination of the media to join a wrongful act with the fact that the perpetrator has some affiliation with the military, no matter how remote the relationship between the two. We should not be frustrated. This reporting serves as a constant reminder of the nation's expectations of our behaviour and the values that should underpin it. These are the values we carry on operations. These are the values that are the foundation of our actions. These are the values that are the best guarantee we will act appropriately—that we will do what is right.

A culture that places self-sacrifice, discipline and subordination to the needs of the group, and compassion for those it is one's duty to protect, is essential to group cohesion, combat efficiency and operational success.

In my role as Deputy Operations Officer in Iraq, I was responsible for compiling target packages for the approval of the four-star commanding general. His approval was usually only sought for targets in which the estimated number of civilians likely to be harmed exceeded the limit delegated to the corps commander. One afternoon, I received a proposal to bomb a gathering of around 50 insurgents. The corps commander had endorsed the proposal but the number of possible civilian casualties exceeded his authority, and the attack required the commanding general's approval.

The insurgents had gathered in a school. To minimise the risk to schoolchildren, the attack was to be prosecuted at night. But because schools were regarded by some families as safer places to sleep than their homes, the estimated number of possible civilian casualties remained high at 27. The benefits of taking out 50 insurgents were indisputable but not at any cost, and certainly not at the estimated cost. Although the proposal was permitted under the rules of engagement (ROE), I advised the corps headquarters that I would not put my name to it and that I would recommend the same to the commanding general.

It was not always easy to get the corps commander's attention but I did that day. With memorable directness, he reminded me of the deaths suffered by our own troops in that area in recent days and of the atrocities that the insurgents were visiting on the civilian population. He acknowledged the risk to civilians but asked whether I had forgotten we were fighting a war. The notion that you may be risking the lives of your own troops to minimise the risk to others brings an incommunicable pressure. One of the great challenges in war is that you must at once use both extreme violence and extreme humanity. I had the support of the commanding general that day; the attack did not proceed.

Your job as a general is not only to exhibit humanity but to demand the same of your soldiers. A junior Australian soldier in Iraq demonstrated the importance of values in a moment of danger. He was with three armoured vehicles and their crew at a makeshift range test-firing their weapons. The vehicles were stationary and the rear ramps were down. Inside was ammunition, including grenades. Out of the corner of his eye he saw two Iraqi youths running towards the rear of one of the vehicles. A young man running towards coalition soldiers often signalled a suicide bomber. He yelled to them to stop. They kept coming.

Australian ROE forbade the firing of warning shots. In the second or so he had left to act, his mind buzzed with possibilities. It was highly likely that he and his mates were about to be attacked by suicide bombers and he had a responsibility to protect his mates. But he could not be certain that the youths were suicide bombers. While they were not responding to his shouts, they might heed a warning shot. If he were to fire a warning shot, he would be in contravention of his ROE and possibly subject to military discipline. He did

not want to kill two innocent youths but he had to take some action to ensure the safety of his mates. He fired a warning shot; the youths stopped. They were not suicide bombers; they were just teenage boys racing to collect some of the brass cartridges that had been expended in the test-firing of the weapons.

The soldier was instinctively guided by his values and his humanity, and contravened his ROE. He reacted exactly as we would want in that situation. He was formally charged. Fortunately, he had a tenacious commanding officer who eventually convinced the relevant authority to drop the charges and common sense prevailed.

If you need to make a judgment on the likely performance of a military force on operations, your best guide will not be the quality of its legal framework, or the size of the force or the calibre of its weapons. It will be its values, its ethos. We need to be ruled by our values, not valued for our rules.

For generals, this means that we must never let humanity be dominated by rules or process. It means creating an environment in which soldiers understand that the same is expected of them.

Fight for unity of command—if you cannot achieve this, focus on unity of effort

Unity of command is one of the few formally-declared principles of war. Inculcated into us from the beginning of our careers, we are taught that while adherence to the principles of war will not necessarily guarantee success, we ignore them at our peril.

At no time in Iraq or Afghanistan did I observe unity of command at the operational or strategic level—at least not to an extent which satisfied commanders and staff. And we spent plenty of energy trying to achieve this.

In both theatres, although it was more the case in Afghanistan than Iraq, the list of contributing nations and components was long and varied. Within the military, we had conventional land forces, special forces and air forces, none of which wanted to be under the direct authority of another. Outside the military, we had civilian intelligence agencies, civilian police and diplomats. And, of course, none of these wanted to be under the authority of anyone else either. Overlaying all this was the national authority from each troop-contributing nation. This was not such a challenge in Iraq, with some six contributing nations during the time I was there, but Afghanistan was an entirely different matter, with as many as 49 countries involved.

If you cannot achieve unity of command, then you must focus on achieving unity of effort. The Commander in Iraq tried to achieve unity of effort through the production of a joint mission statement. The statement was co-signed by the Commander, representing the military components, and the US Ambassador to Iraq, representing the civilian components. The real benefit lay not so much in the joint mission statement itself but the crucial months of discussion and debate that preceded its signature.

We were not able to achieve effective unity of effort in Afghanistan. Our efforts with the Afghan National Police exemplified the challenge. The police had pockets of excellence but these were overshadowed by the challenges. The Ministry was hollow, corruption was endemic and, while approximately 20,000 officers had uniforms and guns, they had no training whatsoever. Furthermore, Afghan police were being killed in greater numbers than Afghan soldiers. The police were in need of focus, assistance and attention but the international community in Afghanistan could not agree on what was required.

Outside the Afghan authorities, there were three separate international entities whose task it was to advise on policing: ISAF, EUPOL Afghanistan and the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB). We in ISAF sought police involvement in counterinsurgency operations; EUPOL argued that they should remain in traditional policing roles and focus on what they termed 'de-militarising' the police. The IPCB was run by diplomats with no experience of policing or counterinsurgency operations. As a consequence, our efforts were divided and we pulled the Afghan police in conflicting directions. Our failure to achieve unity of effort meant that there was little improvement in the Afghan police in 2012, and they continued to die at unacceptable rates.

Fight for unity of command. If you cannot achieve this, then focus on achieving unity of effort.

Information operations—they are the senior leader’s business

In both wars, I consider the execution of our information operations to have been unsatisfactory. This was because senior leaders, in general, did not invest sufficient personal effort in these operations. And this was partially because our information operations were far too complex.

In both campaigns, we swept up a number of apparently-disparate operations under the capstone concept of information operations. While there are theoretical reasons to link, for example, public affairs with electronic warfare, intuitively the two do not go together. And when you add civil–military and deception operations to that mix, it is easy to become befuddled. I did. As is our tendency when confronted with the complex, we created a specialist staff to meet the challenge. Information operations then became a black art that we left to the specialists.

I concluded that an overarching concept that ties in, among other elements, deception operations and cyber security with public affairs is neither necessary nor helpful. We are better off with more concepts that are smaller and more easily understood. And the synchronisation of these concepts should be left to the commander in the field rather than the military academic in the classroom.

When I was in Iraq, we took out the runners-up prize for information operations. The Commander did not routinely deal with the media. This duty was delegated to a spokesman. The spokesman was a conscientious and articulate Air Force officer. But this was a ground war, and the spokesman was not in charge. Despite his considerable ability and effort, he struggled to achieve the necessary credibility. Consequently, we were effectively unable to convey our message—to our enemy, to the Iraqi people, the international community or even our own forces.

We did not have a public face for our efforts, a leader in whom we could place our trust. And so, in the tough days of February 2006 following the bombing of the Golden Mosque, confidence in our leadership and in what we were doing began to wane. This was a failure of generalship.

Information operations are the senior leader’s business. They are not, nor must we let them become, a black art. They must be command, not staff driven. When the commander personally leads the effort, when he becomes the public face of the effort, success is more likely to follow.

Some 15 years ago, the Commander of the International Forces in East Timor, General Peter Cosgrove, showed us how to do it. Each week he stood before the world explaining what we were doing and why we were doing it. He won and maintained the support of the Australian and international communities for his command.

Conclusion

I started with a purpose to identify the key lessons from my experience of war that I would never forget, some of which cost soldiers and civilians their lives. These are those key lessons:

- Your fundamental duty is to win;
- Identify what winning looks like—you need a vision for success;
- Know and understand the character of the war and be alert to the possibility that it can change during your campaign;
- It’s about the war, not just the fighting or the battles;
- If you have options, take the bold one—we never took a bold option and regretted it;
- Never let go of your humanity—and create an environment in which your soldiers retain their’s;
- Fight for unity of command—if you cannot achieve this, focus on unity of effort; and
- Information operations are the senior leader’s business.

From these eight areas of experience of wartime generalship, three themes emerge. First, generalship is an intellectual endeavour; the most important space on the battlefield is that between a general's ears. The challenge of understanding the character of the war, creating a vision of success and the method to achieve this are substantially more difficult in war—you need the best brains working on this.

Second, once intellect is applied to the challenge ahead, a general must resolutely commit to achieving it and be bold in its execution; generals need to go hard or go home. Third, the drive for success must accommodate compassion; generals must never let go of their humanity. You must never let go of your compassion for your soldiers, for your enemy and, in particular, for the innocent civilians caught up in war.

As a professional experience, my time in the Iraq and Afghan wars was indispensable. I held privileged and senior positions: the Deputy Operations Officer for the Multi National Force-Iraq, a force of over 400,000 (this included the Iraqi Security Forces over which we exercised operational command), and the Chief of Plans for ISAF Joint Command in Afghanistan, a force of over 100,000. We were served by the most advanced technology available. For the most part, I was surrounded and supported by committed professionals. In both theatres, I was a member of a small group of generals who met each morning to plan and direct the progress of the wars. So I share the responsibility for the prosecution of those wars—the good and the bad.

Mine was a position of rare privilege, an extraordinary opportunity for an ordinary Australian. But as a human experience, it was wretched, and in this I would single out Iraq in particular. To be at war is to be transported into the blackest corner of human activity. Unspeakable things happen in war. And in response, you plan and regulate operations that very often result in death and maiming—which are then counted and reported on. You are deprived of sleep; exhaustion is your constant companion. What is required of you is to strain every sinew of competence, flex every muscle of courage, and draw on every drop of your humanity. You can leave nothing in reserve, even when confronted by the most intense of experiences.

Major General Stephen Day has had extensive operational service, including deployments with the UN Transitional Assistance Force in Namibia in 1989/90, International Forces East Timor in 1999/2000, the Multi National Force-Iraq in 2005/2006 and the International Security Assistance Force-Afghanistan in 2012.

In between regimental postings, General Day has held a variety of appointments ranging from Staff Officer to the Chief of Defence Force to the senior planning officer at Headquarters Joint Operational Command. He has also attended Defence colleges in Australia, Malaysia, and the US, and has qualifications from universities in New South Wales, Canberra, Melbourne and Malaysia.

His recent appointments include Commander 7th Brigade in Brisbane, Head Joint Capability Coordination at Defence Headquarters in Canberra, and the Chief of Plans of ISAF Joint Command in Afghanistan. He is the current Head of Cyber for Defence and is also the inaugural Coordinator of the new Australian Cyber Security Centre.

Notes

¹ This article was published as an 'Army Insights Paper' in June 2015, produced by the Directorate of Future Land Warfare as part of the Army Research Papers series. It is reprinted with permission of the Directorate of Future Land Warfare.

Australia and Solomon Islands: what next after 14 years of regional assistance?

Dr Stephanie Koorey, Deakin University

Introduction

In July 2003, Australia committed to sending troops, police and civilians into Solomon Islands—a country in crisis and the third Australian intervention into a neighbouring country in seven years. The reasons behind the intervention were promoted as preventing the country from becoming a ‘failed state’ and thus a ‘safe haven for transnational criminals and even terrorists’.¹ Importantly, the Government of Solomon Islands requested Australia’s assistance and quickly enacted legislation to allow the intervention.

The subsequent mission, known colloquially as RAMSI (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands), was undertaken with a coalition of other Pacific countries, although Australia consistently held the lead. It is due to withdraw in 2017, having downsized significantly already over recent years. While the situation on the ground is currently relatively secure and stable, there is an enduring sense that this is only the case because RAMSI remains. When the mission finally leaves Solomon Islands in a year’s time, will it be so only to return again, and for the same reasons?

Solomon Islands and the evolution of the conflict

Solomon Islands is an island group to Australia’s northeast in the Southwest Pacific ocean. Its closest neighbour is the province of Bougainville in PNG, just 20 kilometres from the northern tip of Solomon Islands. It lies approximately 2000 kilometres, slightly over three hours’ flight time, from Australia’s Queensland coast. Solomon Islands is comprised of almost 1000 islands, including nine large island groups. The capital, Honiara, is based on Guadalcanal, one of the larger islands, neighbouring the island of Malaita.

Between 1998 and 2003, Solomon Islands descended into economic collapse, chaos and armed conflict, a period referred to as ‘the tensions’ in Solomon Islands. While the casualty figures were relatively low, forced evictions and displacements, and a population-wide fear of armed militants, as well as the incapacity of the government to respond effectively, were significant in creating insecurity and instability.² Identifying root causes of conflict are fraught with difficulties. However, the underlying causes of the conflict in Solomon Islands are said to be both deep-seated traditional issues of land and compensation, perceptions and promotion of ethnic differences, poor handling of government revenue, and transmigration to Honiara, all aggravated by uneven economic development and resource extraction.

By late 1998, violent civil unrest had broken out on Guadalcanal, particularly targeting Malaitan settlers who were seen by Gualese as creating land and employment pressures. The perpetrators initially called themselves the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army, then the Isatabu Freedom Fighters, finally arriving at Isatabu Freedom Movement. Towards the end of 1998 and into 1999, the Isatabu Freedom Movement’s violence included several murders, sexual assaults, intimidation and forceful evictions of Malaitan settlers. By mid-1999, an estimated 20,000 people had been evicted from their homes in settlements on Guadalcanal.³ This figure grew to approximately 25,000 over subsequent years.⁴

By the beginning of 2000, and in response to the violence perpetrated against them by the Isatabu Freedom Movement, displaced Malaitans had formed their own group called the Malaita Eagle Force. It had the support of Malaitan business leaders, and from within the Royal Solomon Islands Police, with Malaitan police officers joining them to attack Isatabu Freedom Movement areas in Guadalcanal.⁵ On 5 June 2000, the Malaita Eagle Force, with the assistance of supporters from inside the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, looted the police armoury at Rove near Honiara, and Auki on Malaita, and forced Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa’alu to resign.⁶

Australia's responses

In 2000, Solomon Islands religious and peace organisations rose to negotiate peace agreements, assisted by the Australian and New Zealand governments. On 2 August, an agreement was signed on board the Australian Navy ship HMAS *Tobruk*. It collapsed within a day. Further negotiations resulted in the 'Townsville Peace Agreement', signed two months later on 15 October 2000.

The Agreement suspended violence between the Malaita Eagle Force and Isatabu Freedom Movement militias. A monitoring team from Australia, New Zealand, Cook Islands and Vanuatu entered Solomon Islands. Part of the Agreement's remit was to disarm the groups, which were required to voluntarily surrender firearms and ammunition.⁷ It expired in October 2002, with the surrender of weapons barely successful.⁸ Approximately 500 firearms were still loose, in the hands of those formerly associated with the militias.

Crime was also rife. Special constables were created, as adjuncts to the police force, many of whom were 'amnestied' former Malaitan militants. In the weeks that followed, major industries collapsed and the country's economy weakened further. The breakdown in law and order expanded to remote and rural areas, particularly the southern coast of Guadalcanal, the Weather Coast, and to northern Malaita. On the Weather Coast, a particularly vicious militia emerged, headed by Harold Keke.

In January 2003, then Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer emphatically stated that Australia would not be sending troops to Solomon Islands. Downer contended that not only would such an intervention 'fail to solve the problem' but he was particularly acute to potential allegations of 'recolonisation', and decried the idea as 'folly in the extreme'.⁹ Yet on 22 April, the Solomon Islands Prime Minister, Sir Allan Kemakeza, wrote to Prime Minister Howard, and although not the first time that Solomon Islands had asked for Australian assistance, this time it was followed by a meeting in Canberra on 5 June.¹⁰

Five days later, on 10 June, the Canberra-based Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) published a paper titled 'Our Failing Neighbour: Australia and the future of Solomon Islands'.¹¹ It was not alone in reaching the conclusion of state failure. Earlier in the year, *The Economist* had asserted that 'the Solomon Islands faces the prospect of becoming the Pacific's first failed state'.¹² Such predictions took place against Australia committing troops to US-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, a mounting fear of international terrorism, and a growing academic discourse on failing and fragile states. The concern in Australia was that becoming a failed state would not only generate a humanitarian crisis for Solomon Islands but that it could become a sanctuary for rogue elements, such as transnational criminals and terrorists, all on Australia's doorstep and only months after 88 Australians were killed in the 2002 Bali bombing.

ASPI's publication had previously been circulated and familiarised in Canberra policy circles by its principal author, Elsin Wainright, and then ASPI Executive Director, Hugh White, who had previously been Deputy Secretary for Strategy and Intelligence in Defence.¹³ Being alerted to the report and its proposed recommendations allowed policy-makers and political leaders to consider carefully why and how Australia could or should not intervene.¹⁴ The decision was made to intervene and, on 23 July, Prime Minister Howard farewellled the first RAMSI contingent.

In a subsequent speech to Parliament, Prime Minister Howard listed the reasons why RAMSI was necessary, saying that beyond what he termed 'endemic violence', he was concerned about corruption and used the term 'failed state', linking it to enabling a 'safe haven for transnational criminals and even terrorists', also asserting that 'the time for guns is over'.¹⁵ Along similar lines, Hugh White in the introduction to the ASPI paper had reiterated Australia's responsibilities to Pacific, saying:

A little-known clause in Australia's Constitution assigns to the Federal Government responsibility 'for managing the relations of the Commonwealth with the islands of the Pacific' ... testifying to the permanence of Australia's strategic interests in the pattern of islands that punctuate the approaches to our island continent, and to the enduring challenges that Australia faces in upholding those interests in such small, remote, complex and socially fragile lands.¹⁶

The result was an Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-led mission, police-heavy but with ADF support. Importantly, it had the blessing of the Pacific Regional Forum, and went at the invitation of the Solomon Islands Government. The mission had a tri-fold imperative to restore law and justice, and to improve both economic governance and the machinery of government.

The economic governance pillar was aimed at restoring government finances and promoting economic reform to generate growth. The machinery of government pillar was aimed at rebuilding core institutions of the state, including accountability institutions, such as the public ombudsman. The law and justice pillar was about removing the firearms and enforcing strong penalties for the possession of firearms after an initial amnesty, and rebuilding the police, justice and corrections structures and systems.

RAMSI was considered a turning point in Australian foreign policy—a policy which was not afraid to intervene with armed force in the Pacific, and to do so with the machinery not just of Defence but in a whole-of-government manner.¹⁷ Originally intended to last only a few months, with one garrison staying up to 12 months, RAMSI will be 13 years old in 2016, and 14 when due to depart in 2017.¹⁸ It has also come at an estimated financial cost to Australia of at least \$2.6 billion, the vast majority being expended on the law and justice pillar.¹⁹

An obvious question is whether this effort and cost has been effective in restoring enduring peace and stability to Solomon Islands. The answer is ‘possibly’. However, in addition to sentiments expressed to the author during field research in the Solomons in October 2014, repeated surveys in Solomon Islands indicate that Solomon Islanders have a strong belief that RAMSI’s presence, albeit now significantly scaled back, is the only reason the country has not collapsed back into conflict.²⁰

Nevertheless, there are efforts to disavow this perception. One is the imminent re-armament of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force in preparation for taking back responsibility for maintaining rule of law. This is a particularly sensitive issue, given that the Solomon Islands police were so instrumental in perpetrating violence during the tensions.

Firearms, law and order

A key component of the restoration of law and justice pillar was the removal of firearms from the militias, reflecting Prime Minister Howard’s determined message that ‘the time for guns is over’.²¹ It was also clearly and publicly articulated by the first head of RAMSI, Nick Warner, that the removal of ‘armed thugs’ from the streets of Honiara was a RAMSI priority.²² Indeed, in commenting on the policing lead in RAMSI, then Assistant Commissioner Ben McDevitt contended in 2006 that:

Honiara was under the sway of armed criminal elements. In more remote areas ... self-proclaimed warlords and thugs with guns created no-go zones where they committed horrific crimes at will. These groups were largely unopposed by an almost totally ineffective police force.²³

Repeatedly since, the Australian Government has cited the looting and distribution of firearms in Solomon Islands as a key reason for Australia’s commitments to small arms control.²⁴ The academic literature is also unapologetic in the link between even minimal numbers of these weapons and insecurity. In particular, David Capie noted in 2003 that ‘[t]he collapse of the Solomon Islands ... shows how quickly the uncontrolled circulation of a small number of weapons can reduce a country to near anarchy’.²⁵

Acknowledging the source of the weapons, however, is critical. Leakage—involving the loss, sale or pilfering of official or legal stocks from within the country—rather than gun trafficking, is the most significant source of illicit small arms in the Pacific. Philip Alpers and Conor Twyford, for example, note that:

Small arms stolen or otherwise obtained from security force armouries have featured prominently in all three conflicts in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Bougainville. Indeed, in each of these conflicts, access to state armouries—often with the complicity or open support of the security forces—has been pivotal.²⁶

Alpers and Twyford further point out that access to poorly-secured armouries has not only resulted in the misuse and negative effects as attributed to small arms elsewhere but that illicit small arms have been

'instrumental in undermining democratic institutions in the Pacific'.²⁷ Commentators believe that as many as 3500 weapons, many taken from the police and from police armouries, were in circulation during tensions in the Solomon Islands.²⁸ Alpers and Twyford also found that hand-made or craft-produced firearms comprised almost three-quarters of the weapons handed in during the Townsville Peace Agreement amnesty.²⁹ Such weapons are identified as being particularly significant in the Pacific, with Capie noting that 'in ... the Solomons, home-made weapons present a serious threat to the rule of law and to human security'.³⁰

The supply and demand of firearms were unquestionably significant during the tensions, and have been given prominence in the purpose and practice of RAMSI. An important issue, therefore, is the likelihood of loose, stockpiled or potential firearms, including those craft-produced, presaging a return to conflict, as many Solomon Islanders fear, and a potential trigger for the return of Australia as regional keeper of the peace.

Keeping guns off the streets

There can be little doubt that one major success of the policing component of RAMSI, the Participating Police Force, has been in the removal and deterrence of illicit firearms and ammunition ownership and use. RAMSI's gun amnesties were adhered to because they were not optional, and were enforced with significant penalties of up to 10 years in prison or a substantial US\$3500 fine for being in possession of a weapon.³¹

Sabrina Pfiffner and Heather Sutton argue that Solomon Islands gun-free zones, mostly signposted as 'weapons free villages', were a success not only due to RAMSI dealing swiftly with all illegal firearms but also because of local leadership, community participation including signage, and the non-partisan National Peace Council that implemented and monitored them.³² The role of women, who stigmatised the unlawful possession of weapons, was also seen as highly influential.³³

These factors, in association with the work of RAMSI, successfully increased the social costs of the acquisition and use of weapons. The previous demand was mostly group pressure to acquire firearms due to ethnic differences, grievances and lack of faith in the government. However, under RAMSI, it was successfully replaced by norms that vilified firearms. This is because both supply and demand were addressed by the RAMSI intervention, which in turn gave the population faith in RAMSI.³⁴ The danger, however, is the dependency this has created on RAMSI, particularly the Participating Police Force, in keeping the Solomon Islands relatively firearms-free.

During fieldwork undertaken by the author in 2014, there were many anecdotes and much hearsay about firearms being stockpiled and fired, yet there was no evidence to substantiate these claims.³⁵ While some 200 police weapons remain unaccounted for, repeated interviewees shared doubts that any tensions-era weaponry that was still loose would be useable.³⁶ Very occasional firearms use has been noted over recent years, with allegedly 14 reports of firearms being used between 2003 and August 2015.³⁷ One of the few credible reports was an ATM robbery in Honiara in mid-2014, although the firearm and its user were not located.³⁸ An indicator of the lack of firearms was also said to be the increased crocodile infestation in Solomon Islands since RAMSI's arrival.³⁹

Of greater concern, however, was the shooting of a boat being used by political candidates on Mbike Island in central Malaita in December 2014. While the alleged intention was to incapacitate the boat so that the candidates could not return to vote in the Prime Ministerial election the next day, the alleged perpetrator—an employee of a company owned by a north Malaitan politician—has been charged with firearms offences and attempted murder, although the police investigation is continuing.⁴⁰ What firearm was used, and where it and the related ammunition came from, has not been made public.

Prior to this incident, concern had been raised that the most likely demand for small arms in the Solomon Islands would be from political actors, which is somewhat validated by the Mbike Island shooting.⁴¹ Some succour, however, could be taken from the public outcry, and pressure from Pacific neighbours, when in 2007 the previous Solomon Islands' Prime Minister attempted to create an armed palace guard to be trained in Taiwan, sufficient that the idea was abandoned.⁴² Nevertheless, with a number of former militants now present-day parliamentarians, the risk of politicians or aspiring politicians creating a

private militia, similar to that created by East Timor's former Interior Minister Rogerio Lobato in 2006, remains a real concern.⁴³

A constant over many years has been the assertion that firearms traverse the maritime border between Solomon Islands and Bougainville with relative ease. However, it is quite feasible that demand oscillates depending on factors on each side of the border, and that firearms actually go back and forth across this border rather than stream in one direction. Demand in the Southern Highlands of PNG, for example, is seemingly stronger than in Solomon Islands at this point in time, and it would seem more feasible that small arms from Bougainville transit PNG from east to west than flow south and east into Solomon Islands.

The recent interdiction in the northern Solomon Islands of armed PNG police—allegedly following Bougainville criminals into Solomon Islands territory, and Participating Police Force officers disarming them of their weapons—while possibly one rare case, does indicate that the border in this area is at least partially patrolled and that national laws are being enforced.⁴⁴ Similarly, yachts transiting the Pacific have reportedly had firearms seized when they arrive in Solomon Islands, notwithstanding that their owners claim they were intended only to be used for protection at sea.⁴⁵

The considerable pilfering of explosive material from the easily-accessible World War 2 unexploded ordnance site at Hells Point, near Honiara, remains an issue. Elsewhere, children routinely collect World War 2 remnants to sell to tourists as souvenirs. It is reassuring that there is no evidence of explosive material currently being re-used to make small arms ammunition. It is, however, used to make explosives for fishing. Home-made grenades, comprising scavenged explosive packed into a plastic water bottle, are ignited and thrown into the sea, allowing for easy collection of killed fish floating to the surface. Three such grenades were allegedly sold in the local market in October 2014 for approximately A\$80, although there is no evidence that they or similar devices have been used for other than fishing.⁴⁶ The weapons that are sighted in crime and disputes are more commonly bush knives, and craft-produced projectiles, the latter including sharpened bolts and screwdrivers destructive enough to pierce metal.⁴⁷

Despite the imminent partial rearming of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force with lethal rounds, as an institution it is much less of a proliferation risk than it was at the start of the tensions. The combined efforts of its new Commissioner, increased armoury security, and the expansion and re-armament of three of its units, are being handled sensitively and consultatively. The three units to be armed are those involved in personal protection for dignitaries, police operating at international airports, and a response team to respond to civil disturbances. The recent recruiting effort to deliberately target potential police cadets from across the country also reflects an encouraging determination to diminish the traditional Malaitan dominance of the Police Force, which was a key vulnerability during the tensions.⁴⁸

In terms of potential weapons proliferation, the risk remains that small arms could be shipped in and across Solomon Islands, most likely sourced from Bougainville. There are numerous small airstrips across Solomon Islands where light aircraft could land. Firearms could also be craft produced as they were during the tensions. Significant machine tool and construction machinery use by Solomon Islanders over the past decade could have developed the necessary knowledge and skills to manufacture small arms, as certainly occurred in PNG. The materials needed to manufacture them could also be easily shipped into harbours undetected. However, there have been no reports of any serious level of sophisticated or widespread ammunition or weapons production. Perhaps a curious indicator is that World War 2-related memorial brass plaques have been intact over the past decade, whereas earlier there were allegations of plaques being removed and melted to make bullet casings.

The strongest catalysts for firearms demand in Solomon Islands appear to be fourfold. First is RAMSI's scheduled departure by 2017. Second is opposition to the limited re-armament of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. Third is the potential creation of politically-aligned militias. Fourth, there was the frequently heard refrain that the original causes of the tensions were never adequately dealt with, including Malaitan transmigration to Guadalcanal. If such demand generators can be met by supply, there is a serious danger of a return to pre-RAMSI anarchy in Solomon Islands. Fortunately, there is currently little appetite for this, and Australia would seem well placed to move the bilateral relationship into a new phase to ensure such a risk is mitigated.

Australia and the future Solomon Islands

In 2017, RAMSI will leave Solomon Islands. It clearly should not do so only to return with RAMSI Mark 2. After such a commitment, which has not only been financial but has involved the professional commitment of Australian police, the ADF and civilian personnel for over a decade, Australia should be placing itself to support a sustainable, stable and secure post-RAMSI Solomon Islands.

However, at present, the relationship with Solomon Islands continues to be in one direction, from Australia as benefactor and Solomon Islands as recipient. Given the relatively-benign operating environment in Solomon Islands, it is disappointing, for example, that Australian container ships from Honiara return to Australia empty. Trade, and seasonal as well as permanent labour mobility, would greatly assist in developing the Solomon Islands' economy, and the latter would ease the frictions caused by internal migration.

Prior to RAMSI's departure, a friendship visit from the ADF might also be considered. This could be a naval visit, with a strong Indigenous component, such as patrolmen from NORFORCE and invited Indigenous officers throughout the ADF. The exercise could also involve a demonstration of unexploded ordnance clearance at Hells Point. That would enhance professional relationships and develop Indigenous links with Solomon Islanders. It is worth noting that in April 2015, Taiwan conducted its 13th naval visit to Solomon Islands since 1984.⁴⁹

While Australia already conducts unexploded ordnance clearance in Solomon Islands under Operation RENDER SAFE, given the enormity of the task, unexploded ordnance will continue to pollute enormous areas of land and sea in the country for decades to come. In addition to RENDER SAFE, Australia might consider creating a Pacific Explosive Ordnance Disposal School to conduct unexploded ordnance risk education, which could assist in minimising the pilfering of unexploded ordnance and the potential for explosive devices to be used in civil disturbance.

Australia might also consider suggesting that prior to the partial re-armament of the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, the Participating Police Force could offer to conduct an audit of its less lethal stocks, such as bean bag rounds and pepper spray, to identify any weaknesses in stockpile management and to encourage accountability. The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force could also be encouraged to consider ways in which crocodile infestation could be reported and responded to quicker than at present.

The policing relationship between Australia and Solomon Islands is strong, and should continue to be supported. None of the suggestions in this article will be a panacea, nor will they take place in a vacuum. However, they may assist Solomon Islands and Australia to build a deeper, stronger, relationship, which clearly would be in the interests of both parties and for regional stability more broadly.

Stephanie Koorey is a senior lecturer in strategic studies at Deakin University, based at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies at the Australian Defence College. She received her PhD from ANU in 2009, and retains a Visiting Fellowship with the University of NSW Canberra's 'Fragile States Project'. This article is based on research undertaken with funding from the Australian Civil-Military Centre for the research project 'Illicit Small Arms in the Pacific, 2014-2015'.

Notes

- 1 John Howard, 'Solomon Islands speech', House of Representatives, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, 12 August 2003.
- 2 Purportedly in the hundreds: see Matthew Allen, 'Contemporary Histories of the Conflict in Solomon Islands', *Oceania*, Vol. 76, No. 3, November 2006, p. 310.
- 3 Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka, 'Australian Foreign Policy and the RAMSI Intervention in Solomon Islands', *The Contemporary Pacific*, Vol. 17, No. 2, Fall 2005, p. 285.
- 4 Jon Fraenkel *et al.*, 'The RAMSI Decade: a review of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, 2003-2013', *East West Center* [website], 14 July 2014, p. 15, available at <<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2014/July/Independent%20RAMSI%20Review%20Report%20Final.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 5 Kabutaulaka, 'Australian Foreign Policy and the RAMSI Intervention in Solomon Islands', pp. 285-6.
- 6 One thousand from Rove on Guadalcanal and 34 from Auki on Malaita respectively: see Philip Alpers and Conor Twyford, 'Small Arms in the Pacific', *Small Arms Survey* [website], March 2003, p. 90, available at <<http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/B-Occasional-papers/SAS-OP08-Pacific.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 7 UN Security Council, 'The Townsville Peace Agreement', *UN* [website], available at <http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SB_001015_TownsvillePeaceAgreement.pdf> accessed 24 August 2015.
- 8 Elsinä Wainright *et al.*, 'Our Failing Neighbour: Australia and the future of Solomon Islands', Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI): Canberra, 2003, p. 23, available at <<https://www.aspi.org.au/publications/our-failing-neighbour-australia-and-the-future-of-solomon-islands/solomons.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 9 Alexander Downer, 'Neighbours cannot be recolonised', *The Australian*, 8 January 2003.
- 10 Howard, 'Solomon Islands speech'.
- 11 Wainright, 'Our Failing Neighbour'.
- 12 *The Economist*, 'The Pacific's First Failed State: special constables, special problems', *The Economist* [website], 13 February 2003, available at <<http://www.economist.com/node/1580220>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 13 Bob Breen, 'The Good Neighbour: Australian peace support operations in the Pacific Islands 1980–2006', Vol. V, *The Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations*, Cambridge University Press: Port Melbourne, forthcoming.
- 14 For explanations of why the Prime Minister decided to intervene against departmental advice, see Breen, 'The Good Neighbour'.
- 15 Howard, 'Solomon Islands speech'.
- 16 Hugh White, 'Director's Introduction', in Wainright, 'Our Failing Neighbour', p. 1.
- 17 Allan Gyngell and Michael Wesley, 'Case Study: The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', in Allan Gyngell and Michael Wesley (eds.), *Making Australian Foreign Policy*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007, p. 227.
- 18 Privately, Downer and Howard acknowledged the intervention could last a decade: see John Braithwaite *et al.*, 'Chapter 5. Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands', in John Braithwaite *et al.*, *Pillars and Shadows: statebuilding as peacebuilding in Solomon Islands*, ANU E Press: Canberra, 2010.
- 19 Jenny Hayward Jones, 'Australia's costly investment in Solomon Islands: the lessons of RAMSI', Lowy Institute for International Policy: Sydney, May 2014.
- 20 Fraenkel, 'The RAMSI Decade', p. 91.
- 21 Howard, 'Solomon Islands speech'.
- 22 For example, Craig Skehan and Geoff Kitney, 'PM's warning to Pacific thugs', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 July 2003.
- 23 Ben Mc Devitt, 'Operation Helpem Fren: a personal perspective', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 3, No 2, 2006, p. 66.

- 24 The most widely accepted definitions of small arms include firearms, including home-made. For Australia's commitments see, for example, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, 'High Level Meeting Small Arms: the impact of the illicit transfer, destabilising accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons on international peace and security', *Foreign Minister* [website], 26 September 2013, available at <http://foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/Pages/2013/jb_sp_130926.aspx?ministerid=4> accessed 26 October 2015; also Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, 'Australia ratifies Arms Trade Treaty', *Foreign Minister* [website], 3 June 2014, available at <http://foreignminister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2014/jb_mr_140603a.aspx> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 25 David Capie, *Under the Gun: the small arms challenge in the Pacific*, Victoria University: Wellington, 2003, p. 14.
- 26 Alpers and Twyford, 'Small Arms in the Pacific', p. 24.
- 27 Alpers and Twyford, 'Small Arms in the Pacific', p. 29.
- 28 Alpers and Twyford, 'Small Arms in the Pacific', p. 90; Robert Muggah, 'Diagnosing Demand: assessing the motivates and means for firearms acquisition in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea', *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Discussion Paper, 2004/7*, Australian National University: Canberra, 2004, p. 5.
- 29 Alpers and Twyford, 'Small Arms in the Pacific', p. 25.
- 30 Capie, *Under the Gun*, p. 121.
- 31 Muggah, 'Diagnosing Demand', p. 6.
- 32 Sabrina Pfiffner and Heather Sutton, 'The Gun-Free Zone: a tool to prevent and reduce armed violence', UN Office on Drugs and Crime Occasional Papers No. 25, *UN Office on Drugs and Crime* [website], December 2013, pp. 20 and 24-6, available at <<https://www.unodc.org/documents/ungass2016//Contributions/UN/UNODA/Gunfreezones.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 33 Muggah, 'Diagnosing Demand', p. 8.
- 34 Graduate Institute of International Studies, *Small Arms Survey Yearbook 2006: unfinished business*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006, pp. 9 and 17.
- 35 Not only on land but sealed in pipes hidden under water: personal communications, Solomon Islands, 8-10 October 2014.
- 36 Personal communications, Solomon Islands, 8-12 October 2014; also Fraenkel surmises that from a 'minimalist perspective', success included that most firearms were removed or rendered unusable: Fraenkel, 'The RAMSI Decade', p. 89.
- 37 Personal communications, Solomon Islands, 8 October 2014; Australia, 20 July 2015.
- 38 Assumpta Buchanan, 'Alleged robbers deny charges', *Solomon Star*, 26 March 2015.
- 39 Personal communication, 9 October 2014.
- 40 See for example, Phillip Lilomo, 'More resources put into Mbike Island shooting probe', *Island Sun*, 9 March 2015.
- 41 For example, personal communication, Solomon Islands, 9 October 2014.
- 42 See for example Emile LeBrun and Robert Muggah, 'Gun Facts: Solomon Islands', in Emile LeBrun and Robert Muggah (eds.), *Silencing Guns: local perspectives on small arms and armed violence in rural Pacific islands communities*, Occasional Paper No. 15, Small Arms Survey, the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies: Geneva, 2005, cited at <<http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/citation/quotes/517>> accessed 17 June 2015.
- 43 See Stephanie Koorey, "'Orphans" and Icons: small arms control and armed groups in Southeast Asia', doctoral thesis, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU: Canberra, 2008, p. 175, available at <<https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/7183/2/Koorey02whole.pdf>> accessed 15 June 2015.
- 44 'Bougainville police disarmed in pursuit across Solomon Islands border', *ABC Radio Australia*, 20 April 2015. Other reporting also claimed armed Bougainvillian criminals were entering Solomon Islands-based logging camps to steal chainsaws and cash: see 'Calls for Border Policing between Bougainville and Solomon Islands', *Pacific Islands News Association*, 20 April 2015.
- 45 Personal communication, Solomon Islands, 8 October 2014.
- 46 Personal communication, Solomon Islands, 14 October 2014. A bush knife costs around A\$10.
- 47 Personal communications, Solomon Islands, 8-10 October 2014.

-
- 48 '40 new recruits in for training next Monday', *Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation*, 18 April 2015.
- 49 'The ROC (Taiwan) Navy squadron to make goodwill visit to Solomon Islands', *Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in Solomon Islands* [website], 16 April 2015, available at <<http://www.taiwanembassy.org/SB/ct.asp?xItem=606826&ctNode=4629&mp=267>> accessed 26 October 2015.

Counter-Network Operations: insights into the application of complexity theory

Major Andrew Maher, Australian Army

Introduction

The ultimate goal of military force is to achieve political aims. But in an era of globalised communication, where even relatively minor tactical actions can influence the polity, the terms 'tactical' and 'strategic' have become increasingly entwined. Moreover, in today's globalised pond, it has become increasingly difficult to foresee the ripple effect of many tactical actions.

One approach to respond to this complexity is to apply a conception of complex adaptive systems to our adversaries, ourselves and to our environment. This approach would see us considering actions in the context of the overall system, rather than reacting to components in isolation or without considering the relationship to other parts of the system.

In this article, it will be argued that counter-network concepts, developed for countering al Qaeda in Iraq and other non-state threats, could prove a useful starting point for the application of a complex adaptive systems approach to conceptualising the range of challenges in contemporary conflict.

Background

Discussion surrounding the current and future operational priorities of the ADF is sometimes presented in binary terms, such as conventional or unconventional, regular or irregular, or enemy-centric versus population-centric. However, any such categorisation tends to understate the complexity of modern warfare, and arguably contributes to the 'failure of commanders to establish ... the kind of war on which they are embarking'.¹

This article contends that we need to take note of Sun Tzu's guidance and utilise combinations of direct and indirect methods tailored to our political objectives. In modern-day parlance, this would involve exploring complexity and systems science ideas, as applied to the full range of conflict, and embracing the inherent complexity of operating through networks. The desired outcome would be one that assimilates binary concepts rather than seeing them as a zero-sum game.

The Australian Army, in its adoption of 'Adaptive Campaigning' in 2006, accepted the application of complex adaptive systems science to military operations.² Despite tactical adaptation to the insurgent and irregular threats in Iraq and Afghanistan, we arguably have failed to modify our doctrinal foundations accordingly. Indeed, there is no Australian doctrine for the development of indigenous partners, despite the employment of this operational method in both Iraq and Afghanistan. We have failed to institutionalise 'Adaptive Campaigning' and its underlying conception of competing complex adaptive systems.

More broadly, we have failed to heed Colin Gray's assertion that 'strategic concepts are not dictated to us; rather, we choose them and decide how they can serve as building blocks for the edifice of theory we prefer'.³ As the Afghan experience closes, and we reflect on what we have learnt in applying Clausewitz-derived doctrine to inherently ambiguous counterinsurgency and counter-network operations, an opportunity exists to apply complexity science to improve Army's doctrine across the full range of conflict from messy, law enforcement-type activities through to major combat operations. Such an approach would adhere to Gray's assertion and build an appropriate theoretical edifice using complex adaptive systems theory.⁴

In 2012, Defence funding in Australia fell to 1.5 per cent of GDP. Australia remains financially constrained in its ability to respond to the full range of security threats,⁵ thereby dictating the requirement for a carefully-devised mix of direct and indirect methods to achieve the government's strategic objectives. We

are unable to afford the more conventional and the more 'comfortable' military solutions that would be available in a fiscally-unconstrained force structure or that adherence to retaining a 'technological advantage' might dictate.

Almost three decades ago, General John Galvin spoke of the dangers such a cognitive bias toward 'comfortable solutions' may present, observing that:

[W]hen we think about the possibilities of conflict we tend to invent for ourselves a comfortable vision of war, a theatre with battlefields we know, conflict that fits our understanding of strategy and tactics, [and] a combat environment that is consistent and predictable, [and] fightable with the resources we have.⁶

Galvin's observations were made in the wake of the Vietnam War, while commanding US Southern Command's counterinsurgency operations in El Salvador. Yet they resonate with many military practitioners today, especially given that Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan all demonstrated inconsistencies, unpredictability and resourcing challenges. What Galvin suggests is that we need to accept the 'uncomfortable nature' presented by the systemic and complex challenges of today's globally networked operating environment, wherein:

It is highly unlikely that the Taliban fighter whom our Soldiers and Marines face on the ground in Afghanistan or the al Qaeda operative who intends to kill Americans on US soil wakes up and chooses to fight irregular war, or network war, or fourth-generation war. They simply choose war.⁷

Galvin highlighted a further risk in that 'we search for ways to categorize and then dismiss ... [unconventional threats] or relegate them to theoretical pigeonholes where they can be dealt with, hopefully by someone else, while we fight the main battles'.⁸ The reality, however, is that 'a direct relationship has existed frequently between armed forces engaged in the conventional form of warfare and those fighting in an irregular manner'.⁹

In other words, problems cannot be solved using reductionist methods. Moreover, akin to fighting an oil fire with a high-pressure water hose, our misunderstanding of unconventional al Qaeda-aligned adversaries has arguably exacerbated the spread of instability from Afghanistan in 2001 to Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Syria, Libya, The Philippines, Mali and Somalia. Our best intentions are in fact failing us—and reframing is necessary to successfully employ force to achieve national objectives. Indeed, the resurgence of al Qaeda-Iraq as Islamic State exemplifies the adaptive resilience of our adversaries.

The US Quadrennial Defense Review of 2014 captured this complexity, noting that 'the rapidly accelerating spread of information is challenging the ability of some governments to control their populations and maintain civil order, while at the same time changing *how wars are fought* [emphasis added] and aiding groups in mobilising and organising'.¹⁰ A year earlier, President Obama had asserted a similar sentiment, contending that:

Beyond Afghanistan, we must define our effort not as a boundless global war on terror, but rather as a series of persistent, targeted efforts to dismantle networks of violent extremists that threaten America.¹¹

The application of complex adaptive systems theory

Research by Australia's Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) in the early 2000s was instrumental in conceptualising the application of complex adaptive systems theory to conflict, underpinning the Australian Army's subsequent doctrinal acceptance of systems thinking in the form of the 'Adaptive Army' construct.¹² In 2005, the US Army's School of Advanced Military Studies similarly commenced teaching 'Operational Design' and 'Operational Art' in response to the increasingly networked, inherently human nature of the 'Information Age'.¹³

However, despite being on an operational footing for much of the past two decades, the Australian Army and Western nations in general, have arguably been slow to incorporate an 'adaptive' approach within their strategy.¹⁴ Yet our adversaries are adapting and doing so quickly. Having been almost destroyed in the eastern Afghanistan provinces of Kunar and Nuristan, al Qaeda has recently been deepening its affiliations with various other groups, enabling multiple diverse actors to pool their resources and work towards a common objective.¹⁵ At the same time, the collateral impact of certain Western targeting efforts

have steeled the resolve of some who otherwise may have sought reconciliation or at least have been marginalised within remote provinces.

Returning to Galvin's analysis from 1986, he predicted 'a synthesis of conventional and guerrilla warfare, with greater importance accorded the societal dimension, [as] a likely model for the future',¹⁶ presciently describing the challenge encountered by coalition forces in Iraq. By 2009, the US Department of Defense had arrived at the same conclusion, asserting in its stated objective of 'a balanced army for a balanced strategy', that 'we are more likely to face hybrid threats—dynamic combinations of conventional, irregular, terrorist and criminal capabilities'.¹⁷

Certainly, complex adaptive systems theory can account for the concept of a 'hybrid war' by accepting that layers of systems can operate concurrently, aligning unexpectedly in a synergistic manner. A 'counter-network' perspective then becomes a strategic thread that can stitch together disparate, competing concepts of regular versus irregular versus hybrid—and, indeed, all security threats across this spectrum—into a cohesive whole.¹⁸

The variability and unpredictability of the operating environment creates further challenges, as an optimal system will naturally seek to operate 'on the edge of chaos; it is here where its ability to choose alternative futures is optimised'.¹⁹ US advisers during the early 2000s, working to support the Colombian military in responding to its narcotics and insurgency challenges, initially misunderstood this dynamic. A senior Columbian military officer reflected that:

We were caught by surprise, because we had American doctrine. The American approach taught us there were two types of war, conventional and unconventional, what you call 'war' and 'other than war'. This is a mistake. This is your view, but it is not correct for us. Actually there is only one conflict, going from guerrilla war through mobile war to conventional war. It's all integrated. And we must be able to fight at all levels.²⁰

The cognitive shift required is that we are moving out of the Industrial Age and into the Information Age. Computer systems, streaming news media and social networking have linked people into an intertwined system of ethnic, racial, religious and familial allegiances. It is these connections in our environment that are generating complexity in our battlespace. In planning military interventions, we must anticipate the ripples of conflict to spread far and wide across the globalised pond, requiring a cognitive shift in warfighting.

Networks, complexity and failure mechanisms

The term 'network' has entered the common vernacular through the advent of social media, and describes the manner in which entities interact. The most familiar model is the hierarchical organisational structure. The more obtuse is the all-channel matrix wherein all members of an organisation have connections. Complexity science describes the observed behaviour of such networks, which, if they demonstrate non-linear behaviour through self-organisation and emergence, are better termed complex adaptive systems. Indeed, the now familiar models of threats as networks are a temporal representation of these systems, with the evolving picture of al Qaeda's senior leadership since 2001 exemplifying the characteristics of adaptation, emergence and resilience.

We can readily associate with these concepts, as humans are effectively part of a 'complex adaptive system', scalable as a family group, tribe or nation state. Indeed, the colloquial terminology of 'social fabric' is apt, embodying an interlocking weave of religious, ethnic, political and familial ties, demonstrating symbiotic strength against particular stressors.

In 1996, Andrew Ilachinski wrote a seminal paper that precipitated a growing interest in complexity science through simple analogies between warfare and scientific understanding.²¹ The trend coincided with the explosion in social media and an increased strategic focus on terrorism. Studies by the psychologist Dietrich Dörner in 1996 prompted Defence's interest in complexity science through his analysis of how failure occurs, even within highly-trained groups of people.²² Between Ilachinski's and Dörner's work, we can readily assimilate against our operational experience that has been, as Galvin terms it, 'uncomfortable'.

If we accept such environmental complexity, we must then posit how we destroy a complex adaptive systems. Napoleon's advice that 'one jumps into the fray, then figures out what to do next'²³ seemingly recognises the inherent complexity of human conflict and draws parallels with the well-known ASDA loop—Act, Sense, Decide and Adapt. A level of engagement with an adversary system is essential to understand its functions and to orchestrate an appropriate failure mechanism. Disengaged study will not yield the insight we might seek.

A useful analogy for an operational system is that of a tree, with the concept of attrition analogous to pruning.²⁴ Too slow or too lightly and the leaves regenerate and no progress is made. Cutting off a particular bough (or key node/sub-system) may remove a diseased limb but the tree as a whole could continue to grow. Using broad-spectrum poison may overwhelm its defences and successfully kill the tree, although the wrong kind of poison could be a fertiliser that sparks frenetic growth. Severing its roots (analogous to local support) could cause the tree to topple. With the changing seasons, a tree may also shed its leaves and look to be dead, only to return with better conditions (analogous to a resurgence of popular support, perhaps prompted by a particular incident).

Failure mechanisms are therefore varied, complex, temporal and potentially most successful when used in combination. These are briefly discussed below. But all require mapping of the network, combined with a review of appropriate systemic principles and traits to determine the appropriate failure mechanism to employ, with 'the aim ... [being] to attempt to inject non-linear complexity into the network ... cascading it to a point of termination and ultimate systemic destruction'.²⁵

An example is illustrated at Figure 1, where an insurgency as a network is simplistically shown in the left-hand image. A counter-network approach, shown by the green flows in the right-hand image, demonstrates the objective, whereby knowledge of the system supports targeted attacks (internal and external) to achieve the most significant system-level impact on the overall insurgency network.

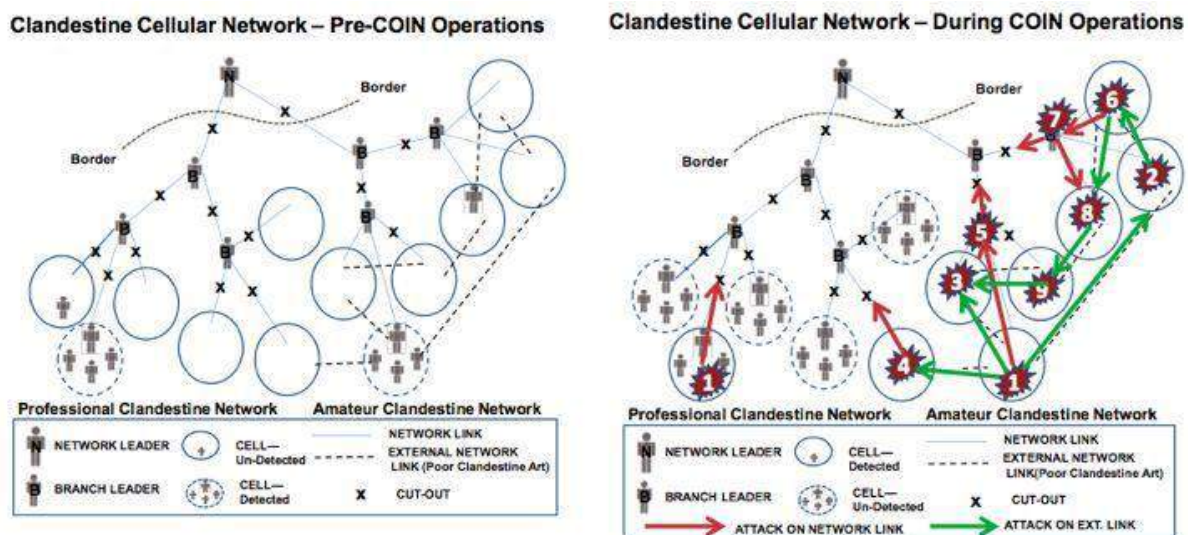


Figure 1: Utilising a counter-network approach in counterinsurgency operations²⁶

More broadly, failure mechanisms might be considered a 'theory of victory', appropriate to the temporal state of the system. Selection of a mechanism may need strategic adaptation as an adversary seeks to improve the 'fitness' of his organisation with respect to its environment. Likewise, a theory might prove self-defeating if 'fitness' is not maintained against shifting Western and local perceptions, which leads to the consideration of logical failure mechanisms.

Key node disruption

Defeating organisations like al Qa'eda, its affiliates and adherents, requires persistent pressure against their critical requirements, capabilities, and resources. It requires the removal of key leaders, denying/disrupting safe havens, severing connectivity between extremist nodes, challenging violent ideology, and offering alternatives to potential recruits. When we remove pressure, we see them metastasise, regionally and globally.²⁷

This conceptualisation seeks to remove or significantly disrupt the nodes within a system that have a high degree of connectivity. These typically would be leadership elements or facilitators whose high connectivity makes them holders of significant informal power, even if not vested with authoritative power. By removing such nodes, the system is forced to adapt and spend time and effort seeking to reconnect its separated elements, and in the process diminishing its ability to achieve its primary objectives. Successful nodal targeting can also fragment sub-systems, potentially encouraging the adversary system toward chaos.

Such an approach, when applied to leadership elements, is the high-value targeting paradigm or 'decapitation' strategy often exemplified by the 'direct action' missions employed by special forces. Notwithstanding the varying views within literature about the mixed successes of this strategy, a common thread is the importance of accurate network mapping for targeting 'connectivity' rather than formal authority.²⁸ A good example is the 1992 capture of Abimael Guzmán of the *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path movement) in Peru, which effectively resulted in the demise of the organisation.

Link disruption

A link disruption strategy seeks to exploit a well-compartmentalised adversarial structure by targeting those links that connect (or prospective links to connect) sub-systems, thereby isolating cells from any form of support (or encouraging a link to form that ultimately proves disruptive). It aims to encourage the system towards chaos or it may seek to de-radicalise/reintegrate elements of the system into the friendly system or the broader societal fabric.

Nevertheless, this can be a risky strategy, as terrorist cells may be specifically designed without exterior links—and a number of reintegration campaigns have proven challenging. Theoretically, the severing of linkages within the system could be conceived in the classic counterinsurgency strategy of separating insurgents from their support base. Understanding the human network within an area may assist in unveiling the pressure points where separation might be successful, and where it prudently should not be pursued.²⁹

Push into chaos

This strategy seeks to push an adversary's system 'into irreversible chaos'.³⁰ Such chaotic behaviour may be encouraged by completely disorientating its sub-components, potentially against each other. It is an inherently difficult strategy, requiring a detailed understanding of sub-system motivations and frictions. But it holds considerable potential by bringing about a calamitous change in the adversary's system. This concept was seen in the so-called 'Anbar awakening' in Iraq, wherein al Qaeda's support base—the Sunni tribes of Anbar province—directly turned against it.

Of course, the fragmentation of a system may not necessarily result in its demise, as demonstrated by the Iraq experience and indeed the broader al Qaeda franchise. The establishment of relatively independent sub-systems typically adds a level of resilience to any structure, and hence must be considered with due care and consideration of local cultural factors.

The use of information operations is critical to seed mistrust, separate sub-systems, and encourage infighting to bring about internal network degradation. Consequently, the strategy is inherently complex. Because it relies on detailed and accurate intelligence, its historical success is mixed. Despite this challenge, the goal of seeking to bring about an adversary's demise through its own undoing is a very attractive goal, and often worthy of pursuit.

Push into simple/complicated behaviour

This strategy seeks to marginalise the effectiveness of an adversary by reducing complexity and generating simpler behaviour within the adversary's system. It exploits rule sets, those aspects that define an adversary's dominant narrative, and imposes limitations and constraints on the system. The Dhofari counterinsurgency exemplifies such an approach, where the Marxist goals of the Yemeni-based Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf were simply incompatible with traditional Islamic culture, and hence defeating the system needed only to encourage the Front to adhere to its own self-defeating adherence to Marxist strategy.

In marginalising an adversary through changed behaviour, its system may become more predictable in its response patterns. Clearly, the human element of choice will always remain. However, an understanding of how such choices are constrained by culture, societal norms and ego may well remove sufficient choices such that an adversary's behaviour becomes more predictable. Marginalisation is therefore inherently risky, and unknown factors may yield unintended consequences that neuter this theory.

A combined approach of pressure and disruption

The combined approach of network pressure and disruption is exemplified in the case study that follows. It essentially can be visualised as a form of pressure on an adversary's network, coupled with selected disruption of links or nodes critical to the coherence of the system.

An example is a 'reconnaissance in force' action, based on tenuous intelligence, which seeks to prompt the adversary system to respond, giving an insight into its dispositions, operating procedures and command organisation. As information about key nodes/links becomes evident, continued pressure could be exerted, potentially leading to further unmasking of system elements, holding potential for the development of a virtuous cycle of intelligence and action.

A further example of such an approach can be seen in law-enforcement actions against organised crime. Publicity actions, crackdowns on street dealers and overt surveillance may all seek to exert pressure on a criminal network at the boundary interface, seeking to encourage mistakes that make key nodes targetable.

This strategy is particularly worthy of consideration, not least because much of our planning methodologies emphasise that 'intelligence drives operations'. While that may be axiomatic, we should not overlook the notion of conducting operations to drive a better intelligence and an improved understanding of an adversary.

Strategic reframing

Because we are engaging with complex adaptive systems, a theory of victory is only valid until the enemy adapts to the threat. Adapting at the strategic level is essential, shifting the theory of victory to sustain 'fitness' with the broader political context. Political reticence to reframe strategic narratives may therefore prove the Achilles heel to Western forces engaging with such adaptive adversaries.

Case study – a complex adaptive systems approach in Afghanistan

The crucible of conflict in Iraq was instrumental in the evolution of the theory of counter-network operations, particularly with considerations of tribal and familial linkages to determine targetable critical vulnerabilities in engaging al Qaeda networks.³¹ Within this conflict, General Stanley McChrystal developed an 'industrial' process of 'find, fix, finish, exploit, analyse' (F3EA), which sought to generate a level of tempo that would overwhelm threat networks' adaptive and regenerative responses.³²

Importantly, this 'industrial' process exemplified the ASDA approach where efforts to 'sense' the ripples emanating from decisive action led to decisions about subsequent targeting priorities. Organisational adaptation to evolve itself to the challenges of the Iraqi political context epitomised the value of strategic reframing, as target sets shifted from Ba'athist to al Qaeda-Iraq to Shia militia groups.

Late in 2013, General McChrystal drew parallels between counterinsurgency literature and human immunology and physiological responses, calling the nation-state a 'living organism that depends on certain things to work'.³³ He posited 'a national immune system ... built up to protect borders and ... places', aided by forces whose role would be to cleanly excise the problems attacking the living organism, while doing no harm to the host.³⁴

The F3EA process has been applied by the Australian Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) in Afghanistan to target key nodes, with varying objectives of severing linkages in the enemy network, disrupting the leadership of network cells or reinforcing information operations objectives. Significantly, F3EA has been upgraded to F3EAD, adding the key element of 'disseminate' to emphasise the importance of information operation objectives.

Such adaptation has been made in the face of the emergence in Afghanistan of a broader, hybrid insurgent threat, wherein a significant narcotics industry has become increasingly entwined with the insurgency, notably along the Helmand River valley (exploiting the artificial seam between two coalition force regional boundaries). Operations to counter this threat, known as 'NEXUS operations', have been conducted since early 2011, specifically targeting areas where insurgent support systems, including smuggling and infiltration routes, are being utilised by insurgents, auxiliaries and other support structures simultaneously.³⁵

The logic has been to disrupt the funding lines that fuelled the insurgency, to interdict the aid being infiltrated along the same narcotics distribution networks and to deny sanctuary to the insurgency. The operations, coordinated through a Combined Joint Inter-agency Task Force, have drawn together US intelligence agencies, the US Drug Enforcement Agency, the Afghan National Interdiction Unit, the Australian SOTG and others.

What quickly became apparent was the utility of the layered, network analysis approach. A raid in Daykundi province in June 2011 recovered a cache of anti-personnel mines (see Figure 2), at a logical staging point for infiltration routes running into western Uruzghan. Reporting of a subsequent raid at the same location in October 2011 noted that 'the ferocity of the insurgent response ... is a clear indicator of just how important this cache was to their plans'.³⁶ This second raid denied 4000 kilograms of poppy seeds to the narcotics industry, which 'would significantly impact the insurgent-aligned syndicate's ability to plant and harvest a crop in the 2012 growing season'.³⁷



Figure 2: Weapons and narcotics recovered in Daykundi province in June/July 2011

(images courtesy of Department of Defence <http://images.defence.gov.au/20110710_SOTG_0435.jpg,
<http://images.defence.gov.au/20110606_SOTG_017.jpg>)

The NEXUS operations have demonstrated the complex adaptive systems nature of the insurgent/narcotics networks involved, through their gradual adaptation to targeting efforts. Drug-labs were initially relocated to more remote and better-defended locations, camouflage efforts became more elaborate and, eventually, the labs themselves became more mobile. Each evolution required corresponding adaptation to permit continued tracking and successful targeting. Importantly, such adaptation was clearly a competition. Our adversaries sought to evade detection and then improve defensive capabilities, while Coalition forces engaged in improving intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, and operational targeting assessments. Indeed, the theory of victory could be seen to shift from Uruzghan-centric disruption to wide-area, network-centric pressure and disruption

Most raids recovered improvised explosive devices (IED), weapon systems and ammunition caches, validating the intelligence reporting that the narcotics distribution network was utilised in reverse for insurgent materiel being channelled into the country. Most importantly, however, prosecution under Afghan law became far more effective—being captured with an IED might not lead to incarceration but being captured with several kilograms of opiates had a penalty of years of incarceration.

The most interesting dynamic of the 2011 targeting period was what evolved as a network pressure approach. A raid in mid-September 2011 in the Baghran district of northern Helmand province was the Drug Enforcement Agency's most successful in history, destroying opiates worth US\$150m in US street value.³⁸ A week later, at a nearby processing plant, the record was re-broken with narcotics in excess of US\$350m destroyed.³⁹ Importantly, it is estimated that 'in Afghan terms, the combined hauls would remove around US\$21m from directly funding the insurgency'.⁴⁰ In an environment where AK-47s can be purchased for around US\$100 and IEDs manufactured for \$US5-10, the loss of US\$21m was significant.

The insurgent leader of this narcotics network had previously proved exceptionally difficult to target, because of his astute operational security measures and remote location. However, the denial of this revenue caused him to change his modus operandi, including being forced to travel more broadly to reassure creditors and source other funding to keep his operation functioning. This made him targetable, and he was subsequently neutralised by Coalition forces. The removal of the network leader, combined with unprecedented external financial pressure, overcame the inherent adaptive qualities of the network creating a 'rapidly deteriorating situation' leading to its subsequent collapse, disrupting the flow of lethal aid into Uruzghan.⁴¹

Conclusion

This article has advocated further exploration of a networked and counter-network paradigm to provide coherence in Defence planning and doctrine development, especially for the increasingly complex environment of counterinsurgency operations. It also espouses that we should more vigorously embrace complex adaptive system theories and network perspectives in order to gain cognitive coherence against a broad range of threats, including conventional challenges. Such an approach would explore strategic problems through the lens of seeing nested 'networks of networks', encompassing diplomatic, informational, military and economic means to achieve an acceptable solution.

As advocated by Ian Langford, 'network-based targeting offers a different perspective on the target system or systems by focusing on the interrelationship of elements within the larger system'.⁴² Certainly, the need for such a change should be evident from the uncertainty and complexity encountered in the Afghan theatre, which has been described as 'the most watched battle-space in the history of warfare'.⁴³ The complexity of the current globalised security environment therefore posits the requirement for greater diversity in preparedness objectives, flexibility in employment and agility in response.⁴⁴

The Australian Army's experience over the past two decades in the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia has highlighted that military activities are like ripples across a pond—their effects may amplify, they may be far-reaching or they may combine in seemingly innocuous ways to create significant, unintended disruptions. Rather than an 'action-reaction' approach to strategy, Western nations need to rethink their typically rigid orientation to linear planning paradigms, particularly in light of the continuing activities of al Qaeda-related insurgencies in various theatres. An approach based on complexity theory likely offers a better alternative to our current globalised security challenges.

Major Andrew Maher has served in 2nd Commando Regiment and the Special Forces Training Centre in a range of command, staff and training appointments. He has completed several deployments with the Special Operations Task Group, and has a Masters in Defence Studies.

Notes

- 1 This statement paraphrases Albert Palazzo and Anthony Trentini, 'Hybrid, Complex, Conventional, Fourth-Generation, Counterinsurgency: it's decision that still matters most', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2010.
- 2 See 'Adaptive Campaigning – Future Land Operation Concept', Australian Army website, available at <<http://www.army.gov.au/Our-future/Publications/Key-Publications/Adaptive-Campaigning>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 3 Colin Gray, *Categorical Confusion? The strategic implications of recognising challenges*, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College: Carlisle, 2012.
- 4 This paper summarises a range of discussion about complexity and complex adaptive systems before building on work commenced by Ian Langford, 'Understanding and defeating a complex adaptive system', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 9 No. 3, 2012.
- 5 Anton Kuruc, 'The Relevance of Chaos Theory to Operations', *ADF Journal*, No. 162, September/October 2003.
- 6 John Galvin, 'Uncomfortable Wars: toward a new paradigm', *Parameters*, Winter 1986.
- 7 Sebastian Gorka and David Kilcullen, 'An actor-centric theory of war: understanding the difference between COIN and counter-insurgency', *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Vol. 60, 1st Quarter 2011.
- 8 Galvin, 'Uncomfortable Wars'.
- 9 Galvin, 'Uncomfortable Wars'.
- 10 Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review 2014*, Department of Defense: Washington DC, 2014, p. 3, available at <www.defense.gov/qdr/> accessed 4 March 2014.
- 11 Barack Obama, 'Remarks by the President at the National Defense University', 23 May 2013, available at <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/23/remarks-president-national-defense-university>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 12 See for example, A.M. Grisogono, 'A CAS Framework for Addressing Complex Problems', in A. Bender (ed.), *Microelectronics, MEMS and Nanotechnology: complex systems*, Proceedings of the Society of Photo-Optical Instrumentation Engineers' International Symposium on Microelectronics, MEMS and Nanotechnology, Brisbane, 2005; A. Grisogono, 'What do Natural Complex Adaptive Systems Teach us About Creating a Robustly Adaptive Force?', paper presented at the 9th International Command and Control Research and Technology Symposium: Edinburgh, 2004, available at <http://dodccrp.org/events/9th_ICCRTS/CD/papers/107.pdf> accessed 22 June 2015; A. Grisogono and A.J. Ryan, 'Designing Complex Adaptive Systems for Defence', paper presented at System Engineering Test and Evaluation Conference, Canberra, 2003, available at <http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Anne_Marie_Grisogono/publication/27255282_Designing_complex_adaptive_systems_for_defence/links/5538f4490cf247b8587ddeec.pdf> accessed 22 June 2015.
- 13 See, for example, School of Advanced Military Studies, 'Art of Design', available at <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/CGSC/events/sams/ArtofDesign_v2.pdf> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 14 The failure of Western nations to adapt strategically is best captured by RAND's report by Linda Robinson, Paul Miller, John Gordon IV, Jeffrey Decker, Michael Schwille and Raphael Cohen, *Improving Strategic Competence: lessons from 13 years of war*, RAND Corporation: Santa Monica, 2014. It notes (p. xiii) multiple strategic failures that can be attributable to a failure to adapt to evolving strategic circumstances, specifically noting that 'formulating strategy is further inhibited because there is no established integrated civilian-military process that would rigorously identify assumptions, risks, possible outcomes, and second-order effects through soliciting diverse inputs, red-teaming, and table-top exercises. The lack of such a process inhibited timely adaptation of strategy in response to the evolution of understanding and events'.

- 15 Derived from 'An interview with Hassan Abdullah, senior journalist and researcher', *Dunya Online*, 26 January 2014.
- 16 Galvin, 'Uncomfortable Wars'.
- 17 Department of Defense, *Adapting our Aim: a balanced army for a balanced strategy*, CMS White Paper, 2009, p. 4, available at <asc.army.mil/docs/divisions/rm/CSA_White_Paper.pdf> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 18 Alexander Vacca and Mark Davidson, 'The Regularity of Irregular Warfare', *Parameters*, Spring 2011, p. 18, flag that the 'use of the term "irregular warfare" in official and unofficial documents is an unhelpful and dangerous trend', noting a historical trend for dismissing the lessons learnt from conflicts involving unorthodox tactics because of the perception that 'irregular' means a diversion from true military methods.
- 19 Langford, 'Understanding and defeating a complex adaptive system', p. 110.
- 20 Thomas Marks, 'Columbian Army Adaptation to FARC Insurgency', Strategic Studies Institute: Carlisle, 2002, p. 9, available at <www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 21 Andrew Ilachinski, 'Land Warfare and Complexity, Part II: an assessment of the applicability of nonlinear dynamic and complex systems theory to the study of land warfare', Center for Naval Analyses: Alexandria, 1996.
- 22 Dietrich Dörner, *The Logic of Failure: recognising and avoiding error in complex situations*, Metropolitan Books: New York, 1996. Dörner identified that 'over-involvement in "projects" blind(ed) ... [exercise participants] to emerging needs and changes in the situation': p. 18.
- 23 Quoted in Chris Smith, 'Solving twenty-first century problems with cold war metaphors', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 3, 2011, p. 99.
- 24 Derek Jones, 'Understanding the Form, Function, and Logic of Clandestine Cellular Networks: the first step in effective counter-network operations', School of Advanced Military Studies: Fort Leavenworth, 2009.
- 25 Langford, 'Understanding and defeating a complex adaptive system', p. 112.
- 26 Diagrams sourced from Jones, 'Understanding the Form, Function, and Logic of Clandestine Cellular Networks'.
- 27 William McRaven, 'Posture Statement, Commander United States Special Operations Command before the 113th Congress House Armed Services Committee', 27 February 2014, available at <http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/McRaven_03-11-14.pdf> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 28 For an example of conflicting views on 'decapitation' strikes, see Seth Jones and Martin Libicki, 'How terrorist groups end', RAND Corporation: Santa Monica, 2008, available at <<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG741-1.html>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 29 Efforts to separate Pashtun insurgents from xenophobic Pashtun tribesmen is a case in point, wherein a blunt counterinsurgency strategy was unsuccessful: see, for example, Oleg Svet, 'COIN's Failure in Afghanistan', *The National Interest* website, 31 August 2012, available at <<http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/coins-failure-afghanistan-7409>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 30 Langford, 'Understanding and defeating a complex adaptive system', p. 112.
- 31 Discussed by Christopher Lamb and Evan Munsing, *Secret Weapon: high-value target teams as an organisational innovation*, Center for Strategic Research, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University Press: Washington DC, 2011.
- 32 See, for example, Stanley McChrystal, 'It Takes a Network: the new front line in modern warfare', *Foreign Policy*, 21 February 2011, available at <<http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/02/21/it-takes-a-network/>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 33 Quoted in Fred Dews, 'How is counterinsurgency like the way the human body fights disease?', Brookings website, 19 December 2013, available at <<http://www.brookings.edu/research/commentary?start=1&sort=ContentDate&geo=Afghanistan&topic=Health>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 34 Dews, 'How is Counterinsurgency like the way the human body fights disease?'.
- 35 Celeski, 'Operationalising COIN', p. 49.
- 36 See, for example, <<http://news.defence.gov.au/2011/11/03/afghan-and-australian-troops-destroy-insurgent-syndicate%E2%80%99s-2012-drug-plans/>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 37 As above.

-
- 38 See, for example, <<http://news.defence.gov.au/2011/09/20/afghan-and-australian-forces-destroy-biggest-narcotics-find-two-australian-soldiers-wounded/>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 39 See, for example, <<http://news.defence.gov.au/2011/09/30/afghan-and-australian-forces-seize-record-narcotics-haul/>> accessed 21 January 2015.
- 40 As above.
- 41 The Australian Army's foundation in manoeuvre warfare is notable in this context given it seeks to 'shatter the enemy's moral and physical cohesion through a series of actions orchestrated across multiple lines of operation to a single purpose, creating a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating situation with which the enemy cannot cope': Australian Army, *Land Warfare Doctrine 1 - The Fundamentals of Land Warfare*, Government of Australia: Canberra, 2014, available at <http://www.army.gov.au/~media/Content/Our%20future/Publications/Key/LWD1/LWD-1_B5_190914.pdf> accessed 1 June 2015.
- 42 Langford, 'Understanding and defeating a complex adaptive system', p. 114.
- 43 Quoted by Brendan Nicholson, 'Wars will always be hell, says general', *The Australian*, 17 February 2014.
- 44 This comment alludes to 'Ashby's law of requisite variety', which states that 'only variety can destroy variety', hence preparedness for the greatest range of threats requires a range of response options: see, for example, <<http://requisitevariety.co.uk/what-is-requisite-variety/>> accessed 21 January 2015.

Abuse of Power and Institutional Violence in the ADF: a culture transformed?

Anne Goyne, Department of Defence

Contributing authors

Lieutenant Colonel William Coates, Australian Army
Lieutenant Guy Forsyth, Royal Australian Navy
Commander Lara Fowler, Royal Australian Navy
Lieutenant Colonel Phillip Gibbons, Australian Army
Warrant Officer Kevin Woods, CSC, OAM (retd)
Jamie Cullens, Department of Defence

Introduction

It is vaguely ironic that the two social institutions with the highest reliance on authority are prisons and the military. Both use a uniquely punitive form of authority to enforce conformity to desired norms of behaviour but for starkly different reasons. In a prison, the need for strict discipline reflects a fear that prisoners are dangerous and need to be closely controlled at all times.¹ The fact they are being ‘punished’ also forms part of the rationale for how they are treated.

By contrast, military discipline is part of an indoctrination process that instils adherence to a new way of life and military code of behaviour; a process that reflects the unique extremes of the profession of arms, namely the requirement to face life-threatening danger and to apply violence in the service of the state.

Military training is expected to be physically and emotionally challenging to prepare trainees for the crucible of combat. Given the need to ensure all members will adhere to an order that might result in their own death, it was—and probably still is—believed that new recruits need to be more afraid of not adhering to the order than following it. Hence, military discipline is swift, reinforces personal responsibility (that is, to make the miscreant feel ashamed of failing and letting down the team) and is certainly punitive. This approach to military training and discipline continues to exist for one reason—it works.

From enlistment, new recruits learn their place in a military hierarchy where those with rank have authority over the minutiae of their lives. As volunteers, most enlistees cooperatively relinquish their personal freedoms during the process of training, suggesting they trust and acknowledge the centrality of military authority to the institution they have joined. While a few new joiners rebel against or even reject outright their lowly place in the military hierarchy, they either learn to ‘toe the line’ and conform or eventually they leave—but only after every attempt to instil conformity has failed.

In an institution as reliant on the exercise of authority as the military, it is not surprising for those lower down the rank chain to interpret this power as abusive. The difficulty is determining whether the use of authority is legitimate or represents an abuse. In the ADF, this issue is moot because official complaints against the abuse of power in the ‘here and now’, as opposed to the past, are relatively rare.² Partly, this reflects a culture where complaint can be construed as weakness or, worse, disloyalty. But more recently, it may be a sign that cultural tolerance for institutional violence and abuse of power has shifted in the modern ADF.

Abuse of power and institutional violence are not synonymous. Abuse of power in a legal sense is the ‘improper use of authority by someone who has that authority because he or she holds a public [e.g., legitimate authority] office’.³ In the ADF, this definition would refer to anyone who has a rank above Private (or its equivalent in the Navy or Air Force).⁴

Such behaviour does not always—or even often—have to include violence. Indeed, abuse of power is most likely to involve non-violent unfairness to demonstrate the relative powerlessness of a person more junior in rank. However, in more extreme cases, authority is used to intimidate by emotionally, physically or sexually abusing someone who lacks the power or status to defend him- or herself. By contrast, while institutional violence can involve abuse of power, it also relates to a pattern of ‘systemic’ violence inflicted by an individual or group towards one or more individuals of the same rank.⁵

While the ADF has avoided the catastrophic public relations disasters that have followed atrocities committed by deployed foreign troops against civilian or enemy forces in recent times, institutional violence and the abuse of power within the ADF itself has become an increasingly-sensitive issue for the Australian public. As a consequence of a series of highly-publicised ‘scandals’, human rights investigations and formal inquiries, the Australian public has developed an intolerance to unfairness within the ADF, especially where this results in harm to members and a lack of accountability by command.

The first tangible sign of this shift was in 1996, after a multiple Blackhawk helicopter crash resulted in the deaths of 18 service personnel. When the then Chief of Army publicly stated that the fault for the accident ultimately lay with the commander on the ground (in this case a Major), the backlash against the Chief of Army was sudden, extreme and almost certainly unexpected. Despite touting a line well used within his organisation, the Chief of Army quickly found himself under intense public criticism. No longer could senior ADF commanders avoid public opinion or confine an issue within the institution. An expectation now existed, both within the military and in the community, that senior leaders would assume accountability for whatever occurred under their watch.

This pressure for greater accountability in the ADF became even more insistent when the victims of abuse or mistreatment were women. By the late 1980s and early 90s, women’s rights had become a clarion call in the broader Australian society. So when the mistreatment of women by senior cadets at ADFA became a national scandal in the late 1990s, the general public was quick to respond. The Government commissioned an independent inquiry and, when it was found that among other things women were being pressured for sex by male cadets with authority over them, the reaction of the public was severe. The response to the Grey Review resulted in a root-and-branch overhaul of ADFA, including the permanent loss of the cadet hierarchy.⁶ This remains a peculiar feature of ADFA as an officer training institution to this day.

The perception that people of any rank could abuse their power in this way created a troubling challenge for the ADF, and certainly the ‘new’ generation of accountable senior leaders. Attempts were made to promote better behaviour and make changes but, as the scandals continued, public outrage grew louder and more damaging to the reputation of the ADF. When the scandal involving HMAS *Success* in 2009—which again involved the abuse of women—was followed by the ‘Skype’ sex scandal at ADFA in 2011, public opinion reached a crescendo.⁷ The Skype scandal touched a nerve among serving and previous-serving ADF members, both male and female, who appeared to identify with the story. Suddenly an unprecedented number of allegations about historical abuse were sent to the then Defence Minister, who realised there was a need to do something about institutional violence and abuse of power in the ADF.

The ADF as a whole may not have lost its moral compass but pockets within the institution appeared to be resistant to change. This was further demonstrated by the ‘Jedi Council’ scandal involving over 100 male Army officers and non-commissioned officers, who used social media and Defence’s email system to share private sexual images of female friends and colleagues without consent. The then Chief of Army showed unconcealed wrath in his now famous ‘Change or Get Out’ speech.⁸

Prior to the speech, the Chief of Army had met female victims of abuse in the Army and the experience brought home the impact this abuse had on those who suffered it. This speech, more than any previous comment from an ADF leader, indicated senior leaders in the ADF were as outraged by abuse perpetrated by those under their command as the Australian public. There is no question the vehement and well-publicised reaction of the Chief of Army circumvented further negative public opinion and a possible erosion in confidence of the ADF.

In 2012, the Defence Minister commissioned an investigation by legal firm DLA Piper to review the scope of initial complaints of abuse in the ADF. As a result of this investigation, the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART) was commissioned to investigate historical incidents of abuse in the ADF.⁹ These

investigations resulted in the ADF being forced to address literally thousands of cases of abuse from serving and ex-serving ADF personnel (both as victims and perpetrators) dating back 60 years. The genie of institutional violence and abuse of power was now well and truly out of the bottle and this time it was not just women who were the victims, and not just men who were the only perpetrators.

The results of DART revealed a previously-hidden truth about this long and shameful history of violence. Young men (many just boys) were frequent victims of institutional violence at the hands of their male peers and men in authority over them. There was also a significant number of women who had been victimised by women during their training. The suffering of these young men and women was ignored by every layer of command; they were disbelieved, scape-goated and ultimately forced to watch in silence as perpetrators were rewarded with positions of authority and power in the system. Most of those who revealed their stories to DART, both male and female, had continued to suffer post-traumatic like symptoms for many years following the abuse.

Before the DART team published their results, the then Chief of the Defence Force sponsored two major cultural change documents, 'Beyond Compliance' and 'Pathway to Change', an ambitious five-year plan to evolve the culture of the ADF towards a more inclusive and accountable organisation.¹⁰ In a similar vein, the Navy had already commenced its own 'New Generation Navy' program, which also focused on addressing cultural change, as did the Air Force's 'New Horizon' program.¹¹ All three programs are impressive in their ideals and scope, and all seem to have had a more than grudging acceptance among service personnel.

While 'Pathway to Change', 'New Generation Navy' and 'New Horizon' suffered the inevitable problem of tarring everyone in uniform, particularly men, with the same brush, the publication of the DART report and two companion reports into institutional violence at HMAS *Leeuwin* and ADFA seemed to silence the most vocal critics. The shocking stories of sexual assault, physical violence, bullying, bastardisation and victimisation of so many young male and female members of the ADF simply defied belief. For those who have read the DART reports, the results are extremely sobering.

What are the root causes of institutional violence and abuse of power in the ADF?

Anyone reading these reports would have to ask themselves how and why such behaviour evolved and remained undetected for so long. For such widespread abuse to continue, leaders had to be complicit in the behaviour to varying degrees, whether by turning a blind eye or giving tacit approval. Indeed, it is doubtful much of this behaviour was even identified as 'wrong' at the time. The attitude most frequently reported in the early 1980s was that those targeted somehow deserved what they got because of perceived weakness or unsuitability.¹²

Jokes were regularly made about 'blanket-bashing' (wrapping a person in a blanket and beating them) and 'scrubbing' (scrubbing a person who purportedly did not wash with a hard brush). However, the implication seemed to be that there was nothing particularly harmful about the behaviour and, despite the fairly ubiquitous nature of this kind of discussion, rarely if ever did someone in authority openly state that the behaviour was unacceptable. Indeed, more senior people seemed to be 'in' on the joke.

In the absence of any clear, unequivocal statement about the 'wrongness' of institutional violence and abuse of power, it is easy to envisage how such behaviour could become 'normative'. While it has long been argued that human beings are programmed for obedience to authority and conformity, it is no longer accepted that people blindly follow orders they disagree with.¹³ Indeed, the evidence seems quite to the contrary; people obey orders, even orders that result in 'evil' outcomes, because they believe in what they are doing.

To emphasise this point, when Stanley Milgram first ran his obedience experiments in the 1960s, the reason most frequently given for continuing to follow orders by participants themselves—and to give what appeared to be life-threatening shocks to suffering people—was a belief the experiment was legitimate and that it advanced the cause of science.¹⁴ In other words, their decision to continue was not driven by pressure to conform to authority but reflected that they were cooperating because they agreed with the process.

Piero Bocchiaro and Philip Zimbardo reached a similar conclusion when they conducted a modern version of the Milgram obedience study in 2010.¹⁵ In contrast to Milgram, Bocchiaro and Zimbardo found that 70 per cent of the participants (all naïve to the original Milgram study) did not conform to the request to continue with an experimental procedure that appeared to harm another person. The most common reasons given for ending the experiment was they believed that stopping it was what most people would do and that it felt like ‘the right thing to do’. Bocchiaro and Zimbardo concluded that individuals do not blindly conform to authority but actually consider the rightness and wrongness of their actions and broader social norms.

The sad truth is that while the victims of violence and abuse in the ADF before the mid 1980s were predominantly male trainees, recognition that anything was ‘wrong’ simply eluded most people. Victims were categorised as slackers, odd-balls, no-hopers or similar, resulting in such effective depersonalisation that their mistreatment could be seen as consistent with the overarching intent of military training.

Of course, a victim did not have to be a particularly poor recruit, they just had to be singled out by an instructor or a peer as ‘a poor performer’ or ‘different’, which could be the green light for abuse and mistreatment. The use of communal punishments, where a group was punished for the poor performance of an individual, only fuelled this flame. The very fact that one was a ‘victim’ made one personally responsible for what was happening. Consequently, identifying oneself as a victim by complaining to the chain of command only cemented one’s status as deserving of abuse. As acknowledged by then Chief of Navy in 2014:

What happened at *Leeuwin* came about largely because of a culture that excluded rather than included. Where diversity was not tolerated, those that did not ‘fit in’ paid the price.¹⁶

The justification most commonly used to explain institutional violence during military training is the perception that survival may one day depend on the person serving beside you. As this is a scenario traditionally reserved for men, it is fair to argue that such men had a right to feel confident about the men who became soldiers, sailors and airmen. This is precisely why leaders may have turned a blind eye to unacceptable behaviour. If a man was not accepted by his peers then he was a threat to the survival of the group. It was the group who graduated from military training, not individuals. It was group cohesion, not individual identity, that drove success in combat. This mindset would have made it difficult to come out in strong support of victims, while at the same time enforcing standards within the group. In this scenario, the escalation of abuse was almost inevitable.

Of course, this story, like all smokescreens, seems so plausible it could even today be used to justify the ongoing mistreatment of trainees. Its plausibility acted most effectively on the very group of people who may have been able to stop the abuse, or at least investigate it; people with good intentions who believed in the values of the ADF and upheld those values throughout their careers—in other words, the vast majority of ADF personnel. While most people who joined the ADF were neither victims of abuse nor perpetrators of this behaviour, all would have heard the stories about institutional violence and many might have believed incidents of abuse were even normal or appropriate within the military.

To explain this point, Michel Larivière—reporting on research investigating the attitudes of correctional officers—noted that contrary to the stereotype, most correctional officers reported a personal concern about the rehabilitation and welfare of the prisoners under their watch.¹⁷ However, when asked to report on the attitudes of correctional officers generally, correctional officers themselves over-estimated the cynicism and punitiveness of their colleagues.

In this scenario, empathic correctional officers were more likely to overlook the punitive behaviour of their peers, while punitive officers felt their behaviour was normative within the group. Accordingly, it is not hard to envisage how a stereotype of punitive and abusive recruit instructors could create the impression that all military instructors were punitive and abusive, even though just a few adopted this type of behaviour. Nevertheless, instructors with a tendency to abuse trainees were unlikely to be identified as aberrant because their behaviour matched an accepted stereotype.

However, more than anything else, it is the nature of the abuse reported to DART that gives away the lie about the role played by institutional violence in the ADF. While 50 per cent of people responding to the DART reported instances of physical violence in the ADF that may seem consistent with a rough form of

barracks-room discipline (for example, 'bed-bashings', 'contact counselling', 'scrubbing' and similar), 38 per cent (834 out of 2224 cases) of the allegations reported to DART related to sadistic, homo-erotic, sexual abuse that had nothing to do with military life or training.¹⁸

'Woofering' (using a vacuum cleaner on a young man's penis), 'turkey slapping' (holding someone down and repeatedly slapping them with a penis), 'nuggeting' (smearing a young man's testicles with boot polish or toothpaste), anal penetration of young boys in their sleep with a wooden dildo, male pack rape, female rape and sexual abuse, and any number of other sexually-deviant behaviours, are not normal in any institution—and they are not consistent with military ideals, training or bonding.

The particular consistency of some of the behaviours aimed at young men remained unchanged over generations of trainees, suggesting they were systematically passed down by perpetrators from one group to the next. They were never reported by the men who suffered them, because they implied weakness, homosexuality or both. Being involved in homosexual behaviour, even as a completely-unwilling victim, was unmentionable in the ADF and broader Australian society at the time. These men literally had nowhere to go to complain and they held on to the shame of these secrets all their lives.

Violence and abuse of power as cultural artefacts

While the abusive treatment of women in the ADF provided the initial catalyst for cultural change, the one-sided nature of this argument has dramatically missed the point about institutional violence and abuse of power. Every time violence against women is identified as wrong, the subtle subtext appears to be that violence against men is 'not wrong', and that where sexual violence towards men is concerned, it does not happen. The results of DART provide unequivocal evidence that men have been frequent victims of institutional violence, including sexual violence, in the ADF for generations.

Other than the one investigation into bastardisation at the Royal Military College in 1969, during all this time there was no outpouring of outrage from the Australian public or from the Defence leadership of the day.¹⁹ Even now, men comprise 75 per cent of all victims of non-sexual violence in Australian society, and are arguably still likely to be the victims of abuse of power and violence in the ADF. Yet this has never raised significant comment. Men cannot be blamed for cynicism each time society and their leaders pour scorn on the perpetrators of abuse against women, when abuse against men is tacitly condoned by silence.

While bystanders can be roped into institutional violence, the majority of men in the ADF, or anywhere else, do not behave this way and it would be an insult to men to imply the behaviour is, in fact, normative. However, in the absence of an unequivocal leadership statement about the treatment of men in the ADF (or anywhere in Australian society), there has been a grey area, where the sexual mistreatment and physical abuse of men has remained invisible.

There is no evidence available anywhere in the world showing that victims or perpetrators of abuse and violence are 'improved' in any way by the experience, and yet this seems to be a hard fact for military members at all levels to accept. The belief that aggressive or violent people make the best warriors or that to be a 'good soldier one doesn't have to be a good human being' are perceptions that seem hard to shift among some elements of the military. That some of these 'hard' people were/are sexual predators of men as well as women has not been part of the discussion at all.

The way ahead

Herein rests the challenge for the ADF and, indeed, society at large in identifying and eradicating institutional violence and the abuse of power against men, as well as women. This issue gets to the murky core of precisely what constitutes an abuse of power towards men in an environment where aggression and combat-related violence are rewarded and highly valued.

In the past, perpetrators of abuse have been mistakenly cast as better warriors because they showed a willingness to use violence against other men. However, the evidence is now clear that this attitude gave a sub-class of these men an opportunity to physically and sexually abuse generations of young men and boys without any fear of exposure, due to a culture that failed to identify that such abuse against men was

wrong. Not only did the abusers maintain their place in the ADF but the culture of silence made cowards of those who stood by and accepted their tyranny and did nothing. In this scenario, the ADF had no heroes.

More than at any time in our past our defence forces have become an exemplar of our society. The ADF is not just called upon to fight but also to protect and serve our society. Humanitarian aid, rescue, disaster relief, protective and peacekeeping support are now commonplace roles for ADF personnel. Australians view such activities as reflective of a good and moral society and our nation is projected through these actions, consequently, it is increasingly incumbent upon ADF members to act appropriately. Even junior ADF members are being called on to assume leadership in a way that would have seemed a heresy in the old ADF, and they are rising to this challenge. The Australian public has also acknowledged and rewarded this new ADF by rating the military as the most trusted public institution in Australia for the past decade.²⁰

Criticisms of the 'old order' of the ADF are not intended to imply the institution was 'rotten' or 'morally corrupt', because it was not. However, outmoded and destructive training practices and mistreatment have no place in the modern military and must now be firmly, and forever, relegated to our past.

Anne Goynes and the contributing authors are from the Centre for Defence Leadership and Ethics (CDLE), which was established at the Australian Defence College's Weston Creek campus in January 2002. Its mission is to provide corporate-level military leadership and ethics research and doctrine development in order to shape expertise in these areas across Defence. CDLE's vision is to be the centre of expertise for the development of command, management, leadership and military ethics in Defence: <<http://www.defence.gov.au/ADC/CDSS/CDLE.asp>>

Notes

- ¹ Michel Larivière, 'Antecedents and Outcomes of Correctional Officers' Attitudes towards Federal Inmates: an exploration of person-organizational fit', doctoral thesis, Carlton University: Ottawa, 2001, available at <http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/research/forum/e141/141e_e.pdf> accessed 6 October 2015.
- ² L. Roberts-Smith, *Report on Abuse in Defence*, Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART) Report, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, 2014. The DART report noted there was significant under-reporting of abuse by serving members within the ADF. There was a perception that the abuse was tacitly or directly condoned by command and therefore unlikely to be taken seriously or investigated.
- ³ *West's Encyclopedia of American Law*, Vol. 2, Gale Group: Farmington Hills, 2008.
- ⁴ This does not include 'technical authority' which can apply to members without rank.
- ⁵ By 'systemic', the authors are referring to a pattern of violence rather than a random act of aggression. Systemic violence as practised in the military has a particular identity; it usually has a name (for example, 'scrubbing'); it follows a similar pattern; and it can be committed by different groups over generations.

-
- 6 Bronwyn Grey, *Australian Defence Force: report of the review into policies and practices to deal with sexual harassment and sexual offences at the Australian Defence Force Academy*, Director Publishing and Visual Communications: Canberra, 1998.
- 7 In early 2012, a young female Officer Cadet from ADFA went to the media after she became aware that two of her 1st year colleagues had filmed her in consensual sex act without her knowledge and streamed the footage to a group of young men in her year group in an adjacent room. The young woman did not believe the ACT police were intending to charge the two men who set up the camera, so she decided to demand action be taken on national television, thus prompting a nation/international scandal.
- 8 See, for example, ABC News, 'Chief of Army David Morrison tells troops to respect women or "get out"', *ABC News* [website], 14 June 2013, available at <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-14/chief-of-army-fires-broadside-at-army-over-email-allegations/4753208>> accessed 6 October 2015.
- 9 Roberts-Smith, *Report on Abuse in Defence*; L. Roberts-Smith, *Report on abuse at the Australian Defence Academy*, Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART) Report, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, 2014; and L. Roberts-Smith, *Report of abuse at HMAS Leeuwin*, DART Report, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, 2014.
- 10 C.W. Orme, *Beyond Compliance: professionalism, trust and capability in the Australian profession of arms*, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, 2011; and Department of Defence, *Pathway to Change: evolving Defence culture*, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, 2012.
- 11 See, 'Next Generation Navy', *Navy* [website], available at <<https://www.navy.gov.au/navy-today/new-generation-navy>> accessed 6 October 2015; and 'Air Force Values', *Royal Australian Air Force* [website], available at <<http://www.airforce.gov.au/About-us/About-the-RAAF/Air-Force-Values/?RAAF-P1m6QSkD2B/teTTYHuezoeElikbosHGEX>> accessed 6 October 2015.
- 12 These reports are not formally documented but reflect informal, casual conversations between Service personnel and the authors.
- 13 S. Haslam and S.D. Reicher, 'Contesting the "Nature" of conformity: what Milgram and Zimbardo's studies really show'. *PLOS Biology* [website], 20 November 2012, available at <<http://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.1001426>> accessed 6 October 2015; P. Bocciaro and P.G. Zimbardo, 'Defying Unjust Authority: an explanatory study', *Current Psychology*, Issue 29, No. 2, 2 May 2010, pp. 155-70, abstract available at <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2866362/>> accessed 6 October 2015.
- 14 S. Milgram, 'Behavioral Study of Obedience', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Issue 67, No. 4, 1963, pp. 371-8. In a now famous series of experiments, Milgram found that up to 65 per cent of participants in an obedience study would give 'fatal' electric shocks to a confederate completing a learning task, because they were told to keep going by an experimenter in a white coat. As a result of their apparent 'obedience' to authority, Milgram concluded that almost anyone could be induced to conform to an authority figure asking them to do evil things, leading to the now much-disputed 'banality of evil' hypothesis.
- 15 Bocciaro and Zimbardo, 'Defying Unjust Authority'.
- 16 Official response to the DART report into HMAS *Leeuwin*.
- 17 Larivière, 'Antecedents and Outcomes of Correctional Officers' Attitudes towards Federal Inmates'.
- 18 Roberts-Smith, *Report on Abuse in Defence*, p. 94.
- 19 Gerald Walsh, an academic at the Royal Military College Duntroon in the 1960s, reported on the issue of hazing at the College to the Commandant, setting off a public scandal about bastardisation.
- 20 A 2004 study found that 91 per cent of Australians surveyed reported a high level of confidence in the ADF: C. Bean, 'Is there a crisis of trust in Australia?', in Shaun Wilson *et al* (eds.), *Australian Social Attitudes: the first report*, University of NSW Press: Sydney, 2005, pp. 122-40, available at <<http://eprints.qut.edu.au/5624/1/5624.pdf>> accessed 6 October 2015.

Everyone's Accountable: how non-state armed groups interact with international humanitarian law

Lieutenant Colonel Tim Rutherford, Australian Army

Introduction

Since its inception, there has been a clear separation in international law between the law of war and the law of peace. The divide has been supported by a belief that war was the sole purview of the state. However, following the end of the Cold War, the nature of conflict changed. The move to a unipolar world, coupled with a new wave of democratisation and the increasing globalisation of information and economic power, are credited with triggering a surge in micro-nationalism and sometimes violent claims of self-determination. This has resulted in a shift in the balance of conflict from conventional, interstate wars, predominantly driven by political factors, to low-intensity, intrastate wars, predominantly driven by human factors.¹

Over the past 60 years, the number of intrastate wars has doubled, meaning approximately 80 per cent of all conflict now involves a non-state actor.² As the trend in conflict continues to be dominated by intrastate wars, or more frequently termed 'non-international armed conflict', it is useful to understand the relationship that non-state actors have with international law.

Until the release of Additional Protocols I and II in 1977, the 300 words contained in Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions was the sum total of international law applicable to parties engaged in intrastate conflict. Since then, several rulings have provided more detailed interpretations of the laws applicable to non-state actors.³ There have also been a number of treaties concluded (or revised) that seek to regulate non-international armed conflict.⁴ But as Anthea Roberts and Sandesh Sivakumaran have noted, with this growth comes anomaly as only states have the authority to make international law.⁵ Moreover, if the notion that international law is derived from the consent of those it governs remains true, there is a disconnect in whether international law can bind the non-state actor.

As the ADF embarks on Operation OKRA, in support of the international effort to combat the Islamic State terrorist threat, it is timely to review what methods may exist to hold non-state armed groups accountable to humanitarian norms.⁶ To that end, this article will examine which rules of international humanitarian law apply to non-state armed groups and to what extent they are legally capable of contributing to the formation or interpretation of the rules. In doing so, it will highlight the importance of status by reviewing the legal personality of non-state actors, before discussing which rules bind them. It will conclude by discussing the contribution non-state armed groups are capable of making to international law and how this may benefit the conduct of future military operations.

The importance of status

As with all forms of law, understanding the legal personality of those involved is an important first step. That begins with knowing who they are. International humanitarian law is the field of law that governs how wars are fought and it presently recognises two types of armed conflict, namely:

- International armed conflict, where two or more opposing 'high contracting parties' (states) resort to armed force against one another, even if a state of war is not recognised by one of them. This may also include conflicts where people are fighting against colonial domination, alien occupation or racist regimes while exercising their right to self-determination;⁷ and
- Non-international armed conflict, which takes place in the territory of a state between its armed forces and those of a non-state armed group which, under responsible command, exercises control over a part of its territory to enable them to carry out sustained military operations. This does not include internal disturbances, such as riots, isolated and sporadic acts of violence and other acts of a similar nature which are not armed conflict.⁸

Criteria to support the classification of conflict can be derived from Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions [1977] and the ruling of the International Criminal Tribunal Yugoslavia in the *Tadic* case [1999]. Additional Protocol II employs the terms 'sustained' and 'concerted' to describe the nature of operations to be considered when implementing the Protocol. The *Tadic* ruling held that a non-international armed conflict exists when there is 'protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a state'.⁹ Consequently, non-international armed conflict is generally defined by satisfaction of two criteria: intensity and organisation.¹⁰ Where these criteria are unable to be satisfied, human rights law would apply.

Notwithstanding the importance of intensity in declaring a non-international armed conflict, the requirement to demonstrate 'organisation' is perhaps more pertinent to understanding how a non-state armed group may be bound by international law. To that end, the UN defines it as a group that:

[Has] the potential to employ arms in the use of force to achieve political, ideological or economic objectives; [but] are not within the formal military structures of States, State-alliances or intergovernmental organizations; and are not under the control of the State(s) in which they operate.¹¹

Membership to a non-state armed group is based on an individual continuously assuming a function for the group involving its direct participation in hostilities.¹² By assuming a continuous combat function, members forfeit their status as civilians and therefore their entitlement to protection against direct attack.¹³ However, as noted by the International Committee of the Red Cross, in its *Interpretive Guidance on the Notion of Direct Participation in Hostilities under International Humanitarian Law*, assuming a continuous combat function 'does not imply *de jure* entitlement to combatant privilege' that would be afforded to a combatant acting on behalf of a state.¹⁴ This correctly infers that a conflict involving a non-state armed group operates on a different set of rules than a conflict between states. So how are non-state armed groups bound by international law and what rules apply?

The application of international law to non-state armed groups

While non-state armed groups have no independent international legal personality, several arguments justify the applicability of international humanitarian law to them. The most favoured argument posits that non-state armed groups are bound by customary international law, which is codified in Common Article 3.¹⁵

A recent study by the International Committee of the Red Cross has also shown that a number of customary rules correspond with the provisions in Protocol I, including the principle of distinction between civilian and combatants; the distinction between civilian objects and military objectives; the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks; the obligation to respect and protect medical and religious personnel and units; the obligation to protect enemy *hors de combat* (outside the fight); and the prohibition on attacking objects that are indispensable to the population.¹⁶ An alternative view holds that the rules of international humanitarian law bind individuals through domestic law and the implementation of these rules into national legislation or their direct applicability of self-executing norms.¹⁷

Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions [1949] is the cornerstone of international law applicable to the non-state armed group. It obliges all parties to the conflict to treat those who have laid down their arms, or are *hors de combat*, humanely and without adverse distinction.¹⁸ While it does not deal directly with the conduct of armed conflict, it does imply the principle of civilian immunity, by prohibiting 'violence to the life and persons taking no active part in hostilities'.¹⁹ However, Common Article 3 is a very generic set of rules which, if viewed critically, fails to clearly outline how far protection extends with regard to special protections (for example, to doctors, medical personnel, the emblem etc). It also fails to provide guidance on the treatment of detainees or the means and methods of warfare.

To address some of the deficiencies in Common Article 3, Additional Protocol II was adopted in 1977. This Protocol focuses on the protection of victims in non-international armed conflict and provides guidance on who and what may be protected from direct attack, as well as listing a fundamental set of guarantees. Yet Additional Protocol II falls short on details regarding the permissible means and methods of warfare, and fails to provide a direct prohibition against indiscriminate attacks or establishing a mechanism for criminal enforcement.²⁰

Since the release of Additional Protocol II, there have been a number of other conventions adopted that impact non-state armed groups, including the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons [1980]; the Chemical Weapons Convention [1993]; the Ottawa Convention banning anti-personnel land mines [1997]; and, the Statute of the International Criminal Court [1998]. Each of these conventions regulates the conduct of armed conflict, ranging from the means of warfare to the permissible methods. However, the applicability of their rules to non-state armed groups is seldom stated clearly. Rather, their texts usually prohibit the state from certain means or methods of war and require it to implement national measures to ensure compliance by persons in its territory or jurisdiction. This raises the question of how accountable a state can be when it does not have effective control over some (or all) of its territory.

Territorial control is a key feature of state-ship. The International Criminal Tribunal Yugoslavia ruling in the *Tadic* case noted that effective control of a non-state armed group over an area can, for the purpose of applying customary international law, de-link it from the sovereign state. This was later referenced in the report of the Darfur Commission.²¹ The result is a layering of law—domestic, treaty and, where necessary, customary international law—that binds a non-state armed group to the humanitarian principles espoused by states.

Non-state armed groups contribution to international law

It is clear from the above that the doctrine underpinning the creation and governing of international law is highly 'statist' (that is, the belief that the state should control either economic or social policy, or both, to some degree). This assertion is reinforced through the definitive reference on the sources of international law, namely Article 38(1) of the Statute of the International Court of Justice. The Article articulates four sources of international law, being international conventions; international customs; general principles of law recognised by civilised nations; and judicial decisions and teachings of the most highly-qualified publicists.²² With three of the four sources residing in the exclusive remit of states, how can non-state armed groups contribute to international law and to what extent are they legally capable of doing so?

First, Common Article 3 encourages 'the parties to the conflict' to enter into special agreement on all or part of the other provisions of the Convention(s). Similarly, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons [1980] also offers that the 'high contracting party and the authority' may choose to apply the obligations of Additional Protocol I.²³ These examples demonstrate the ability of non-state armed groups to legally enter into international agreements that would be directly applicable to any conflict they were a party to.

Second, flexibility exists within the Geneva Conventions to enable non-state armed groups to lawfully accede or accept the treaty. The Common Article 60/59/139/155 states that accession is open to any 'power', rather than to any 'state'. Similarly, Article 2(3) also uses the term 'power' to denote who may be bound by the treaty.²⁴ If the term 'power' can be linked to the capacity for effective control, as was the situation in the *Tadic* case, then there is scope for non-state armed groups to accede or accept the Geneva Conventions.²⁵

Third, the inclusion of actions by non-state armed groups when considering customary norms has influenced UN reporting in its work regarding the protection of children, among other projects. The UN's broader approach has also sought to apply these norms prior to the determination of the existence of an armed conflict, and recognising non-state armed groups as parties to the conflict. Some commentators believe this is the first step in a more descriptive and normative framework, where 'the law reflects existing cannons of behavior by all concerned'.²⁶

There are several benefits to military operations by allowing non-state armed groups to contribute to international law—most notably, the increased likelihood that opposing forces will abide by humanitarian norms. A study by the International Council on Human Rights Policy found that armed groups which commit to written codes of conduct are more likely to respect human rights.²⁷ For the military forces participating in the conflict, this means a lower probability of antagonists using inhumane tactics, like torture or the execution of captives as the methods of war.²⁸ It may also support a faster stabilisation effort, with potentially less damage to essential infrastructure, such as hospitals, water and power supplies or other objects protected under the Geneva Conventions.

In addition to the direct benefits of non-state armed groups contributing to international law, there are also some less obvious advantages to future military operations. Anthea Roberts and Sandesh Sivakumaran highlighted one example where the written agreement of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army to prohibit the use of anti-personnel landmines enabled the Government of Sudan to ratify the Ottawa Convention.²⁹

Their example is supported by Martin Barber, former director of the UN's Mine Action Service, who commented that 'it is clear from conversations with senior officials of the Government, that they would not have felt able to ratify the Treaty, if the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army had not already made a formal commitment to observe its provisions'.³⁰ The ability to gain a national consensus on this issue, in spite of the ongoing conflict, has no doubt saved lives and made the environment safer for the UN Mission in the Sudan.

However, allowing non-state armed groups to contribute to international law is not without its critics. The principal concern of states is the perceived legitimisation of the group. Consequently, governments tend to refer to these groups as terrorists or criminal organisations. The challenge in progressing the ability of non-state armed groups to influence international law has been neatly summarised by the former director of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, Professor Andrew Clapham, who asserted in 2010 that:

As long as governments remain content to allow other governments to self-determine the existence of an opposing party to an armed conflict, the application of customary international law to armed non-state actors will remain problematic.³¹

Conclusion

This article has examined the rules of international humanitarian law applicable to non-state armed groups, and the extent to which the groups are legally capable of contributing to their formation or interpretation. In doing so, it has noted that international humanitarian law is only applicable in times of international armed conflict or non-international armed conflict; outside this, human rights law would govern the actions of the group. The article has also highlighted that members of non-state armed groups are considered to be performing a continuous combat function and therefore forfeit their status as civilians and their entitlement to protection against direct attack.

It has also been noted that while non-state armed groups have no independent international legal personality, they are still bound by treaty law, customary international law and domestic laws ratifying treaty provisions. However, non-state armed groups are capable of influencing these laws. Specifically, Common Article 3 advocates for the parties to a conflict to enter into special agreements to cover other parts of the conventions; a point repeated in the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. They may also lawfully accede or accept the Geneva Conventions. Perhaps the most influential way that non-state armed groups are able to influence future law is through the inclusion of their customary norms in general reporting.

Several benefits to future military operations of allowing non-state armed groups to contribute to international law have been highlighted, including the increased likelihood of antagonists complying with humanitarian norms—which has the potential to make a conflict safer through the elimination of inhumane methods of war such as torture. Further, the adoption of protectionist principles found in the Geneva Conventions could also assist in preserving essential infrastructure and therefore reduce reconstruction requirements. It was also demonstrated that entering into written agreements with non-state armed groups can support the broader acceptance of international law, with reference to the Sudanese ratification of the Ottawa Convention.

As international law is intrinsically linked with a state's sovereignty, it is understood that any change that may impact one will be resisted by the other. Despite the growing trend of intrastate war, the legal framework for the non-state armed group remains immature. As Anne Petitpierre has remarked:

International humanitarian law has always sought to strike the best possible balance between legitimate concern for the security of the State and its citizens on the one hand and the preservation of human life, health and dignity on the other.³²

Lieutenant Colonel Tim Rutherford is a cavalry officer who graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in 1999. He has held a range of command, planning and instructional appointments in Australia, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. He is a graduate of the Australian Command and Staff College and holds a Bachelor of Professional Studies (Peace Studies) from the University of New England, as well as a Masters of Military Studies and a Masters of International Law from the Australian National University. He is currently employed as the Staff Officer Grade 1 – Surveillance and Reconnaissance within Army Headquarters.

Notes

- 1 P.C. Stern and D. Druckman (eds.), *International Conflict Resolution after the Cold War*, National Academy Press: Washington DC, 2000, pp. 1-2.
- 2 Human Security Research Group, 'Human Security Report – 2012', School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University: Canada, 2012, Figure 5.7; and D. Kilcullen, 'The Future of War? Expect to See Urban, Connected, Irregular, Zombie Conflicts', *Foreign Policy*, 5 February 2014, available at <<http://ricks.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2014/02/05/>> accessed 22 September 2014.
- 3 'Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic (Appeal Judgment)', IT-94-1-A, *International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia* [website], 15 July 1999; available at <<http://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/acjug/en/tad-aj990715e.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015; 'Case Concerning Military and Paramilitary Activities In and Against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America)', *International Court of Justice* [website], 27 June 1986, available at <<http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/70/6503.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 4 'Convention on Cluster Munitions', 3 December 2008, available at <<http://www.clusterconvention.org/>> accessed 26 October 2015; 'Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict', 26 March 1999, available at <<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/armed-conflict-and-heritage/the-2nd-protocol-1999/>> accessed 26 October 2015; 'Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction', 18 September 1997, available at <<http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cpusptam/cpusptam.html>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 5 A. Roberts and S. Sivakumaran, 'Lawmaking by Non-state Actors: engaging armed groups in the creation of international humanitarian law', *Yale Journal of International Law*, Vol. 37, Issue 1, 2012, pp. 108-52.
- 6 For more information on Operation OKRA, see Department of Defence, 'OKRA Home', *Department of Defence* [website], available at <<http://www.defence.gov.au/operations/okra/>> accessed 18 October 2015.
- 7 'Article 1 to the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)', 8 June 1977, available at <<https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201125/volume-1125-I-17512-English.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 8 'Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions', 12 August 1949, available at <<http://www.worldlii.org/int/journals/ISILYBIHRL/2001/11.html>> accessed 26 October 2015; and 'Article 1 to the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts'.

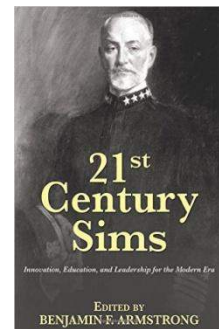
- 9 'Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic'. 'Protracted' was interpreted in the *Haradinaj* case with particular reference to the intensity of the violence, not just the duration. For more, see 'Prosecutor v. Haradinaj', (Judgment), IT-04-84-84-T, *International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia* [website], 3 April 2008, paragraph 49, available at <<http://www.icty.org/x/cases/haradinaj/tjug/en/080403.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 10 Exceptions to this view do exist, as noted in the finding of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in the *Abella* case [1997]. Here, the court found that a 30 hour clash between the attackers and the Argentine armed forces satisfied the conditions to be classified as a non-international armed conflict. For more, see 'Juan Carlos Abella v. Argentina', Case No. 11.137, *Inter-American Commission on Human Rights* [website], 18 November 1997, available at <<https://www.cidh.oas.org/annualrep/97eng/Argentina11137.htm>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 11 UN, 'Guidelines on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups', Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: New York, 2006, p. 1, available at <<https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/HumanitarianNegotiationswArmedGroupsManual.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015. The term 'non-state armed group' is one of several terms used in formal or academic literature on armed conflict to distinguish a particular group of actors. Other terms include 'dissident armed forces' and 'other organised armed groups'.
- 12 N. Melzer, 'Interpretive Guidance on the Notion of Direct Participation in Hostilities under International Humanitarian Law', *International Committee of the Red Cross*: Geneva, 2009, p. 33, available at <<https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0990.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 13 'Article 13 to Additional Protocol II'.
- 14 'Article 13 to Additional Protocol II'. Combatant privilege, namely the right to directly participate in hostilities with immunity from domestic prosecution for lawful acts of war, is afforded only to members of the armed forces of parties to an international armed conflict (except medical and religious personnel), as well as to participants in a *levée en masse*.
- 15 D. Bethlehem, 'The methodological framework of the study', in E. Wilmshurst and S. Breua (eds.), *Perspectives on the ICRC Study on Customary International Humanitarian Law*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007, p. 8; and 'Case Concerning Military and Paramilitary Activities in and Against Nicaragua', paragraphs 118-20.
- 16 J-M. Henckarets and L. Doswald-Beck, *Customary International Humanitarian Law - Rules*, Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009.
- 17 A. Bellal, G. Giacca and S. Casey-Maslen, 'International Law and Armed Non-state Actors in Afghanistan', *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 93, No. 881, 2011, p. 55. For information regarding the process for a state to become party to a convention, see Articles 12, 14 and 24 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 1969.
- 18 'Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions'.
- 19 A.P. Rogers, *Law on the Battlefield*, 2nd Edition, Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2004, p. 221.
- 20 Article 35 to Additional Protocol I notes some prohibitions in the methods or means of warfare that are applicable 'in any armed conflict'. Consequently, an argument could be made that this would apply to non-international armed conflict. For more, see 'Article 35 to the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts'.
- 21 UN, 'Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General', S/2005/60, UN: New York, 2005, paragraph 172, available at <http://www.un.org/news/dh/sudan/com_inq_darfur.pdf> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 22 UN, *Statute of the International Court of Justice*, 18 April 1946, p. 27, available at <<http://www.icj-cij.org/documents/?p1=4&p2=2>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 23 UN, 'Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (and Protocols) (as amended on 21 December 2001)', 10 October 1980, available at <https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVI-2&chapter=26&lang=en> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 24 'Common Article 2 and 60/59/139/155 to the Geneva Conventions', 12 August 1949.
- 25 Not all conventions are so open. For example, Protocol II to the Hague Convention of 1954 [1999] defaults to the use of the term 'State Parties' as opposed to 'parties to the conflict', creating ambiguity regarding its constituency: N. Higgins, 'The Regulation of Armed Non-State Actors: promoting the application of the laws of war to conflicts involving national liberation movements', *Human Rights Brief*, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2009, pp. 12-8,

-
- available at <<http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1101&context=hrbrief>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 26 A. Clapham, 'The Rights and Responsibilities of Armed Non-State Actors', *Social Science Research Network* [website], 1 February 2010, pp. 42-3, available at <http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1569636> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 27 International Council on Human Rights, 'Ends & Means: human rights approaches to armed groups', *International Council on Human Rights* [website], 2000, available at <<http://www.uthr.org/PDF%20files/End%20&%20Means.pdf>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 28 H. Cooper, 'Islamic State: militants claim Jordanian pilot burned alive, Jordan to execute would-be bomber', *ABC News* [website], 4 February 2015, available at <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-04/islamic-state-claims-to-have-burned-jordanian-pilot-alive/6068170>> accessed 11 October 2015.
- 29 Roberts and Sivakumaran, 'Lawmaking by Non-state Actors', p. 129.
- 30 M. Barber, 'Preface', in *Armed Non-state Actors and Landmines: Volume 1 - A Global Report Profiling NSAs and their Use, Acquisition, Production, Transfer and Stockpiling of Landmines*, Geneva Call and the Program for the Study of International Organisations: Geneva, 2005, abstract available at <<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=15037>> accessed 26 October 2015.
- 31 Clapham, 'The Rights and Responsibilities of Armed Non-State Actors', p. 43.
- 32 A. Petitpierre, 'Relevance of International humanitarian Law to Non-State Actors', Address at the Bruges Colloquium, International Committee of the Red Cross: Geneva, 2002, available at <<https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/5f8jez.htm>> accessed 20 September 2014.

BOOK REVIEWS

21st Century Sims: innovation, education and leadership for the modern era

Benjamin F. Armstrong (ed.)
Naval Institute Press: Annapolis, 2015, 176 pages
ISBN: 978-1-6125-1810-7
US\$21.95



Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Michael Scott, Australian Army

21st Century Sims is a well-edited book of century-old writings on the profession of arms that is highly recommended for all officers of the ADF. US Navy Lieutenant Commander Benjamin F. Armstrong, a PhD candidate in war studies at Kings College, London, has done a very good job of collating and introducing Admiral William Snowden Sims' writings. The articles are great examples of professional writing that both demonstrate how to present well-formed arguments and highlight the necessity of healthy professional debate to introduce innovative ideas or disprove accepted theories and concepts.

Admiral Sims was at the forefront of US naval affairs for more than two decades from the early 1900s, although his legacy has been overshadowed by the successes of his protégés in the Second World War—including Chester Nimitz and Raymond Spruance. Sims, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, was an innovative problem solver, an expert researcher and a critical thinker with an exceptional ability for deductive reasoning. None of these traits was more impressive than his moral courage when challenging well-established theories and concepts, especially those of Alfred Thayer Mahan, the 'father of maritime theory'.

As a Lieutenant in 1900, Sims realised that while battleship designs were flawed, he could better the ship through tactics, techniques and procedures. He earned the nickname 'The Gun Doctor', after he introduced a new gunnery system to the US Navy, one that revolutionised naval warfare. Sims learned from Captain Percy Scott of the Royal Navy the idea of 'continuous-aim fire'. He took this idea, which he combined with a new telescopic sight for even greater effect, and sought to introduce the technique into the US Navy. Sims wrote several reports to the Bureau of Ordnance in the Washington Naval Yard, to which he received no response. The experts in the Bureau dismissed Sims' claims as outlandish and impossible. Although he understood that the bureaucracy was blocking him, Sims' dogged determination ensured that he continued to improve the technique and send reports to the Bureau.

Sims finally got a break-through when the Rear Admiral in command of the Asiatic Squadron read Sims' reports and added his endorsement. Word quickly spread through the fleet of the revolutionary technique. However, the Bureau completed its own 'tests' and concluded that Sims' techniques were impossible. He had enough and wrote to the President, Theodore Roosevelt, who had previously been Assistant Secretary of the Navy and was a naval historian. The President ordered a gunnery exercise to demonstrate Sims' technique and, after the exercise was successful, ordered that Sims be appointed the US Navy's Inspector of Target Practice. This appointment gave him the opportunity to revolutionise the entire fleet.

While 'The Gun Doctor' is a naval-specific example of successful professional writing, Sims' other significant writings are very relevant to all members of the profession of arms. These articles and papers, written a century ago, are still very applicable today. Sims wrote on topics that ranged from military character, promotions and reporting to innovation in the military and preparedness. These are topics that are still grappled with today.

Regarding 'Military Character', Sims' subject and paper was the point of discussions at the Naval War College in 1913. The same issues, especially qualities of leaders, were again discussed across the Australian Army in 2013-14, with similar conclusions. Sims espoused the qualities required for a military

mindset. Using examples from across the Services, and from other nations, Sims argued the case for mission command. A critical component of his argument, one that is often missed, is the responsibility of subordinates (that is, the followers) to ensure the success of mission command. Sims concluded that the essential twin qualities are loyalty and initiative, and that mission command is a habit of a trained mind. This article is a 'must read' for all leaders.

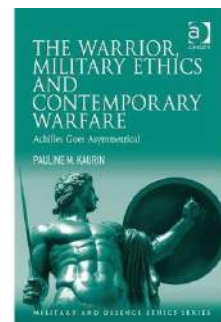
In 'The Practical Naval Officer', Sims articulated the need for a continuum of professional development in military officers (not just naval officers) necessary to become a senior officer. He espoused the crucial quality of critical thinking, essential to innovation and adaptation in any organisation. To garner this quality, Sims—much like the Prussian innovator Scharnhorst—prescribed the requirement for self-imposed lifelong learning. Doing one's current job well does not prepare one for advancement. Through Sims' argument, the reader should ask if Australian officers are being adequately prepared for conducting war at the operational and strategic levels.

The lessons for junior and mid-ranked officers taught by Sims are clear. Ideas are powerful; however, they need to be clearly communicated. Professional writing forums are a means to share ideas as well as test or disprove accepted theories and concepts. To be successful, though, requires well-formed arguments and critical-thinking abilities built on a platform of research. Critical thinking reduces conservatism and risk aversion. Additionally, successful officers require the moral courage to challenge the ideas of others—but should not be vindictive or use inappropriate tone and language, and offer only objective criticism and always offer solutions.

21st Century Sims presents readers the opportunity to be mentored by a great leader who lived a century ago. The book highlights the importance of healthy professional debate, which can sometimes be frowned upon in Australia. Armstrong has done an excellent job to draw parallels to the current day. He notes that 'there is a tendency for Americans in general, and naval officers in particular, to consider the challenges they face as something new and unique to their time'. This observation can also be extended to Australia. The lessons of others should be learned and not 're-experienced'. This book provides such lessons, through examples of effective professional writing, and is highly recommended for all leaders, both in the military and across the wider community.

The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare: Achilles goes asymmetrical

Pauline M. Kaurin
Ashgate: Farnham, 2014, 143 pages
ISBN: 978-1-4094-6536-2
\$125



Reviewed by Brigadier Chris Field, CSC, Australian Army

The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare: Achilles goes asymmetrical, authored by Pauline Kaurin, is the fourth book in Ashgate's 'Military and Defence Ethics' series. This series is co-edited by Don Carrick and James Connelly from the University of Hull, Paul Robinson from the University of Ottawa, and George Lucas from the US Naval Academy, Annapolis. Collectively, these writers seek:

[F]or all those involved in issues of national defence—from policy makers to armament manufacturers to members of the armed forces—to behave, and to be seen to behave, ethically.

The Military and Defence Ethics series aims to provide people involved in national defence with the 'finest possible advice and support [on ethics]', presented in a manner that is 'readily accessible to all'. Pauline Kaurin's *The Warrior, Military Ethics and Contemporary Warfare* is an excellent addition to this series.

Kaurin bases this book on the protagonists from Homer's *The Iliad*—Hector and Achilles. In exploring the idea of ethics as an asymmetric advantage, Kaurin examines the 'perfect warrior' Hector and the

'dishonourable' Achilles. Kaurin emphasises that the 'warrior archetype or warrior ethos ... still holds sway in the [modern] military self-conception, rooted as it is in the more existential notions of war, honour, identity and meaning' and 'independence of judgement'.

Confirming the power of this idea, the ADF frequently portrays a 'warrior ethos' in recruit advertising, through the concepts of 'future leaders'; 'the team works'; 'challenge yourself'; 'accomplished people'; and 'where leaders are made'.

Central to Kaurin's thesis is that 'moral asymmetry' between Western militaries and their enemies is a 'fact' of the contemporary battlefield, and that:

[It] is one of the few things that can virtually be taken as a given. Therefore, moral education and all training must be conducted with this fact firmly in mind ... allowing military personnel to maintain and nourish their own integrity/identity and the standards expected of their profession.

Kaurin acknowledges that the tactics and ideas associated with 'asymmetric war'—including 'terrorism, torture, deliberate attacks on non-combatants, [and] guerrilla and insurgent forms of combat'—have existed for thousands of years. However, Kaurin believes asymmetric warfare is worth studying because it is 'an enduring part of war' and 'the more successful and adept the West become at [its] preferred version of war [that is, conventional war] ... the more asymmetric options [for the enemy] become attractive, and even militarily necessary'.

Employing Achilles as a flawed warrior archetype, this book is designed to assist readers to 'think through the moral implications and challenges posed by asymmetrical warfare' and to 'think through fighting asymmetric opponents'. Kaurin is particularly interested in moral asymmetry which 'relates to the differences in moral practices and the moral norms that undergird [the] strategies and tactics parties of a conflict are willing to utilise in war'.

Kaurin integrates the 'moral questions about the justification and conduct of warfare [with] questions about the moral education and training of soldiers'. To develop these questions, she examines three areas of military ethics, namely the nature of the military and military professionalism; the nature and morality of war—*jus ad bellum* (justice of the war); and moral questions related to the use of force—*jus in bello* (just conduct).

In these three areas, Kaurin explores two moral virtues: courage and loyalty. These virtues resonate with ADF values. For example, the RAN's values include courage and loyalty; the Australian Army's values include courage; and the RAAF's values include integrity, meaning the courage to do what is right.

Kaurin describes two types of courage; courage in the face of personal danger (physical courage), and courage to accept responsibility (moral courage). Her argument is that while Achilles displayed physical courage and a willingness to die in battle, he lacked moral courage because he was 'largely obsessed with his own honour and glory, ignoring the pleas of his comrades to come to their aid'. In contrast, Hector's courage involved 'doing his duty so he can get back to his life and his family'.

Kaurin describes loyalty as 'standing by' an object of loyalty, where a person considers 'the claims of obligation related to the object [or person] of loyalty to outweigh other claims'. In the military context, Kaurin argues that loyalty 'becomes the mark of the [military] professional, as well as a crucial virtue that must be internalised if one is to become a full and authentic part of the [military] group'.

She argues that Hector displayed 'loyalty to fellow soldiers, his "state" (Troy), his own sense of his duty as a son, husband, father and citizen, and his moral obligation to the craft of war ... [as well as] the rules and standards of war'. In contrast, Achilles was 'loyal to his own sense of what it means to be a warrior, his own prowess and self-reliance ... to his fate to die ... his glory, his honour and later, his revenge'.

Kaurin sees Achilles' sense of loyalty as similar to 'traditional warrior or honour societies' faced by Western militaries in the asymmetric context of insurgencies. Like Achilles, many contemporary insurgents are driven by loyalty to 'clan' above 'nation'. Kaurin poses the question: 'if the West identifies with Hector and sees their adversaries as Achilles, what follows?'.

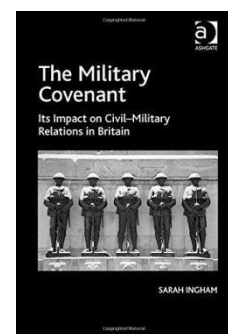
She argues that Western militaries must proactively embrace the broad and inclusive definition of Hector's courage and loyalty, while countering Achilles' narrow self-serving application of these two virtues. Practically, Kaurin envisages four aspects of moral education for the military:

1. Moral education is not hierarchical—this education is required for the entire chain of command;
2. Western militaries must transition from a narrow 'warrior' ethos to a broader 'guardian' ethos;
3. They must also measure and reward in ways that are ethical, for example by eliminating the 'zero defects' military mind-set; and
4. They must acknowledge that change, development and experimentation, with attendant risks, are necessary components of military service.

Finally, Kaurin recommends an 'open-ended approach to case studies [to] develop the moral imagination and empathy necessary to the development of military virtues—like courage and loyalty—that need to be developed with more attention to [the] nuance and complexity [of future] missions and tasks'.

The Military Covenant: its impact on civil-military relations in Britain

Sarah Ingham
Ashgate: Farnham, 2015, 231 pages
ISBN: 978-1-4724-2854-7
£85.50



Reviewed by Wing Commander Jo Brick, Royal Australian Air Force

The relationship between the state and standing military forces is a vast subject that can be examined from many different perspectives. One view focuses on the issue of the relationship between the military and society, particularly the exertion of civil control over military forces in liberal democracies.

On this issue, Samuel P. Huntington's *Soldier and The State*, published in 1957, and the more recent publication by Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: agency, oversight and civil-military relations*, are pertinent. These works have examined the duties that military forces owe to the nation, either through the development of professionalism as a prerequisite to Huntington's theory of 'objective control', or in relation to the duties arising in a 'principal-agent' context in Feaver's work.

Sarah Ingham's work, *The Military Covenant: its impact on civil-military relations in Britain*, dissects the relationships discussed within the broad theories of Huntington and Feaver by examining the interaction between the state, the military and individual soldiers. Specifically, her work contributes to the field of civil-military relations by examining the duties owed by the nation to the military and its individual members through the lens of the British 'military covenant'.

Ingham's work includes an historical examination of the origins of the 'military covenant'. A publication called *Soldiering: the military covenant*, published by the UK Ministry of Defence in 2000, discussed the moral responsibilities arising from the duties of a soldier, particularly in relation to the taking of life. However, the co-opting of the 'military covenant' by various civilian institutions has resulted in the term obtaining mystique that asserts a centuries-old bond of loyalty and responsibility between the nation, the military and the individual soldier. While the original focus of Ingham's *Military Covenant* was the Army, the book also considers the evolution of the covenant to incorporate a joint perspective.

Ingham argues that trust lies at the heart of a 'covenant'—and this is particularly the case in a civil-military context, where soldiers may have to make the ultimate sacrifice to further the nation's cause. The covenant-based relationship also implies an element of reciprocity, where soldiers who serve the nation can expect support from that nation when they return from operations. However, arguments have been made that there is often a significant 'gap' between the military and the nation it serves.

In an American context, the issue of this gap was examined by the US-based Triangle Institute for Security Studies, with findings published in 2001 in *Soldiers and Civilians*, edited by Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn. Ingham's work complements such studies by contributing the British experience, particularly her discussion of the role of the military covenant as a means of bridging the civil-military gap, as manifested by the increased support for veterans' groups, such as 'Help for Heroes', and for remembrance activities.

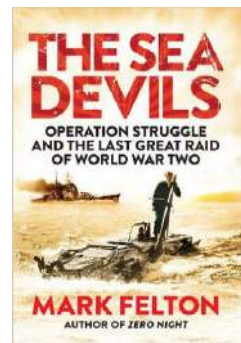
Ingham also considers the evolution of the military covenant to include significant moral issues, and its quasi-judicial status, in the context of British military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. This includes consideration of how the covenant was allegedly 'fractured' by the UK Government in providing insufficient and unsuitable military equipment during Operation HERRICK in Afghanistan. The discussion also includes the appropriation of the military covenant by various civilian groups, including the judiciary, which used it as the basis for providing members of the armed forces with 'citizen-plus' status.

This was evident in the UK High Court's *Limbu* judgment, which resulted in residency being granted to a group of Gurkhas, who had served with the British Army. It demonstrated that the moral reward under the covenant extends to material support, and significant legal rights of residence and citizenship. These developments are extensions of the original 'military covenant', which started as a simple moral code but is now a fundamental aspect of executive policy and judicial decision-making.

The bulk of the literature on civil-military relations is from the US and encompasses a broad range of issues, many of which are addressed in Ingham's work. However, this book makes a particularly valuable contribution to the narrative by considering the field through the prism of the British experience. Importantly, it highlights that the covenant needs to be seen in the context of the interaction between the nation, its people and its warriors—and asks what the nation owes to the men and women who serve in its name. This can become a highly emotive and controversial issue that is often debated in the public domain. Ingham's work usefully serves to frame this important discussion.

The Sea Devils: Operation Struggle and the last great raid of World War Two

Mark Felton
Icon Books: London, 2015, 334 pages
ISBN: 978-1-8483-1994-3
\$27.99



Reviewed by Jim Truscott

The story of the interdiction of the undersea cables which provided the Japanese with secure telephone communications between Singapore, Saigon and Hong Kong is not a well-known or recently-told history. This is surprising given the strategic importance of the Allies not being able to intercept radio communications when the Japanese defence perimeter had contracted in 1945 and they were no longer using radio as much.

This book, about four secret mini XE submarines, part of the British 14th Flotilla, is replete with tense and danger-close reading about special and hazardous duties. Interestingly, the author states that the Far East was the only theatre where special operatives were issued with suicide tablets due to the high risk of their compromise.

While used with some success in Europe, the mini-submarines had a chequered start in the Pacific, with the British seeking to use them in some way to maintain their sovereignty in the Far East after the war. However, by the time the mother ship and six mini-submarines had arrived in the American-controlled Pacific Theatre, the naval war was running out of Japanese shipping targets to attack, and neither Nimitz nor the British Pacific Fleet wanted anything to do with the 14th Flotilla.

However, just as the Flotilla was about to be decommissioned, the American High Command had a need to be able to read Japanese communications after the dropping of the first atomic bomb. So Operations FOIL and SABRE were authorised to cut the cables off Hong Kong and Saigon at the end of July 1945. To appease the British, the Americans also offered two moored cruisers as targets in the Straits of Johore, as the Japanese heavy cruisers *Takao* and *Myoko* were threats to Operation ZIPPER, Mountbatten's planned invasion of the Malay Peninsula. This raid was labelled Operation STRUGGLE.

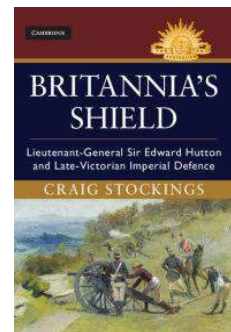
Final rehearsals took place at Subic Bay, with the raid on Hong Kong launched from there, while three other mini submarines were launched from Brunei Bay, which had just been retaken. The four mini-submarines were towed into position by other British submarines but with the Americans retaining naval command from on board HMS *Bonaventure*, the mother ship.

The brown-water skills and fortitude required to locate the undersea telephone cables and for divers to actually leave the submarines to cut them are formidable. The professional skill and bravery required to penetrate naval defences, which included near collisions with other vessels, and place explosive charges on a hull covered with growth while jammed on the sea bed under an enemy cruiser are deserving of the VCs awarded to the diver and captain of the XE3.

It is timely that this book has been published just as Australia's politicians and military commanders are making decisions about its future submarines, and when telecommunication companies are also seeking to build new undersea cables linking Australia to the rest of the world. This book should be mandatory reading for SAS operators, clearance divers, submarine captains and those in military headquarters and other government departments responsible for planning and executing special operations.

Britannia's Shield: Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton and late-Victorian Imperial defence

Craig Stockings
Cambridge University Press: Port Melbourne, 2015, 348 pages
ISBN: 978-1-1070-9482-6
\$59.95



Reviewed by John Donovan

Professor Craig Stockings has cast a bright light on the troubled career of Lieutenant General Sir Edward Hutton. Like a modern Cassandra, Hutton seemed condemned to produce well thought out, practical plans to improve Imperial defence (at least as regards Britain and the self-governing colonies), while being unable to ensure their implementation. Even today, many of his ideas, particularly about infantry mobility, have resonance.

As Stockings demonstrates, a significant part of the problem was Hutton's own personality. Hutton's failures were often for constitutional reasons that he respected in theory but ignored in practice. His difficult personal relationships with political leaders in the colonies were a significant obstacle to achieving his objectives, while his habit of appealing directly to the press, over the heads of his constitutional masters, was not particularly helpful.

Hutton regularly warned his British colleagues and superiors that the colonies could not be forced to commit themselves to binding peacetime arrangements. He saw that while leaders in the self-governing colonies were willing to seek volunteers in time of crisis, they would not commit themselves at other times, without some control over Imperial policy. However, he then pressed the governments he worked for to move further than they were willing.

Hutton believed that a system of 'Cooperative Empire Defence' could be based on an Empire-wide volunteer militia force comprised largely of mounted infantry. This would provide a deployable reserve

that could be used wherever the Empire was threatened. Stockings shows that Hutton's emphasis on mounted infantry, developed at Staff College, was confirmed by command of a mounted infantry company in South Africa in 1881, and polished in Egypt and during campaigns against the Mahdists. In 1888, in one of his few clear successes, Hutton established a mounted infantry school at Aldershot.

Stockings shows how Hutton used his time as Commandant of the New South Wales forces to plan a force based on a split between a static Garrison Force and a mobile Field Force. Economic problems, and Hutton's arrogance towards and impatience with the compromises inherent in politics, left his plan incomplete. Similar problems ensued during Hutton's periods in command in Canada, and commanding the new Australian Army after Federation. The period in Canada was particularly difficult, as Hutton attempted to reform a politicised militia.

However, Stockings shows that even though his 'master plan' was never implemented in any of the forces he commanded, those forces did benefit from improvements to training and organisation that Hutton was able to put in place. The closest that Hutton came to implementing his dream was as commander of the 1st Mounted Infantry Brigade in South Africa. Stockings' discussion of this period demonstrates again Hutton's inability to 'cooperate to succeed'.

As well as falling out with his colonial political masters, Hutton also antagonised his British superiors. Stockings records that when the 'Roberts Ring' replaced the 'Wolseley Ring' in the War Office, the writing was on the wall for both Hutton and his ideas. The cavalymen French and Haig later ensured that mounted infantry did not replace the cavalry. Even the Australian Light Horse, given the role of mounted infantry by Hutton in 1902, was converted to cavalry regiments from late 1917, albeit some regiments were again converted to motor or machine gun regiments in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

It would take another war before mounted infantry (particularly in the British motor battalions, American armoured infantry battalions, and German panzer grenadiers) became fully accepted. Ironically, Hutton's old regiment, the 60th Rifles (King's Royal Rifle Corps), provided many of the motor battalions.

Hutton was at the centre of the development of Imperial defence policy in the last decade of the 1800s and the first few years of the 1900s. As Stockings demonstrates, however, while Hutton's theories were known in London, the actual course of events followed a path based on the work of others. Reforms to the British Territorial Army implemented after Hutton's retirement were based on the work of others, although they resembled his ideal scheme.

That did not stop Hutton from claiming that he could see his ideas in many developments before and during the First World War. Despite his failures, however, Hutton seems to have been the most capable of the men discussed in Jim Wood's book (*Chiefs of the Australian Army, 1901-1914*, Australian Military History Publications, 2006).

While the printing standard in this book is excellent, the editing is somewhat eccentric for a product of Cambridge University Press. The words 'a' and 'the' seem to have been dropped on random occasions and there are other quirks. Homonyms seem to have been used incorrectly in a couple of places.

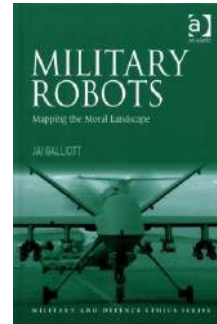
Military Robots: mapping the moral landscape

Jai Galliot

Ashgate: Farnham, 2015, 276 pages

ISBN: 978-1-4724-2664-2

£65



Reviewed by Craig Beutel, Department of Defence

Unmanned systems have unique attributes which have encouraged militaries all over the world to introduce them into service. Since the 2003 Iraq War, these platforms have rapidly proliferated—but not without their fair share of controversy and criticism. In particular, the Obama Administration has had a fondness for drones as a risk-adverse method of pursuing the ‘War on Terror’. However, like all disruptive innovations, there have been some unforeseen consequences which strike to the core of the nature of war.

Former RAN officer Jai Galliot pens *Military Robots* with a mission to explore the moral, political and military application of unmanned systems, through a deep and comprehensive analysis. Not many books on military technology start with Homer and traverse through Hobbes, Sun Tzu and Kant. However, Galliot bases unmanned systems in their legal, moral, historical and socio-political context. This is the right foundation from which to discuss any military issue, as we are reminded through Clausewitz’s trinity that war has its fundamental tenets which are based in the human condition.

This is the problem we face when considering unmanned systems—a technology which deliberately puts distance between combatants in an attempt to remove the human element from warfare. But instead of changing the nature of war, unmanned systems force us once again to understand another shift in war’s character. The drive for autonomy is not a new phenomenon—in World War 1, tele-operated technologies were introduced, while in World War 2, basic task autonomy could be seen on the battlefield. The limiting factor has always been communications related, as it is difficult to send signals over large distances and they are inherently vulnerable to compromise.

With satellites and cyberspace, communication impediments have reduced, thus the mass proliferation and advancement of unmanned platforms in the 21st century. The book comes to a modern definition of an unmanned system as being a group of powered electro-mechanical systems, all of which have in common that they do not have an on-board human operator; are designed to be recoverable; and exert power to deliver a lethal or nonlethal payload, or otherwise perform a function in support of a military force’s objective.

Galliot advances the central problem with the use of unmanned platforms, which might be shortened to ‘you are not getting what you think you are getting’. While unmanned systems are thought to remove people from harm and, therefore, remove the tragedy from war, this idea might be counterproductive and somewhat paradoxical. If war is without risk or cost, the threshold to enter war is lowered, which in turn encourages leaders to use war more prevalently as an extension of their politics. The de-risking of Western societies invites the use of unmanned platforms, which are sold as fostering less devastating wars, which ironically means it becomes easier to wage war politically, and tactically easier to kill people without respect for *jus in bello*.

Galliot argues that if you aim to de-risk war, you remove the barriers to conflict and the need for the rules of war which have been built up over the centuries. Adherence to ‘just war’ theory and the laws of armed conflict are important because they reduce the risk of harm to your own military forces; rules are designed not to be punitive but make us safe. But if there is no risk, there is less incentive to uphold them. An example is the use of unmanned systems in Pakistan against terrorists, which ignores the considerations of sovereignty that would be considered in more conventional operations.

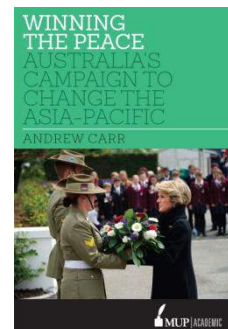
The book argues that fully-autonomous systems would never be able to meet the strict rules of conflict in a complex modern, and overwhelmingly-human, operating environment. These autonomous weapons

would remove the human responsibility for war—thus politically de-risking the chance of a human being responsible for any disaster or war crime. But are we more likely to accept a human error on the battlefield or a mistake from a machine?

Galliot provides a broad analysis designed to give the reader a deeper understanding of the underpinning issues when it comes to the application of *Military Robots*. Unfortunately, there is not a strong voice of Galliot himself. As a result, the reader feels the benefit of his formulaic research but not his expert opinion. However, he does leave us with a conclusion that far from the perceptions of the label ‘unmanned’, warfare is a human activity and a social institution, despite the current policy to reduce risk. Therefore, as war is organised violence through contractual arrangements, there must be human responsibility in unmanned warfare, no matter the difficulty in moral accounting.

Winning the Peace: Australia’s campaign to change the Asia-Pacific

Andrew Carr
Melbourne University Press: Melbourne, 2015, 336 pages
ISBN: 978-0-5228-6772-5
\$59.99



Reviewed by Justin Chadwick

It could be argued that Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes began the country’s journey toward middle-power status. His demands for access to the table during the Treaty of Versailles negotiations, following the First World War in which more than 60,000 Australians were killed, were strident. This desire for the country to appear more than just an outpost of Empire in the Pacific could only be achieved through cooperation with a greater power.

Initially, this was Britain; following the Second World War, it was the US. The successful negotiation of ANZUS, initially opposed by the US, displayed Australia’s skills in promoting its own self-interest. At the conclusion of the Cold War, however, Australia had to reappraise its approach to diplomacy and interaction with its neighbours and the wider global stage. In order for Australia to continue achieving its foreign policy objectives, it needed to be proactive. No better example of this was the period from the early 1980s, following the election of the Hawke Government.

Andrew Carr, in *Winning the Peace: Australia’s campaign to change the Asia-Pacific*, uses this as a starting point to commence his investigation of three main campaigns—irregular immigration, weapons of mass destruction, and trade liberalisation—that have been instrumental in Australia’s involvement in the Asia-Pacific region. After a thorough discussion of what constitutes a ‘middle power’, Carr embarks on a necessary history of Australian foreign and defence policy from Federation until 1983. Each of his three campaigns are then discussed in detail, and conclude at the end of the Rudd-Gillard era in 2013.

By covering a 30-year period, Carr is able to provide long-term evidence that Australia has achieved its goal of middle-power influence. As he states, Australia ‘was almost uniquely positioned over the last few decades to have an influence on shaping [the] international rules-based order’.

This is a scholarly text and does not attempt to shy away from the fact. However, it is written in an approachable style that is suitable for undergraduates and those with an interest in the subject. The literature review on the concept of middle powers and norms is extensive and demonstrates how important middle powers can become and what they are able to achieve in their best interests. Carr’s selection of ‘campaigns’ shows how far Australia has come in its foreign policy goals and achievements. Although the book focuses on the Asia-Pacific region, it also touches on global aspects of Australian foreign policy.

Winning the Peace is an important title to be added to the literature of not only Australian foreign policy but also the concept of middle powers and their ability to 'punch above their weight'.

READING LISTS

Professional military reading plays a vital role in developing knowledge that will assist with good judgment, effective leadership and the pursuit of excellence.

Each of the single Services regularly publishes a 'recommended reading list' for its officers. The listings are not meant to be exhaustive but provide a starting point to find material according to an individual's particular interests.

They are recommended to all ADF officers, and to others who wish to further their professional education and development.

Chief of Navy's reading list

<<https://www.navy.gov.au/spc/publications/chief-navy-reading-list/cn-reading-list-2014>>

Chief of Army's reading list

<http://www.army.gov.au/~/_media/Files/Our%20future/LWSC%20Publications/SP/sp323_CAs_Reading_List_2012-Land%20Warfare%20Studies%20Centre.pdf>

Chief of Air Force's reading list

<<http://airpower.airforce.gov.au/Publications/Details/581/CAF-Reading-List-2014.aspx>>