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CIVIL AFFAIRS ISSUE PAPERS
VOLUME 10, 2023-2024

Campaigning and Civil Affairs

2023 CIVIL AFFAIRS CONFERENCE REPORT

Campaigning and Civil Affairs

by Colonel Christopher Holshek, USA, (Ret.)

ISSUE PAPER

The Digital Screenline: Economy of Force in Campaign Civil Reconnaissance

by Major Wayne Culbreth, USA

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A Civil Affairs Campaigning Framework

by Major Nicholas Ashley, USA

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An Ocean Between Us: Civil Affairs from Shore to Shore

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Civil Affairs as The Premier Maneuver Force for Winning Without Fighting

by Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Seese, USA (Ret.),
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and Major Assad Raza, USA (Ret.)

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Campaigning the Campaign Plan

by Major J. David Thompson, USA

CAMPAIGNING
AND
CIVIL AFFAIRS

CIVIL AFFAIRS ISSUE PAPERS, VOLUME 10, 2023–2024

THE CIVIL AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY ROTC

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Campaigning and Civil Affairs

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U.S. Army Special Operations Command Force Modernization Center,

U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center & School,

Special Operations Center of Excellence,

NATO Civil-Military Cooperation Center of Excellence,

U.S. Army Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute,

Joint Special Operations University,

Modern War Institute at West Point,

Irregular Warfare Initiative at West Point,

and

Joint Civil-Military Interaction

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Dennis J. Cahill

Dedicated in Memory of

Larry Rubini,

Copy Editor and Civil Affairs Issue Paper Committee Member, 2012-2023

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The Civil Affairs Association is a not-for-profit military profession and veterans association under IRS code section 501(c)19. It seeks to further the global civil-military network among the U.S., NATO and other regional allies, and international partners through the provision of platforms for discussion of topics related to Civil Affairs and partner force, organizational, and professional development. The opinions expressed by anyone appearing at an Association event or in any Association publication are entirely his or her own and not to be construed as the opinion of any government agency, the person's represented office, or the Association or its organizational partners, unless specifically cited in official strategy, policy, doctrine, or regulatory documents or cited in cleared media sources or organizational publications.

For more, go to: <https://www.civilaffairsassoc.org/>



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Cover photo: Colonel Andrew Scott DeJesse and Captain Sonia Dixon of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) 38G Military Government Specialist Program aboard a 15th Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III loading cultural artifacts looted in the Pacific Theater of Operations during World War II to be returned to their rightful owners as part of USACAPOC(A)'s support to cultural heritage and property protection, a global effort in coordination with the Smithsonian Institution and a large array of government and non-government organizations, national and international. Photo courtesy of Col. DeJesse.

Foreword

The Civil Affairs Association's Civil Affairs Conference on *Campaigning and Civil Affairs* at Ft. Liberty, NC, from 8-9 December 2023 witnessed what may turn out be a pivotal moment in the development of the extended Civil Affairs Corps. Before discussing this, I first thank the previous Association president, Col. (Ret.) Joe Kirlin, for his dedicated leadership and direction in the remarkable growth of the Association over the past 12 years.

At last spring's Roundtable, keynote speaker Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC)) Christopher Maier, gained great appreciation for the impressive capabilities of this talented and diverse force of Soldiers and Marines. By all accounts from a strong cohort of CA team members there, ASD Maier is championing the many values-added that CA brings to integrated deterrence in his dialogue with other senior leaders in the Defense Department, the Joint Staff, the Special Operations community, geographic combatant and service component commands, interagency partners, and members of Congress. The ASD (SO/LIC) followed up its refreshed interest in the reserve component (RC) and active component (AC) CA by sending Deputy ASD for Counternarcotics and Stabilization Policy, James Saenz, as the honored speaker at the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), or USACAPOC(A), military ball held that Saturday evening of the Conference.

At the Roundtable, ASD Maier gave the Association and the CA Corps this year's theme of "campaigning" as the best way the Corps can support integrated deterrence. By doing so, he has helped us to realize, as the major findings of the Conference affirmed, how campaigning is not only the best way that geographic combatant and service component commands can leverage the full array of CA capacities and capabilities, but also the best way for the CA Corps to support and integrate with these commands at the critical theater-strategic and operational levels. This is where civil affairs operations (CAO) play an inherent part of campaigning in the joint, interorganizational, and multinational (JIM) environment in which these commands (and supporting Army and Marine tactical commands) must work and for which CA is ideally suited.

ASD Maier, who sees campaigning as "a deliberate leveraging, layering, and linking of all elements of power to achieve desired strategic effects," is joining a growing list of senior civilian and military leaders who also see a significant role for CA in integrated deterrence, in the steady state of current and emerging operations across the competition continuum, and in readiness for large-scale combat operations (LSCO). Among these is Lt. Gen. Xavier Brunson, the Army I Corps commanding general, to whom the Association presented the Col. Eli E. Noblemen Award at last year's Annual Meeting. Other senior Army leaders provided important insight, including Lt. Gen. Jonathan Braga, commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Lt. Gen. Christopher Donahue, commanding general of the XVIII Airborne Corps, and others. Army Reserve Command's Brig. Gen. Kelly Dickerson, in his keynote presentation at the Conference, confirmed these points from the force provider perspective.

In a time of growing global unrest, the demand signal for AC and RC CA is growing in every theater as well as among Army brigade combat teams preparing for LSCO. This demand resonates in dialogue with those commands and with CA commands echoed by Maj. Gen. Isaac Johnson, commanding general USACAPOC(A), to his CA command and brigade commanders, and by Col. David Kaczmarek, commander of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne), whose battalion commanders joined him and us in the discussions those two days.

Our choice of annual theme has led us to perhaps the most important revelation from the Conference—how multicomponent CA and multidisciplinary information-related force teaming is the way forward to successful integration of CA forces in strategic competition, integrated deterrence, and campaigning as well as LSCO. Especially in Workshop II, as you can read in the Conference Report, we learned how multicomponent CA teaming has already become a mainstay of CA support to security cooperation missions and a growing exercise option over the last year.

As part of this emerging way of integrating CA, Army 38G Military Government and other functional specialists are proving of high value to campaigning in matters such as cultural heritage and property protection. Astride critical centers of gravity of theater campaigns and the conflicts and competition they help manage, these CA professionals contribute to strategic and operational analysis and warning. Unlike the historical “monuments men and women,” contemporary CA functional specialists have a continuous role in current operations, including conflict prevention.

Finally, the need for dedicated maritime CA was highlighted, although Army RC CA has been filling the growing gaps for capabilities previously met by Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command (MCAST). As Marine Corps Maj. John Holmes explains in his *Issue Paper*, it is the people who live near the oceans who most impact to the freedom of movement and access to the seas than the ocean itself—highlighted by ongoing Houthi interference with access to the Red Sea and Suez Canal, threatening one of the world’s most critical sea lines of communication.

We may be witnessing a “revolution in CA” unlike any seen in decades. The extended CA Corps, along with its JIM colleagues and partners, need to continue to include these considerations in planning. The Association, as a non-government organization, is well positioned to assist through an impressive and well-established array of collegial platforms including its annual thematic series of spring and winter programs to convene all parts of the Corps and other stakeholders.

The Symposium and Roundtable drive an ongoing, annual thematic discussion on the future of Civil Affairs. Now in their 12th year of advancing a more strategic, comprehensive, and integrative understanding of CA, these venues help foster a culture of learning beyond military command structures and the CA Corps, facilitating inclusion of other civil-military organizations as well as interagency, interorganizational, and private sector partners. This helps mainstream CA into the larger discussions of the Army, the Marine Corps, and the Joint Force, improve the analytical and writing skills of CA professionals, and promote intellectual capitalization and readiness.

Our events have included workshops representing critical Corps constituencies such as: the Army and Marine Corps CA proponents: the U.S. CA forces in the 95th CA Bde (SO) (A), USACAPOC(A), and Marine Corps CA institutions and groups; allied and multinational civil-military counterparts; interagency and interorganizational partners and associates; Army and Marine Corps CA non-commissioned officers (NCOs); and CA junior leaders who not only best represent the cutting edge of CA practice but the future of the CA Corps.

The *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*, now in its 10th volume, is the Association's capstone professional and force development deliverable. It serves to deepen and broaden formal institutional processes for CA force development, doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P). Since 2012, the Association has added the *One CA* podcast and *Eunomia Journal* as well-respected platforms for force and professional dialogue.

At the end of this last Conference, the Association held its annual Board meeting. The Association, in partnership with the CA proponents and commands, agreed to lead the long-needed effort to develop and capture a strategic narrative for CA that enables any CA professional to tell the CA story and explain what CA is and does to any audience in any situation. This theme will be considered at the next Roundtable in April 2024, with its key deliverables posted soon after that.

The Association recognizes that, to keep pace with and even better serve the extended CA Corps, it must adopt a campaigning approach to its own development, including review of its value proposition, organizational analysis and update of the By-Laws, and promotion of younger Association leadership. We are in exciting and challenging times that present an opportunity to strengthen the future of the CA Corps. The Association's role in helping to build this future can be central, but our membership and partners must continue to participate in the process.

In this collaborative endeavor, the Association is honored to work with institutions like: the ASD (SO/LIC); the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); the USASOC Force Modernization Center and U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS); the 95th CA Bde (SO) (A) and USACAPOC(A); the U.S. Army Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI)—which, incidentally, recently celebrated its 30th anniversary; the U.S. Marine Corps Civil-Military Operations School (USMCCMOS); the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU); the NATO accredited Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Centre of Excellence (CCoE); and the United Nations Office of Military Affairs.

In addition to the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA), the Association's partners include: the CCoE; the Reserve Organization of America (ROA); the Foreign Area Officers Association (FAOA); the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA); and the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC). More recently, it has joined with: the Modern War Institute (MWI) and Irregular Warfare Initiative (IWI) at West Point; the JSOU; and Joint Civil-Military Interaction Global Research and Education Network (JCMI). Additional partnering efforts are underway.

Our website continues to improve while our social media outlets have expanded beyond Facebook, X (Twitter), and LinkedIn to Spotify and Sticher. Thanks go to Association Vice President Col. Arnel David and Director Maj. John McElligott for their diligence and hard work.

We are also grateful to Third Order Effects, Civil Solutions International, Valka Mir Human Security, the Patriot Fund, SharCon Government Services, and Conductr for their sponsorships. We look forward to their continued sponsorship in the future.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Niagara University in helping us make this publication possible. Their partnership has been invaluable. Special thanks go to Jaclyn Rossi Drozd, University Vice President for Institutional Advancement; Suzanne Karaszewski, Associate Director of Creative Services; Army Lieutenant Colonel James Silsby, Professor of Military Science; and Nana Bailey, Assistant at the ROTC Department for their diligence and cooperation.

Additional thanks go to our Issue Papers Committee: Chairman, Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Glenn Goddard, who succeeded Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Bruce B. Bingham; editors Col. (Ret.) Christopher Holshek, Col. (Ret.) Dennis J. Cahill; and committee members Col. Caroline Pogge, Col. Leonard J. DeFrancisci—as well as the authors themselves. Of special note are the services of original committee member and copy editor Col. (Ret.) Larry Rubini, who passed away on the last day of last year and in whose memory the Association dedicates this Volume.

Special thanks go to Association Vice President Col. (Ret.) Christopher Holshek, Director Col. (Ret.) Monti Zimmerman, and Conference workshop facilitators Col. (Ret.) Dennis J. Cahill, Col. David Kaczmarek, and Col. Andrew “Scott” DeJesse for putting together and running an exceptionally productive Conference.

Finally, our thanks go out to the many members and supporters of the Association who contribute quietly to our worldwide civil-military enterprise to educate, advocate, and motivate.

We look forward to seeing you at the online Civil Affairs Roundtable in April 2024. To learn more, subscribe to our newsfeeds, and join our Association, visit www.civilaffairsassoc.org.

“Secure the Victory!”



Hugh Van Roosen
Major General, USA, (Ret)
President
The Civil Affairs Association

2023 Civil Affairs Conference Report:
“Campaigning and Civil Affairs”

Christopher Holshek

Dennis J. Cahill (ed.)

The Civil Affairs (CA) Association hosted its annual Conference (a combination of the Symposium and Annual Meeting for 2023), sponsored by The Patriot Fund, Third Order Effects, Civil Solutions International, Valka Mir Human Security, and Conducttr, from 8-10 December 2023 at the Iron Mike Conference Center at Ft. Liberty, NC. The event, involving over 70 participants on-site and nearly 30 more online, was in coordination with the Association of the United States Army, U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, Joint Special Operations University, the Modern War Institute and Irregular Warfare Initiative at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) accredited Civil-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence.

At last spring’s Roundtable, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC)) Christopher Maier stressed “campaigning” as the way the Civil Affairs Corps can support integrated deterrence. The *National Defense Strategy* describes campaigning as “...the conduct and sequencing of logically-linked military initiatives aimed at advancing well-defined, strategy-aligned priorities over time.” ASD (SO/LIC) Maier, who sees campaigning as “a deliberate leveraging, layering, and linking of all elements of power to achieve desired strategic effects,” also sees a significant role for CA in it. More actionable and measurable than “competing,” it entails greater civil-military integration and steady state use of CA to win without fighting, increasing the role of CA across the competition continuum but also presenting new challenges for all CA force providers.

The Conference, including the Issue Papers presented, considered numerous questions. These included: How can the extended CA Corps contribute to campaigning across the competition continuum within the regions? Beyond policy, what changes in doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities, (DOTMLPF) can better operationalize and integrate the role of CA in campaigning? How can joint and interorganizational coordination improve at those levels? How would CA forces measure progress in campaigning? How would a full concept of the CA role in campaigning apply to conflict prevention, security cooperation, irregular or gray zone warfare, and major combat operations as well as stabilization and strategic competition? Are there case lessons from CA operations or from the recent wars in Ukraine and Gaza? How would CA in campaigning further improve readiness for reserve component (RC) CA forces through regional presence and engagement?

These questions framed the discussion to enable the CA Corps to offer ways ahead to related institutional and policy leadership. The Conference started with three key workshops on Friday. The next day followed with a keynote presentation, a discussion on a strategic narrative for CA, recaps of the workshops, and presentation of the *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*.

The Conference also enabled the Corps to come together, network, formulate, and discuss ways ahead with institutional and policy leaders as well as recognize its outstanding members, enjoy camaraderie, and build *esprit de corps* at the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) (USACAPOC(A)) military ball that Saturday evening.

Major Findings

Although the Conference did not answer all the above questions, the participants identified some interesting findings of relevance to the extended CA Corps and numerous CA stakeholders and partners, with relevant implications along DOTMLPF-P lines:

- **Civil affairs capabilities and civil affairs operations (CAO) are integral to campaigning.** As such, they must be more strongly emphasized within core regional campaign objectives at all levels of command and across the full range of operations in support of strategic competition, integrated deterrence, and positioning the U.S. and its allies and partners to win in the event of large-scale combat operations (LSCO). The extended CA Corps, CA stakeholders at policy and institutional levels, and CA partners must work together to enable this outcome. They should always be thinking in terms of campaigning – even when considering LSCO. On this last point, the panel members of Workshop I agreed that the Office of the ASD (SO/LIC) needs to focus on where best to place CA presence at strategic and operational levels. Toward that end, the panel suggested the execution of a joint capability-based assessment (CBA) to look at where to place CA positions and how to address other integration gaps. Similarly, in their Issue Paper presentation, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Gregory Seese, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Rafael Linera, and Maj. (Ret.) Assad Raza recommended that CA proponents fully develop the role of CA in campaigning that can apply to conflict prevention, security cooperation, irregular or gray zone warfare, and major combat operations as well as stabilization and strategic competition. Doing so would also help CA forces measure effectiveness in campaigning. Finally, Maj. David Thompson explained in his Issue Paper presentation that AFRICOM is assessing CA effectiveness with respect to specific campaign objectives and lines of effort.
- **The theater-strategic and operational levels are critical for integration of CA forces.** Theater campaigns are planned and executed by Geographic Combatant Commands and Service Component Commands (GCCs/SCCs) and the ongoing integration of Theater Civil Affairs Planning Teams (TCAPTs) and Civil Affairs Commands (CACOMs) at GCCs is essential. Campaigning at these levels is also inherently done in a joint, interorganizational,

and multinational (JIM) context. This means CA commands and personnel supporting at such levels must be familiar with joint policies, doctrines, and procedures, starting with the *Joint Warfighting Concept*, Joint Planning Process, etc., as part of professional development and mission preparation. They must also know how to conduct Operations in the Information Environment (OIE), Irregular Warfare (IW), and how to work with allies and partners using North Atlantic Treaty Organizations (NATO) civil-military cooperation and United Nations (UN) civil-military coordination (i.e., CIMIC) frameworks.

- **Campaigning at joint command and country team levels is inherently an interagency undertaking.** Civilian agencies such as the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are in the lead with respect to integrated deterrence and issues of governance and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), which are commonly linked to military operations. Several Workshop I participants observed that interagency collaboration is trending positive and there is growing congressional interest in this. The GCC is the mesh point for interagency collaboration at the regional level. The CA role there and in country teams is to get the right representative to the right working group at the right time for the right strategic effects. CA professionals under such circumstances must also be familiar with interagency campaigning references and procedures, e.g., the Stabilization Assistance Review (SAR); Global Fragility Act (GFA); Women, Peace, and Security (WPS); and with issues such as climate change, mass migration, etc., as matters of training, education, and leadership under DOTMLPF-P.
- **Campaigning is not only the best way for GCCs and Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) to leverage CA but also the best way for CA to support and integrate with these commands.** Campaigning and campaign plans are an theater-strategic and operational extension of national or grand strategy. As CA teams at the tactical level help supported commands better understand how they can best leverage CA capabilities under the military decision-making process (MDMP), mid- to senior-level CA leadership must learn how to integrate CA operations into theater strategic and operational campaign plans, along with the request for forces (RFF) process under the joint campaign planning process, Global Force Management, etc., as well as understand the authorizations under which each CA capability deploys and operates.
- **Multicomponent CA and multidisciplinary information-related force teaming is the way forward to successful integration of CA forces in strategic competition, integrated deterrence, and campaigning as well as LSCO.** This maximizes the considerable diversity of Army and USMC CA forces and enables supported commands to produce the right mix of CA force capacities and capabilities to meet current and future mission requirements. Workshop II mentioned how multicomponent teaming not only leverages the massive Department of Defense (DoD) footprint but also reaches back to and

supports State Department and USAID activities in all regions in strategic competition and security cooperation settings, which can be a game-changer in integrated deterrence. It also helps supported commands gain a new appreciation of RC CA engagement in the steady state rather than just for LSCO and post-conflict stabilization, particularly in meeting the ongoing stabilization, governance, and civilian resilience challenges in all regions, along with civilian harm mitigation and 38G cultural property protection. Keynote speaker Brig. Gen. Kelly Dickerson identified a huge opportunity to accelerate CA integration with Army National Guard (Compo 2) activities in the regions, particularly under the State Partnership Program (SPP). He also noted that multicomponent CA deployments could help address issues such as information integration and sharing with interagency and interorganizational partners, providing more depth and realism in scenario play in collective exercises, measures, and evaluations for competition as well as crisis response, lessons processing, and continuity from missions over time. There was broad consensus that improving active-reserve CA relations and operational integration should be more the result of deliberate campaigning of multicomponent CA operations at the institutional level (e.g., in training, education, and leader development). Preventing full exploitation of the newly discovered potential of multicomponent teaming are considerable longstanding DOTMLPF-P gaps that CA proponents, Army and joint commands, and ASD (SO/LIC) need to address.

- **Army 38G Military Government Specialists are ideally suited for employment in campaigning.** The unique capacities of CA functional specialists can help political-military leadership best identify and understand the strategic and operational environment, including the people-centric centers of gravity (CoGs) and related civil threats critical to modern warfare. 38Gs can also determine the linkages between campaign objectives, threats, and cross-cutting variables like stable governance and civilian resilience, the rule of law system, and whether people can enjoy a safe and secure environment, a sustainable economy, and social well-being. Their extensive global networks along vocational lines enable unique access, influence, and other positional advantages. In addition to growing media interest and popularity, the 38G program's rapid growth in size, relevance, and demand signal has generated more applicants this past year than it can absorb—a model to recruit interesting people to do interesting and important things that the rest of the CA Corps and the Army may wisely consider. There was broad consensus for bringing back the Institute of Military Support to Governance (IMSG), as was for RC conventional CA (38A/Bs) to train and exercise more with 38Gs. Another way to improve 38G integration is to pair them with counterpart agency representatives at GCCs to promote common environmental understanding among military and civilian specialists among stability sectors, as done at the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM).
- **The need for dedicated maritime CA forces has once again become more obvious.** Army CA team deployments on Pacific Fleet ships and at naval stations demonstrate a

clearly present and enduring need for dedicated maritime CA forces since the U.S. Navy decommissioned its Maritime Civil Affairs & Security Training (MCAST) Command in 2014. As Marine Corps Maj. John Holmes briefed in his *Issue Paper* presentation, the people who live near the oceans are far more impactful to the freedom of the seas than the ocean itself. CA forces have a major role to play in understanding, influencing, and working with these people to ensure access to critical sea lines of communication such as the Red Sea and Suez Canal, currently in the news.

- **Finally, there was universal consensus that the extended CA Corps needs to create an identifiable 21st century strategic narrative for CA.** A universally identifiable strategic narrative would enable CA professionals to definitively describe what CA is and does in terms that non-CA people (civilian and military) can understand. This narrative would help CA professionals engaged with military and civilian decision-makers at national and theater strategic levels explain the capabilities, comparative advantages, and constraints of multicomponent U.S. Army and Marine Corps CA capabilities, the enduring core values and competencies they share, what they seek to achieve in the future, and how they intend to do that. A recommendation from the panel discussion for the Association, in coordination with the CA proponents, to lead this effort found approval at the Association Board’s annual meeting the next day.

Workshop I: Integrating Army and Marine Corps Civil Affairs with Joint, Inter-organizational, and Multinational Partners in Campaigning

Workshop I captured the Conference’s core discussion. It brought together representatives of the JIM communities with direct and indirect linkages to the diplomatic, informational, military, and economic elements of national power to discuss how well, and with what mechanisms, U.S. CA forces are providing input to campaigning and integrated deterrence while integrating DoD CA capabilities with JIM partners at the operational and strategic levels. One of the challenges used to frame the discussion was: *How can the U.S. compete effectively when there is unity of effort but not command?*

Col. (Ret.) Dennis J. Cahill, Deputy Civil Affairs Capability Manager at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) Force Modernization Center (UFMC), and an Association director, facilitated this session. Joining him in person were: Col. Donald A. “Tony” Vacha, 353rd Civil Affairs Command; Mr. Ryan McCannell, USAID Development Advisor to the Pentagon, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Stabilization Policy (CN&SP), ASD (SO/LIC); Lt. Col. Diana J. Parzik, CA Policy Analyst, CN&SP, ASD (SO/LIC); Lt. Col. Christopher B. (Brad) Hampton, Director, U.S. Marine Corps Civil-Military Operations School (USMCCMOS); and Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Bogdan A. Ionescu, Command Sergeant Major, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) (95th CA Bde (SO)(A)). Participating virtually as panel members were Col. Jay Liddick, Director, U.S. Army Peacekeeping & Stability

Operations Institute (PKSOI); Col. Brandon Mills, Deputy Commander, 350th CACOM; and Mr. John Mongan, Senior Stabilization Officer, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), at the State Department.

In advance of the workshop, Col. (Ret.) Cahill provided panel members framing thoughts and questions, also shared with the audience as the session started. The framing thoughts included statements from the two main national-level documents that provide strategic direction for all U.S. government (USG) departments and agencies. The 2022 *National Security Strategy* states that, “Our (strategic) approach encompasses all elements of national power—diplomacy, development cooperation, industrial strategy, economic statecraft, intelligence, and defense...” and *integrated deterrence* is our approach to national defense.¹ The 2022 *National Defense Strategy* states that, “The Department will advance our priorities through integrated deterrence, campaigning, and actions that build enduring advantages,” where campaigning is defined as “...the conduct and sequencing of logically-linked military initiatives aimed at advancing well-defined, strategy-aligned priorities over time.” Col. (Ret.) Cahill recalled how ASD (SO/LIC) Maier, at the Civil Affairs Roundtable last April, described campaigning as *a deliberate leveraging, layering, and linking of all elements of power to achieve desired strategic effects*. It was this statement that most influenced the theme of the fall Conference, the Issue Papers, and the focus of this workshop.

Before diving into the discussion questions, each panel member was given an opportunity to provide opening remarks. The following is a combined summary of the key points made during that portion of the workshop and should not be attributed to any one individual.

At the national strategic level, while DoD focuses primarily on the NDS, the State Department and USAID look primarily to the NSS for their strategic direction, so the respective panel members stated up front that they would be using it as their point of reference for the panel discussion. However, campaigning is just one of the three primary ways to achieve NDS priorities, the others being building enduring advantages and integrated deterrence. The State Department and USAID panel members saw CA equities in all three.

There is a difference between national strategy and theater strategy. National strategy and campaigning are conducted in Washington, D.C.; theater-strategy and operational campaigning take place in GCCs (military) and country teams (State Department and other government agencies). While CA is not generally a topic of discussion at the National Security Council, it is a policy issue being addressed at the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). Policy makers at OSD are looking at the strategic priorities for CA and aligning CA with legislative requirements, e.g., the GFA, WPS, Operations in the Information Environment (OIE), Irregular Warfare (IW),

¹ According to the 2022 *National Defense Strategy*, “integrated deterrence is a framework weaving together all instruments of national power—with diplomacy at the forefront—to work seamlessly across warfighting domains, theaters, the spectrum of conflict, and our network of alliances and partnerships. Tailored to specific circumstances, integrated deterrence applies a coordinated, multifaceted approach to reducing competitors’ perceptions of the net benefits of aggression relative to restraint.” (p. 5)

and climate change. They are seeking opportunities to engage the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) and the Senate Arms Services Committee (SASC) on these topics.

The theater-strategic and operational levels are critical for CA integration. Because GCCs/SCCs plan and execute theater campaigns at touchpoint JIM levels, the integration of TCAPTs and CACOMs at GCCs/SCCs is essential. The GCC/SCC is the mesh point for interagency collaboration. In INDOPACOM, military planners and interagency decision-makers are heavily involved in writing theater campaign plans. U.S. military and USG department and agency strategic goals and objectives are not always in synch; the art is in identifying where objectives intersect. Civilian agencies have different views of DoD and their need to work with elements of DoD; some integrate easily while others are more of a challenge. The CA role is to get the right representative to the right working group at the right time for the right strategic effects.

The State Department considers the country team its unit of action and, as such, is the most common and functional interagency mechanism for campaigning. Likewise, the country team is considered the lowest echelon of other U.S. departments and agencies operating in specific countries. These echelons typically have direct access to the decision makers at their organization's home office and are generally focused exclusively on the country to which they are assigned. While some agencies operate regional offices that synchronize efforts of their representatives across multiple country teams, most agency representatives do not track broader regional issues unless there is a direct impact to the country of assignment. CA personnel are well-known visitors to U.S. embassies and collaborate effectively with the country teams. All U.S. foreign service officers have clearances and can participate in classified planning sessions; local staffs cannot. Posts also have "POL-MIL" sections or designated POL-MIL officers in smaller political sections. Within USAID, at least one foreign service officer at every U.S. Embassy, consulate, or diplomatic post abroad is designated as a Mission Civil-military Coordinator (MC-2) as an additional duty.

The 95th CA Bde (SO)(A) has a global footprint that allows it to look at campaigning across all theaters. It is an active participant in campaigning in competition: elements of the brigade conduct day-to-day activities that support the NDS and, over time, promote integrated deterrence. What this looks like in practice is the deliberate execution of integrated military activities or initiatives designed to: train the force to be combat credible; posture the force forward in exercises to work with allies and partners; build interoperability with the joint force and multinational partners; and build partner capacity. In each case, and with the support and assistance of the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) and the TCAPTs, the brigade is working on integrating active component (AC) Army CA forces with both U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) and U.S. Marine Corps Reserve (USMCR) CA forces. The USMCR CA force is seen as a more tactically focused than operationally/strategically focused capability. However, it does support setting the theater to understand the human dimension before introducing combat forces. Much of this requires closely working with interagency partners, but most interagency partners are not seen in theater exercises.

One panelist suggested that CA integration should be a campaign plan objective, not a series of one-off activities. Several observed that interagency collaboration in the competition space is trending positive and there is congressional interest in this. However, DoD needs a one-pager that definitively describes what CA brings to the table. When one panelist web-searched “civil affairs,” one of the top responses was, “What does Civil Affairs even do?” (On the second day of the Conference, a separate panel on “Finding a Corps-wide Narrative on the Civil Affairs Value Proposition” took on this key topic.)

One of the final insights raised during the first half of the workshop was that CA professionals should always think in terms of campaigning. With respect to governance, the military has a supporting role rather than direct authority. The community needs to scope that CA role in a flexible manner that accounts for the roles of our multinational partners when supporting civil authorities in friendly territory and supporting other instruments of national power in occupied territory. It was suggested that the example of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Iraq may be a more realistic model for the latter. To emphasize this, a panel member cited General (Ret.) David Petraeus as saying recently that what comes next in terms of integrating stabilization tasks as part of warfighting is not going away. By way of example, he recalled reporting to the Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) commander, Lt. General Ricardo Sanchez during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* that, “The good news is, we just took Najaf. The bad news is, we just took Najaf.”

Following a 20-minute break, the workshop resumed with a discussion of its framing questions.

Question 1: *How well are we integrating Army and Marine Corps CA capabilities with JIM partners in campaigning at the operational and national or theater strategic levels today? Provide examples.*

- Are these examples of episodic or long-term relationships?
- Are these examples of formal or informal relationships?

One point made early on by one of the interagency panel members is the fact that CA forces do not generally participate in strategic level discussions in the U.S. National Capital Region (NCR) as there are few CA staff officers serving at the DoD, Joint Staff, and Army Staff levels. However, when brought into national strategic level interagency conversations, among the most important contributions of CA professionals is their understanding of military planning and capabilities. At the operational level, U.S. Special Operations Command’s (USSOCOM’s) civil-military engagement (CME) program, led by civil-military support elements (CMSEs), is most valuable thing CA forces do for interagency partners abroad. In that role, CA Soldiers bring a unique capacity for civil reconnaissance (CR), civil engagement (CE), civil-military planning, and the ability to facilitate interagency coordination in a military setting. That said, the best way to answer this question is, it depends. Panelist responses highlighted integration within two lines of efforts – theater-level exercises and planning.

Beyond daily country team interaction, integration is best seen in theater-level exercises, particularly with joint and multinational partners. In the U.S. European Command (EUCOM), CA forces are better integrated with NATO CIMIC forces in NATO exercises today than ever before. In INDOPACOM, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) exercise program is how the GCC postures forces in theater. The challenge is integrating interagency partners into these theater-level exercises. Reasons they are not there include: the low density of personnel available; the operational focus of partner agencies competes with number and duration of military-led exercises; and the exercise design does not support interagency objectives.

Integration is also seen in planning. The USAID civil-military cooperation policy is sunseting because civil-military cooperation is mainstreaming into USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS)—its equivalent to doctrine. According to the revised ADS, country development cooperation strategies should now incorporate theater campaign plans and the NDS alongside USAID and State Department planning documents. This may owe, in part, to the success of PKSOI's Joint Interagency Stabilization Course (JIASC) that brings representatives from DoD, State Department, and USAID into a classroom environment to discuss policy, principles, joint planning factors, etc., for executing stabilization, transition, and other complex operations in which defense, diplomacy, and development intersect.

Another example was the May 2023 GFA Tabletop Exercise (TTX) co-sponsored by the ASD (SO/LIC) and the 95th CA Bde (SO)(A). The TTX was the largest Joint Staff J8 exercise conducted to date and gathered representatives from multiple USG departments and agencies, the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) TCAPT, the Special Operations Command-Africa (SOCAF) G9, the 95th CA Bde (SO)(A), and the 352nd CACOM. The TTX used coastal West Africa to demonstrate common goals and integration requirements in building partner nation civil-military capacity in that region in competition, which is a current major GFA gap and a departure from the common perception that CA is only used in post-conflict scenarios. However, to date, similar events have not been executed forward in-theater and buy-in has not been consistent across the DoD enterprise.

Earlier discussion highlighted how a more fundamental integration challenge exists among DoD CA capabilities, which are trifurcated among active Army special operations CA forces assigned to USASOC; USAR CA forces assigned to U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), U.S. Army Southern Command (USARSOUTH); and U.S. Army Pacific Command (USARPAC); and active and USMCR CA forces. When deployed in theater, active CA forces are assigned to TSOCS, USAR CA forces are assigned to ASCCs, and USMCR CA forces are assigned to Fleet Marine Forces (FMFs) and Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs). The TSOCS, ASCCs, FMFs, and MAGTFs do not often coordinate or integrate their activities with one another during periods of competition. This increases the pressure on CA planners at the GCC level to leverage, layer, and link all CA activities in theater with all elements of power in campaign fashion.

Question 2: *What mechanisms are we using to promote integration at the operational and national or theater strategic levels? Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs)? Joint Interagency Task Forces (JIATFs)? Civil-Military Operations Centers (CMOCs)? Liaison Officers (LNOs)? Other?*

One panel member highlighted a comment in a recent Irregular Warfare Initiative-supported summit in Washington, D.C., that demonstrates a perception among some interagency personnel that the JIATF represents a DoD construct that subordinates USG department and agency partners to military forces and represents only interagency personnel on the fringes of coordination. We must transcend this attitude to enable whole-of-government, whole-of-society, and total defense solutions to U.S. and partner nation security challenges.

For the DoD, campaign planning is conducted at the GCC, whereas most other USG departments and agencies conduct their planning efforts within the country team. The State Department and USAID have regional offices that work with country teams but are not consistently synched up with GCCs and TSOCs. These are some of the constructs in which CA forces need to work.

There is good coordination between NATO forces and the EUCOM/U.S. Army Europe-Africa (USAREUR-AF) G9s. Much coordination is through civil-military operations working groups using secure video teleconferences. In INDOPACOM, the Interagency Coordination Group is the theater synchronization mechanism for operations, activities, and investments across the theater. In INDOPACOM, there is a difference between mechanisms and processes for steady state competition versus crisis response.

For steady state competition, interagency representatives/subject matter experts integrate into the GCC staff battle rhythm. For crisis response, the JIACG is active and productive. The JIACG nearly doubles in size for crisis response, but some departments (State, Commerce, Treasury) are good at surging while others are not. Purpose-built teams synchronize JIM activities to meet the objectives of each JIM partner. CMOCs are established at different echelons, but not at the GCC level. USMC CA capabilities are not active at operational and strategic levels on par with U.S. Army CA right now, as they work mostly at the tactical level.

Question 3: *Are there sufficient Army and USMC CA touchpoints in the Pentagon, at GCCs/TSOCs, and at Country Teams with which interorganizational partners can collaborate, coordinate, and cooperate?*

In the Pentagon, there are no CA-coded positions at OSD and only one on the Joint Staff J-37 that does not participate in strategic-level interorganizational integration activities. The responsibility for DoD CA policy is at ASD (SO/LIC) and there is currently a CA officer borrowed from USSOCOM and temporarily assigned to ASD (SO/LIC)'s Counternarcotics and Stabilization

Policy Division. This officer leads a bimonthly Global CA Synchronization Meeting that includes CA representatives from the GCCs, State Department, USAID, and the operational CA forces of both the Army and the USMC. However, since the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is designated as the global integrator, this meeting should be led by a member of the Joint Staff.

As mentioned, there is a trifurcated approach to CA that is split among the active Army, the USAR, and the USMC. There used to be USAR Active Guard Reserve (AGR) positions at several staffs that have been eliminated since the reassignment of USAR CA forces from USASOC to FORSCOM in 2006. There are no USMC positions at the USSOCOM Joint CA Proponent, which is looking at creating CA as a Joint Capability Area (JCA). There are three positions at the USMC's Office of the Deputy Commandant for Information working CA equities for the Marine Corps. There are three lieutenant colonel positions in HQDA G-3/5/7 at Department of the Army's Management Office (DAMO) Strategic Operations (an AGR officer focused on operational issues), DAMO-Force Management (FM) (an active component, or AC officer focused on force structure issues), and DAMO-Strategic Plans and Policy (SS) (an AC officer focused on irregular warfare, civilian harm mitigation and response, and related portfolio issues).

As a result, there are no true touchpoints in the Pentagon for interorganizational partners, let alone CA planners at the GCCs, ASCCs, or TSOCs, with which to collaborate, coordinate, or cooperate on strategic or operational-level issues for which DoD CA capabilities offer solutions. Likewise, there is very little true understanding or frank discussion about the value of CA or the opportunity costs of not properly developing or using CA capabilities among senior civilian and military leaders of the DoD, the Service Departments, or the combatant commands. This is an issue of concern for both the extended CA Corps as well as the ASD (SO/LIC) and relates to the "strategic narrative" issue discussed the next day.

For several years, the 95th CA Bde (SO)(A) stood up a Civil-Military Advisory Group (CMAG) in the NCR that addressed and coordinated USSOCOM CA issues with interagency partners. That program suffered from budget cuts in 2017 and no longer exists, but touchpoints do remain today between interagency representatives and CA liaison officers from USSOCOM at the State Department and USAID in the NCR. These relationships are strong and translate to good communication among their counterparts at the country teams. However, these relationships only account for Army special operations CA operations, activities, and investments and not those of conventional Army or USMC CA forces. At the TSOCs/GCCs, interagency advisors are quite valuable. However, one panel member expressed the opinion that the issue is not so much where CA sits with the interagency but where CA sits within the military. In other words, CA forces have built bona fides with interagency partners, but the challenge is to do the same within DoD formations. The member cited an example of a TSOC re-tasking a deployed CA team to a lower priority mission, demonstrating little regard for its value or for interagency coordination.

Question 4: How can we integrate better?

The panel ran out of sufficient time to cover this question substantively, but the recommendations made during lively discussion throughout the workshop are consolidated here for this report. DOTMLPF-P recommendations generally fell into the categories of education and structure.

The best way to show the value of CA and to integrate CA with other JIM capabilities is to understand the authorizations under which each capability operates. Some panel members noted the positive trends in integration made in recent years and that CA Soldiers and Marines must embrace their role as planner, facilitator, and integrator as well as translator of interagency language into DoD-speak and vice versa. The JIASC was one example of an effort in which interorganizational partners educate each other about how to integrate their distinct capabilities while building enduring relationships and advantages.

Some panel and audience members suggested CA and civil-military integration would improve if Army CA officers designated as 38G Military Government Specialists were paired with counterpart agency representatives at the GCCs to promote better understanding and integration among military and civilian specialists within each of the stability sectors. In INDOPACOM, CACOM-level Functional Specialty Team (FXSP) personnel played in crisis action exercises and assisted interagency subject matter counterparts to integrating into the complicated boards, bureaus, center, cells, and working groups (B2C2WG) planning and operations processes.

The size and scope of TCAPTs were mentioned several times throughout the session. One suggestion was that TCAPTs should grow with additional fulltime manning. Again, INDOPACOM provides an example of a consistently undermanned team that would surge support from USAR CA units during crisis action exercises. This support generally consisted of a CA Planning Team (CAPT) and an FXSP (-) from a CACOM headquarters totaling 14 planners that provided the TCAPT the ability to conduct 24/7 operations. On that note, one audience member suggested a return to a former construct of the CINC Support Teams² that used to reside at the CACOMs in the 1980s and augmented CA planners at the GCCs. Another suggestion was to create USMC CA billets on joint manning documents at USSOCOM, the TSOs, and GCC staffs to support the additional manning requirements at those headquarters and improve the integration of USMC CA capabilities into strategic and operational plans at those levels.

On this last point, the panel agreed that ASD (SO/LIC) needs to focus on where best to place CA staff presence at strategic and operational levels. Toward that end, one suggestion was to conduct a joint capability-based assessment (CBA) to look at where to place CA positions and how to

² *CINC* stood for Theater *Commander in Chief*, which was the term used to describe Unified Combatant Commanders until Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld restricted the use of that title to the President of the United States. Secretary of Defense memo, subject: The Title "Commander in Chief," 24 October 2002.

address other integration gaps. The last time the Joint Staff's Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) reviewed and endorsed a Civil Affairs (DOTMLPF) Change Recommendation was in 2011.³ At that time, at least two *organization* tasks directed a review of the requirements and authorizations of joint CA billets at various joint-level staffs and interagency organizations, but the results of those studies were long forgotten or not known by the panel members. A renewed effort on this and other DOTMLPF-P issues is, perhaps, the most valuable recommendation coming out of this workshop.

Workshop II – Civil Affairs Best Practices in Campaigning – Lessons from Recent and Current Operations from the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne)

Workshop II facilitator and 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (SO) (A) Commander Col. David J. Kaczmarek led a dynamic and open discussion of comparative best practices with key leaders from across his Command. Each panel member had recent and relevant experience in deployments across all geographic regions that were centered around “building [civilian] resiliency” and gaining and maintaining influence in whole-of-government, JIM, and multicomponent approaches to real-time challenges that ranged from counterterrorism (CT) to security cooperation. His discussants, with their corresponding supported GCCs, included:

- Maj. Alex Plotkin, Commander, D/91st Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – AFRICOM
- 1st. Sgt. Alex Conaty, D/91st Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – AFRICOM
- Lt. Col. Nicole Alexander, Commander, 92nd Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – EUCOM
- Lt. Col. Jamie Kelley, Commander, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – CENTCOM
- Maj. Stephen Vadovsky, S3, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – CENTCOM
- Maj. Clinton Kessel, Commander, A/96th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – CENTCOM
- Maj. John Waits, S3, 97th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – INDOPACOM
- Maj. Brett Carter, 98th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A) – SOUTHCOM

The first thing that stood out in this session was the impressive array of diverse, complex mission settings for CA team operations among and within the regions. Lt. Col. Alexander noted, for example, how EUCOM operations take place largely under the rubric of NATO, especially in the growing relationship and information-sharing with the CIMIC Centre of Excellence (CCoE) at the institutional level and at CCoE exercises and training as well as co-engagements in the Balkan and Caucasus regions. An area of rich collaborative learning and information and knowledge sharing is the CIMIC/CA engagement in Ukraine to help improve civilian resilience and resistance on both sides of the lines in the combat zone.

³ Joint Requirements Oversight Council Memorandum (JROCM) 162-11, subj: Civil Affairs (CA) DOTMLPF-P Change Recommendation, 1 December 2011. DOTMLPF stands for doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leader development and education, personnel, and facilities. In 2013, a second P for policy was added to the acronym, making it DOTMLPF-P today.

By contrast, CA team engagement in the other regions takes place largely at the bilateral levels and by, with, and through U.S. country teams. The focus, for example, in places like India, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Nepal is in building civilian resilience against the threat of natural disasters, which are growing in frequency and intensity due to climate change. CA teams on such missions must be well versed in HADR operations as well as know the various international agencies and leading non-government organizations for HADR coordination, the most important being the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA). This is also true for CA teams working in parts of the SOUTHCOM region (especially adjacent to the Caribbean) and in the Gaza area, where HADR support and civil resilience assessment are exceptionally challenged by a high-intensity, non-permissive irregular warfare environment.

In the AFRICOM region, however, the major threat to civilian resilience comes from two major security challenges: CT and security sector instability (e.g., *coups de etat* and other issues resulting from imbalances between defense sector train-and-equip and institution-building and anti-corruption programs) which often present dilemmas for U.S. security assistance, foreign internal defense (FID), and other theater engagement activities that utilize U.S. special operations forces (SOF) that are prompting a re-thinking of security force assistance writ large and especially the CA role in it, as a recent *Eunomia Journal* article argues.⁴ In this region, leveraging and integrating 38G capabilities and other capacities from USACAPOC(A) with general CA capabilities and capacities of both USASOC and USACAPOC(A) CA forces is proving to generate great economy-of-force value-added to supported U.S. country teams operating under interagency frameworks such as the GFA, Defense Support to Stabilization (DSS), and WPS. CA personnel working there must be well versed in the program funding and other authorities of such frameworks and in civil-military integration with interagency partners at both operational and tactical levels.

In the INDOPACOM, AFRICOM, and SOUTHCOM regions, the persistent presence and engagement of multicomponent CA forces is proving critical to countering growing adversarial power presence and influence through strategic competition and integrated deterrence. Maj. Carter noted how SOUTHCOM region CA teams are highly focused on growing strong relationships with their counterparts in Central and South America to build trust and establish themselves as a “go-to” source for problem-solving among their counterparts in partner nations. For this reason, the 95th CA Bde (SO) (A) also maintains a close institutional relationship with the Army's Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) posted at Ft. Moore, GA.

Col. Kaczmarek steered the discussion to a review of JIM-level best practices that the discussants found most worth mentioning. Chief among them was how the deployment and employment of multicomponent CA teams is the way forward for the CA Corps writ large in campaigning and CAO. Maj. Carter mentioned how the ability to leverage the much larger DoD footprint and reach back to support State Department and USAID activities in all the regions in strategic competition

⁴ Robert Schafer and Shafi Saiddudin, “Civil Affairs in Institutional Capacity Building: Conceptualizing Security Force Assistance,” *Eunomia Journal*, updated 23 November 2023.

and security cooperation settings can be a game-changer in integrated deterrence. Maj. Vadovsky and Kessel pointed out how this had enhanced repatriation and resettlement efforts and supported civilian resilience in northeast Syria and in several Central Asian republics in rebuilding from conflict. Maj. Waits reported a growing appreciation among military and interagency customers of CA capabilities for civil-military integration and civil networking and analysis, its role in Oceania Engagement Teams, the provision of DoD-funded Overseas Humanitarian Disaster Assistance and Civic Aid (OHDACA), and the employment of 38Gs in-theater.

Regarding the latter, Col. Kaczmarek also noted how supported commands are gaining a new appreciation of RC CA engagement in the steady state rather than just for LSCO post-conflict stabilization. This is critical to meeting the ongoing stabilization and governance challenges to civil resilience in all regions as well as in civilian harm mitigation and cultural property protection. A huge opportunity also exists to accelerate better CA integration with Compo 2 activities in the regions, particularly regarding the access and influence of the SPP. Col. Kaczmarek felt commands were not sufficiently leveraging SPP in a campaigning sense. He also noted that multicomponent CA deployments, as a CA campaigning mainstay, could help address issues such as integrating and sharing information with interorganizational partners, providing more depth and realism in scenario play in collective exercises, developing measures and evaluations for competition and crisis response, and processing lessons for continuity from missions over time.

Along similar lines, the panel noted that improving AC-RC CA relations and integration can come mostly from more deliberate campaigning of multicomponent CA operations, albeit considerable longstanding DOTMLPF-P gaps that CA and higher Army and joint commands need to address to realize the true potential of campaigning CA as such. This includes the cross-component mission preparation and organizational training validation process, modernizing authorities for leveraging highly sought RC capabilities such as 38Gs, and other force management and generation issues.

Finally, panel members expressed wide agreement on the need for a Corps-wide strategic narrative so that all CA professionals can speak to decision-makers with one voice about what CA is and does. An implied task for such a narrative would be for all of them to be able explain the capabilities and constraints of the various parts of the diverse CA force to enable the right array and mix of CA forces, especially at the GCC/SCC level, in the RFF process. At the same time, they identified that the largest and next-most consequential audience for a CA strategic narrative includes U.S. and foreign military and civilian partners.

Workshop III – Campaigning CA Functional Specialists: Recent and Emerging Operations

The need to discuss the role of CA functional specialists in campaigning had first mention at the 2022 Association Annual Meeting. At that meeting, Col. A. Scott DeJesse, 38G Military Government Specialist Program Director at the USACAPOC(A) Strategic Initiatives Group, provided an update on the status of the 38G program. It was clear that the program, and specialties like 6V, Heritage and Preservation, exemplify how RC CA Soldiers increasingly contribute to real-

time regional campaigning and readiness for crisis response and LSCO, as well as to the CA value proposition at large. At this workshop, joining Col. DeJesse were Col. Mike Lanese, Functional Specialty Team Chief at the 351st CACOM, and Maj. (Ret.) Corine Wegener, Director of the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative.

Col. DeJesse kicked off the session by providing his own summary of the importance of campaigning especially to Civil Affairs, highlighting the following:

- Campaign plans are the operational extension of a commander’s strategy—as is CAO.
- Campaign plans are JIM in nature—as is much of CAO.
- Campaign planning generally applies to the conduct of combat operations but can also be used in situations other than war—as is CAO.
- Campaign planning is mostly linked to operational design, the key elements of which are:
 - Understanding strategic guidance (including the desired end state and military objectives(s)).
 - Identifying critical factors (principal adversary strengths, strategic CoGs, and weaknesses).
 - Developing an operational concept or scheme that will achieve the strategic objective(s).

Among the most important tasks confronting campaign planners is the proper identification of an adversary’s or competing power’s strategic CoGs, i.e., its sources of strength, power, and resistance, which can come from a study of the cultural heritage of the populace under the adversary’s control. This is regardless of conventional or irregular warfare. Campaign planners must understand the sources of the adversary’s strength and its key points of vulnerability, i.e., the critical factors of support and opposition.

Cultural heritage analysis in campaigning is a form of strategic warning that identifies impending civil threats to the strategic and operational environment that also helps reveal the adversary’s CoGs in today’s people-centric conflicts. He illustrated this with examples from the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, Iranian influence in the Middle East, and Chinese influence in Africa. The intentional destruction of cultural heritage and property is more than a major source of instability and an indicator of strategic CoGs; it is as deliberate an attempt to destroy the identity of a target country or population as is genocide.

In other words, 38G Military Government Specialists must help the rest of the CA Corps and the commands it supports to operationalize terms like “culture,” which has mention in FM 3-57 at least 60 times but is never explained operationally. Combined with other functional specialties and interorganizational partners from their civil-military networks, 38Gs must also explain to senior politico-military leaders the strategic and operational linkages between campaign objectives, threats, etc., and cross-cutting variables like stable governance, civilian resilience, the rule of law

system, and whether people can enjoy a safe and secure environment, a sustainable economy, and social well-being. These and other human dimension challenges require strategic and operational understanding by both military and civilian planners in campaigning.

The collaborative 38G exploration of stability and governance problem and solution sets, with interagency, academic, and private sector partners, were among the values-added of the IMSG. Col. Tony Vacha, from the 353rd CACOM, revealed a broad consensus to restore or reinvent this organization and its former tasks, virtually if not physically, to facilitate global management of 38Gs. Given the program's rapid growth in size and relevance and skyrocketing demand signal coming from every GCC across the globe for their unique capacities and capabilities, this would include the sharing of 38G capabilities across the regions, as needed.

Maj. (Ret.) Wegener explained the importance of the emerging global civil-military network among CA functional specialists based on the growing partnership between the Smithsonian Institution and USACAPOC(A) to promote activities that assist U.S. military personnel and other government agencies in protecting cultural property abroad. This includes development of military training aids and materials, workshops, and conferences for skills exchange and capacity-building. It also includes integrating cultural heritage into exercises, sponsoring internships, creating cross-training and mission assignment opportunities, and fielding platforms for outreach to organizations in the wider military and cultural heritage professional communities. She also reminded the audience that, in the 21st century model, military functional specialists, as global networkers and problem-solvers, must constantly remember that civilian institutions are always in the lead.

Col. Lanese depicted how the functional specialist role is reviving as a strategically and operationally relevant capability that a CACOM can offer GCCs/SCCs across the entire competition continuum. In addition to Col. DeJesse's points on the emerging 38G value proposition, illustrated by an INDOPACOM RFF for functional specialist support to its theater campaign plan, he noted how 38Gs were perfectly suited for civil network development across the entire competition continuum to support both conflict prevention and post-conflict stabilization. He also concurred with Workshops I and II that RC conventional CA officers and non-commissioned officers (38A/Bs) should train and exercise more with 38Gs.

The nature of campaigning in strategic competition and integrated deterrence is whole-of-nation as well as JIM, and the promotion of civilian resilience in an era in which CoGs are mostly people-centric is a form of "readiness" to deal with such threats. Col. De Jesse explained that functional specialists are always working from a whole-of-national perspective and in the JIM environment. They are as at home in security cooperation mission settings as in conflict. They work across the whole competition continuum with urgency to protect civilians and their communities and, therefore, do not enjoy the luxury of a long crawl-walk-run learning curve experienced by military personnel preparing primarily for LSCO.

This is one reason 38Gs and functional specialists, regardless of conditions, locations, types of operations, etc., never say “no” when asked for their assistance. They tend to focus more on work quality than quantity, given how long-term measures of effectiveness being more difficult than those of tactical performance. They must also be constantly mindful of their value proposition, as all CA operators must.

Col. DeJesse concluded how the program has seen a significant spike in media and public interest the past couple of years, citing various articles and newscasts, no doubt contributing a rush of more highly-qualified applicants than it can currently absorb. This largely undeliberate model to gain interesting people to do interesting and important things is something that the rest of the CA Corps, regardless of component, and the Army at large may be wise to consider in addressing their own recruiting shortfalls. Moreover, the most important gain in interest and popularity has been with GCC and operational military commanders contending with complex and dynamic strategic and operational environments for integrated deterrence and strategic competition and not just LSCO.

Keynote Speaker

This year’s keynote speaker was Brig. Gen. Kelly M. Dickerson, Deputy Chief of Staff, G3/5/7, Office of the Chief of Army Reserve (OCAR). He opened the second day of the Conference with a presentation on "Campaigning Reserve Component Forces—Implications for Civil Affairs." The former USAJFKSWCS Deputy Commanding General explained how the USAR is campaigning right now to help the Army meet both growing mission templates within diminishing resources and how that affects Army CA. Brig. Gen. Dickerson began by laying out the fiduciary and organizational realities impacting both the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) and USACAPOC(A), in which nests more than 80% of the Army’s CA force.

First, the fiscal normality of congressional continuing resolutions (CRs) seriously constrains maintaining the force and its growing operations tempo, let alone RC force modernization. “You can’t do it all,” he warned. With only \$8.5 billion budgeted for the entire USAR—and about half of that in operations and maintenance, USARC and its commands (including USACAPOC(A)) are compelled to seek ways and means to generate greater readiness, use every training seat available, and spend its budget wisely – with more forethought than hindsight. Although the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and CR maintain the pace of USAR CA force modernization, a sizeable portion of USARC’s full-time manning (FTM) is drawing down by as much as one-third. This will seriously challenge the ability of all USAR forces (especially USAR CA) to maintain regional readiness and campaigning presence.

He then noted the inherent challenge USAR forces have in maintaining even traditional readiness for LSCO. USAR Soldiers have only 39 annual training days against at least 235 days available to AC personnel. At the same time, the demand signal is growing at GCCs for RC personnel and the unique capacities and capabilities of the USAR (many of which reside in CA units) as a steady-state campaigning approach to integrated deterrence takes hold at the regional level against pacing

competition with China and Russia. Meanwhile, as the Army has been unable to meet its recruiting goals in recent successive years, programmed active Army (Compo 1) end strength is dropping from 473,000 to 452,000 while there are 325,000 Soldiers in the Army National Guard (ARNG, or Compo 2), and 174,000 Soldiers in the USAR (Compo 3). For the first time since the All-Volunteer Force began in 1973, RC strength will exceed that of the AC.

This signifies two more things. One is that Compo 2 and 3 forces must fill mission gaps opened up by Compo 1 reductions. The other, as discussed in Workshop I, is the need for greater integration across components. Cross-component teaming is already the mainstay of the OCAR's campaigning concept, which squarely fits the Army's way-ahead. Brig. Gen. Dickerson briefed that multicomponent teaming enhances total force integration, improves the readiness posture of Army units, and optimizes unique capabilities of each component. Ideal characteristics include the ability to support a robust low-to-moderate OPTEMPO environment for strategic competition and integrated deterrence, closer proximity and greater organizational and mission familiarity among various component units, and the more immediate ability of Compo 1 forces to leverage Compo 2 and 3 civilian-acquired knowledge and skills. Among the limitations, of course, are the constraints in funding and authorities for calling up such forces beyond those 39 days he mentioned, or to receive additional training that certain missions may require, as the CA Corps has long known.

The greater reliance on reserve forces, whether for contingencies or in real time, is a sign of the times not just in the United States. Brig. Gen. Dickerson showed a slide of the relative sizes of reserve forces among many of our allies and partners—among them the United Kingdom (U.K.), France, and Germany. Finland, with its long border with Russia and as a new NATO member, has long maintained an active force of about 24,000 that is quickly expandable to around 240,000 combat-ready troops and maintains a total reserve force of 870,000.

The USARC campaigning concept not only helps address the Army's growing capability gaps for LSCO. It strongly supports *National Military Strategy* strategic objectives 4-7 (integrate joint and combined efforts; leverage opportunities in campaigning; reinforce diplomacy; strengthen relationships with allies and partners). Chief among USARC's "influence generators" to help the Army and joint force gain and maintain positional advantages in-theater is CA—38A/B generalists, 38G Military Government Specialists, and others. This is especially true when teamed with RC psychological operations (PSYOP), public affairs (PAO), and information operations (IO) task organized within a JIM-oriented, theater strategic communication campaign. USACAPOC(A), where the Army's information-related forces largely reside, is well positioned at the force management level to enhance supported command campaigning at operational and tactical levels.

Much of this requires a more conscientious job of "doing IO all the time" among populations, partners, and corporate customers. "You're campaigning," he reminded, "whenever you post a picture of you working with your allies and partners on a mission or an exercise on social media.

Not only will your friends see this, but also your adversaries. Our adversaries can emulate it, but they can't match it because we've been doing it longer and better than they have.”

In its role as a force for influence in competition, the CA force's greatest value-added lies in its ability to develop and leverage civil networks through persistent civil reconnaissance and engagement, effect interorganizational civil-military integration, and facilitate information dominance with respect to the human domain through civil knowledge integration. Brig. Gen. Dickerson noted that senior Army commanders, such as XVIII Airborne Corps Commanding General Lt. Gen. Christopher Donahue, have learned to greatly appreciate these unique CA capacities, which cross-multiply through multicomponent teaming.

In the USARC campaigning concept, multicomponent teaming and integration applies to much more than greater integration between the AC and RC, but also between Compos 2 and 3. In addition to providing USAR CA personnel for S9/G9 staff in ARNG commands and maneuver units, a multicomponent campaigning approach to the storied ARNG SPP to strengthen relationships with allies and partners can greatly multiply its effects. This and greater leveraging of USARC capacities and capabilities, including those of USACAPOC(A), to enhance exercises prioritized by the Department of the Army builds readiness across the component board and contributes significantly to integrated deterrence.

USARC and the Army at large are building a strategic narrative for greater AC-RC integration, multicomponent teaming, and working with allies and partners to help the Army become an even more effective force across the entire competition continuum and, ultimately, for LSCO. Among the examples Brig. Gen. Dickerson gave was the Interallied Confederation of Medical Reserve Officers (CIOMR), a NATO initiative that focuses on interoperability, sharing best practices, and professional networking with the joint allied community of military medical professionals. The CIOMR has been instrumental in helping to build civil resilience and resistance along medical lines in Ukraine, as well as in building the capacity of partner Ukrainian Army medical commands. In both Ukraine and the U.K, Army Reserve Medical Commands (AR-MEDCOMs) and other Military Reserve Exchange Program (MREP) opportunities are sharing best practices and expanding the interoperability of partner nations.

Another example of working smarter and not just harder within capacities and capabilities is the 364th CA Brigade's campaigning approach to operational CA employment in the INDOPACOM region under Task Force Frontier in support of I Corps Pacific Partner teaming. The 364th provides 75% of INDOPACOM's persistent presence and engagement of 30 CA teams in-theater. In its alignment with I Corps, its rotations help division and brigade commands better leverage CA capabilities for current operations, interagency level civil-military integration, and establishment of combined joint civil-military operations task forces (CJCMOTFs) in crisis response, validated in key theater exercises.

In the meantime, CA team deployments on Pacific Fleet ships and at naval stations fill a clear need since the U.S. Navy decommissioned its Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training (MCAST) Command almost a decade ago, which a recent Irregular Warfare Initiative article noted was worth reconsidering. “As populations move towards the littorals, the expertise of civil affairs practitioners is essential in understanding potential vulnerabilities, relevant area studies, and how both may impact maritime operations.” (The Houthi attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea area are clearly demonstrating the impact of irregular threats from civil areas to critical sea lines of communication.)⁵

Instead of pushing for longer team deployments, TF Frontier is working within current two-week overseas deployment for training (ODT) authorities to provide more consistent CA boots-on-the-ground. Despite drawbacks in engagement time and the dependency on good information-sharing and mission hand-off among CA teams, this has improved 364th readiness, both in conventional measures and in the expanded sense of real-time CA readiness that USACAPOC(A) Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Isaac Johnson, has proffered. A working agreement with supported commands to pay travel-related costs enables USARC dollars to stretch further and allow greater OPTEMPO.

Brig. Gen. Dickerson also noted how the long-overdue CA force design update (FDU) should help USAR CA forces do a better job of supporting preparedness for LSCO as well as real-time campaigning requirements. This is due, in part, by bringing back designated CA and supported command alignments as done under Cold War era *Capstone* and *Wartrace* programs, as well as address the need for better CA integration with PSYOP and other information related capabilities and human-machine integration through artificial intelligence (AI).

Finding a Corps-Wide Narrative on the Civil Affairs Value Proposition

Telling the Civil Affairs story has long been a widely understood imperative for the CA Corps and the Association, but institutional interest and efforts, whether at the Proponent, the major commands, or the Association, have been insufficient and not well coordinated. New Association president, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Hugh Van Roosen, has placed this among his priorities. Additional priorities include providing professional development and networking opportunities for the extended CA Corps to develop and coalesce as a diverse force, improve its capacities and capabilities through better force integration, and build civil-military networks at JIM levels. Through platforms like the *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*, *Eunomia Journal*, *OneCA* podcasts, and annual thematic series of fall and spring meetings to convene the CA Corps and its partners, the Association, as a non-official organization free of bureaucratic entanglements, is well positioned to assist with this critical self-campaigning requirement at a time of great transition and flux.

⁵ Kevin Bilms, “Solving for the Missing Element of Maritime Campaigning,” Irregular Warfare Initiative website, 14 September 2023. Also see James P. Micciche and Adam K. Christensen, “Maritime Maneuvers: Navigating Irregular Warfare in Yemen’s Civil War,” Irregular Warfare Initiative website, 21 December 2023.

“What is civil affairs and what does it do?” was the oft-raised question throughout the Conference, starting with Workshop I. To focus more on this question, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Van Roosen led an open discussion with the assistance of: Col. (Ret.) Dennis J. Cahill, from the USASOC Force Modernization Center, who led Workshop I; Col. David Kaczmarek, from the 95th CA Bde (SO) (A), who led Workshop II; Col. Clifton Kyle, Commander, 354th CA Bde and of TF Frontier fame; and, Lt. Col. Brad Hampton, who directs the USMCCMOS. Also assisting with facilitation of the discussion was Col. (Ret.) Christopher Holshek, who has headed up many Association programs, events, and initiatives over the last decade.

The discussion centered around the following questions, intended to serve as starting points:

1. What is the problem we are trying to solve? What are we trying to change? Is it a marketing problem or something more substantive?
2. Does the extended Civil Affairs Corps need an “elevator speech” or a “strategic narrative”? What requirements determine one or the other?
3. Why would the Civil Affairs Corps need a strategic narrative?
4. Who would be the target audiences, in order of priority? What should be the essential elements of information that these audiences should take away in better understanding Civil Affairs?
5. What would be the authoritative sources of this narrative? Doctrine, etc.?
6. Does it require formalization?
7. What would be the role of the Association in promoting this narrative?

There was broad consensus that preferred a strategic narrative, defined for this discussion as “an intentionally composed, compelling and inspiring story that explains the enduring values shared by members of an organization, their origins as a collective, and what they want to achieve in the future—and how.”⁶ Rather than the recitable talking points of an “elevator speech,” a strategic narrative is more adaptable to the audience, situation at hand, and deliverer. Developed from the bottom up as the top down, it is a more enduring cognitive reference framing, evolving on its own.

In responding to the above questions, Col. Kaczmarek pointed out that the CA force needs to understand the many customers and partners with whom it works and to see both the diversity of CA and its customers and multifarious partners as an opportunity rather than an obstacle. Any discussion of CA’s value-added should center on how it helps address the strategic and operating environments we are in or entering, how CA forces concentrate on the human dimension of conflict, and the importance of getting others around you to tell the CA story and advocate its values-added, e.g., as an economy-of-force capability. (Or, as Maj. Wegener offered, “We do civilians so you don’t have to.”)

⁶ AmyZalman, “What is a strategic narrative?” AmyZalman.com, 5 February 2022; <https://amyzalman.com/what-is-a-strategic-narrative-strategic-narrative-faqs/>

Col. Kyle added that it was equally important for us to understand that the “we” in Question 1 is the entirety of the CA community, and among the major problems to avoid is “CA fratricide” from its parts working at cross purposes. This implies self-education—making sure we, as a diverse, multicomponent, and multiservice Corps, along with a multitude of JIM partners, know who we are and what we do. “Knowing our strategic value is not good enough,” he said, “more focus should go to explaining, in practical terms, what you can do—not limitations.” Later, Col. Tony Vacha from the 353rd CACOM contributed—beyond his own attempt in the *Eunomia Journal* to answer the question of “Why Civil Affairs?”⁷—on the need to vigorously “red team” any proposed CA strategic narrative across the CA commands and other major stakeholders.

Lt. Col. Hampton suggested looking at how the USMC explains what its “influence officers” are to the Joint Staff and to tie CA competencies to core supported command missions, in accordance with the new *Joint Warfighting Concept* (which, he noted, was a first such joint document since the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986), theater campaign plans, supported exercise objectives, etc. Any briefing to a supported command should be a capabilities-based briefing, keeping it relatively simple. He echoed the earlier contention that the lack of dedicated U.S. Navy maritime CA force is a significant theater capability gap.

Col. (Ret.) Cahill noted how the CA Value Proposition information paper, drafted by his office in March 2022, is based on CA doctrine. With refinement, it could serve as the starting point for a source strategic communications document. While the strategic narrative should draw from CA’s rich legacy, it should focus on what CA does now and can in the future. “We may not fight again like we did in World War II, but World War II holds lessons for CA as it does for other Army branches as they look to the future,” he observed.

Association Director Ryan McCannell, USAID Development Advisor to ASD (SO/LIC), reminded the 90% of the audience who were CA professionals, that most interagency and interorganizational partners know little about CA and what it actually does. Morgan Keay, CEO and Founder of Motive International, LLC, a social enterprise working closely with CA and interagency partners, explained how, from her perspective, CA forces engage with non-military partners to support interagency activities and U.S. strategic objectives through civil-military projects to achieve them.

Mr. McCannell also noted the importance of gaining champions through key leader engagement, as the Association did by having ASD Maier speak at the Roundtable last spring and USACAPOC(A) followed by inviting Deputy ASD for Counternarcotics and Stabilization Policy at ASD (SO/LIC), James Saenz, as the honored speaker at the military ball that Saturday.

⁷ Donald A. “Tony” Vacha, “Why Civil Affairs?,” *Eunomia Journal*, 1 November 2023.

Col. (Ret.) Holshek contributed by providing a set of key statements reflecting the main takeaways of a decade of discussion on Civil Affairs captured in the *Civil Affairs Issue Papers*. These include:

- CA is a national strategic and joint economy-of-force capability (Vol. 1).
- CA is the premier military capability for civil engagement and conflict prevention (Vol. 2).
- CA is best leveraged and integrated through GCCs and ASCCs (Vol. 3).
- CA is the joint force of choice to consolidate military and security gains into political and civilian outcomes (Vol. 4).
- CA must become a better learning organization in all four Army strategic roles (shape, prevent, win, and consolidate conflict) in both irregular and conventional settings (Vol. 5).
- CA is the premier national capability for operational interagency civil-military integration (Vol. 6).
- CA is a leading joint force capability for “strengthening alliances and attracting new partners” to win influence in strategic competition and multidomain operations (Vol. 7).
- CA contributes decisively to full-range positional advantage by building civil-military networks locally and regionally in JIM settings through CR, CE, and civil knowledge integration (CKI) (Vol. 8).
- CA is the premier U.S. force for winning without fighting—a maneuver force in the human and information environments that must be organized, managed, integrated, and resourced with the same institutional as well as operational seriousness as combat forces (Vol. 9).
- CA, CAO, and CMO must be integral to campaigning at all levels of command and across the full range of operations in support of strategic competition, integrated deterrence, and LSCO (Vol. 10).

“What that looks like,” he explained, “is having CA professionals, regardless of component (active or reserve), type (SOF or conventional), or service (Army or Marine) who can adapt that overarching strategic narrative to explain to anyone what CA is and does. The implied task, however, is that any one of them can explain the capabilities and constraints of any part of this diversely talented force to enable the right array of CA forces, especially at theater level, in the RFF process and optimally integrate them in theater campaign plans.”

As the discussion concluded, the Conference participants agreed with the way forward that Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Van Roosen proposed at the end of the discussion:

The Civil Affairs Association, in coordination with ASD (SO/LIC), the Joint CA Proponent, USAJFKSWCS, the USMCCMOS, the 95th CA Brigade (SO) (A), USACAPOC(A), and JIM partners, revises the Association strategic briefing and completes development of a flyer that captures, in plain language, the strategic narrative of the extended CA Corps and summarizes its main talking points for adaptive use by all CA professionals to educate and explain to a multitude of audiences, what Civil Affairs is, what it does, and what value it brings in all mission applications and at all levels of engagement and integration.

The Civil Affairs Association will brief this at the Civil Affairs Roundtable in April 2024, and, pending comments and further refinements, will release it on the Association website.

At the very least, these deliverables will provide a template for further development and refinement of a strategic narrative on Civil Affairs that is comprehensive and collaborative, ensuring maximum buy-in and usage among the wider community of interest.

Civil Affairs Association Award Presentations

During the catered lunch hour, Association president Van Roosen presented the annual 2023 Association awards. This included:

- The Col. Eli E. Nobleman Annual Award for Outstanding Contributions to Civil Affairs: Cmd. Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Neil C. Heupel.
- Maj. Gen. John H. Hilldring Award for Outstanding Contributions to National Defense and Civil Affairs: Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Steven Hashem.
- Col. Ralph R. Temple Award for Outstanding Service in the Furtherance of the Association's Objectives: Col. Susan M. Gannon.

Later that evening, USACAPOC(A) Commanding General Maj. Gen. Issac Johnson presented numerous members of his command medallions the Association provided that are named after General Winfield Scott, considered the "Father of Civil Affairs" for his remarkable historical example as a "warrior-diplomat."

Civil Affairs Issue Paper Presentations

Closing out the Conference, the authors of the five *Civil Affairs Issue Papers* to appear in this year's volume presented summaries of their papers and, through audience vote, competed for cash prizes of \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second, and \$250 for third. The results were:

1. "The Digital Screenline: Economy of Force in Campaign Civil Reconnaissance"
- *Capt. Wayne Culbreth*
2. "A Civil Affairs Campaigning Framework"
- *Maj. Nicholas Ashley*
3. "An Ocean Between Us: Civil Affairs from Shore to Shore"
- *Maj. John M. Holmes*
4. "Civil Affairs as The Premier Maneuver Force for Winning Without Fighting"
- *Lt. Col. (Ret.) Gregory Seese, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Rafael Linera, and Major (Ret.) Assad Raza*
5. "Campaigning the Campaign Plan – Focusing on the Fundamentals at the Combatant Command by Assessing Civil Affairs Operations, Activities, and Investments"
- *Maj. J. David Thompson*

Issue Paper Committee Chairman Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Glenn A. Goddard (who succeeded Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Bruce Bingham) noted how these papers were very timely and contributed substantially to the Conference discussion. Just as the extended CA Corps is challenged to adapt to campaigning as a strategic and not just operational or tactical undertaking, the Army and Marines face challenges caused by changes in strategic focus and personnel constraints, advancing technologies such as AI, and the need to operate more as multicomponent teams in joint and combined settings.

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Goddard, who also chairs the Association's Publication Advisory Board, exhorted CA professionals from all walks to share their experiences, perspectives, and ideas through the Association's many well established collective learning platforms.

Previous volumes, Roundtable Reports, and summaries of the current papers are also available on the Association website.

Final Remarks

Association president Van Roosen closed out the two-day forum by thanking the CA community, its allies from around the world, and its interagency and other interorganizational partners for their robust participation and partnership in helping to grow a worldwide enterprise of civil-military professionals, civilian as well as military. While concurring with the Conference's main findings, among them that the campaigning approach to growing, leveraging, and integrating multicomponent CA and civil-military teams in JIM mission environments was the way forward, the Association, in order to keep pace with and even better serve the extended CA Corps, must itself adopt a campaigning approach to Association development, including review of its own value proposition, organizational analysis, update of the By-Laws, and promotion of younger leadership among the Board of Directors, which he laid out in greater detail at the annual Association Board Meeting open to Association members the next morning.

Col. (Ret.) Holshek is an Association Vice President and a 2017 Distinguished Member of the Civil Affairs Corps and a 2021 CIMIC Centre of Excellence Award recipient. A Civil-Military Director at Narrative Strategies, LLC, he is the author of Travels with Harley: Journeys in Search of Personal and National Identity, the final chapter of "Warrior-Diplomats," and the Peace Operations Training Institute online course on "Civil-Military Coordination in Peace Operations."

Col. (Ret.) Cahill is an Association Board member, a 2014 Distinguished Member of the Civil Affairs Corps, and a past Honorary Colonel of the Civil Affairs Corps. He serves as the Deputy Civil Affairs Capability Manager at the USASOC Force Modernization Center at Fort Liberty, NC. He is the author of the 2003 Army/USMC Civil Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures Manual and numerous articles on Civil Affairs in multiple publications. His most recent article, "Revisiting Civil Affairs Operations in Operation Restore Hope," was published in the Eunomia Journal on October 1, 2023.

The Digital Screenline: Economy of Force in Campaign Civil Reconnaissance

Major Wayne Culbreth, USA

Introduction

In the multifaceted landscape of military campaigns, the capacity to efficiently assimilate, evaluate, and respond to extensive data sets holds critical importance. As the Civil Affairs (CA) community navigates the broader geographic dimensions inherent to modern campaigning, it is confronted with the resource-intensive nature of civil reconnaissance (CR). Drawing parallels from cavalry operations, the concept of a "civil recon screenline" would prove a useful adaptation to CR and Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) writ large. Such an approach, as an economy of force measure, would enable CA teams to amass vital civil information in advance of the main effort, thereby optimizing resources and enhancing situational awareness.

The escalating prominence of artificial intelligence (AI) within the CA community is noteworthy. The utilization of AI in disinformation campaigns, cyber-attacks, and asymmetric warfare against the United States underscores the imperative to both comprehend and harness its potential.¹ There is a pressing need to actively integrate AI-driven systems for enhanced operations beyond just those that identify adversarial AI threats. In this context, advancements in AI, particularly Large Language Models (LLM), offer an avenue for the community to refine its CR endeavors in an economy of force approach.

This paper introduces the concept of the Digital Screenline—an innovative methodology leveraging contemporary AI tools for open-source analysis. By encompassing a myriad of digital streams, the Digital Screenline deploys advanced LLMs with Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG) for meticulous information gathering and subsequent analysis. This strategy promises effective reconnaissance of an expanded Area of Operations (AO) with diminished manpower requirements. The subsequent exploration will detail the integration of the Digital Screenline within the comprehensive landscape of CR and its prospective impact on operational outcomes.

AI in Civil Affairs: Enhancing Modern Reconnaissance

Understanding civilian sentiments across diverse geographies in modern military operations cannot be overstated. For the Civil Affairs Corps, the challenge is compounded by the need to process an overwhelming amount of data with limited personnel. Traditional civil reconnaissance methods force a difficult choice: in-depth analysis with a narrow focus or a broader but superficial overview. Neither can fully meet the requirements of effective campaigning, whose overarching goal is to influence perceptions and behaviors in the complex landscape of international relations. Bibb notes, "Just as commanders cannot fully understand threats until scouts confirm or deny their initial assumptions, CA elements cannot understand, much less counter, civil vulnerabilities until they achieve sufficient awareness of the on-the-ground reality"² underscoring the need for innovative approaches that can provide a more comprehensive perspective.

The digital age, with its proliferation of information sources like radio broadcasts, TV channels, and social media platforms, offers both a challenge and an opportunity. These platforms churn out a continuous stream of data that reflects the evolving sentiments of civilian populations worldwide. During events like the Arab Spring of 2010-2012, the role of these digital platforms in shaping societal dynamics became undeniably clear.³ The question then is how to harness this deluge of information effectively for CAO.

This is where AI, particularly LLMs, comes into play. These advanced tools can rapidly process and analyze vast open-source datasets. More than data interpretation, AI techniques like clustering, dimensionality reduction, and other ever-expanding data science methodologies unearth patterns, identify emerging trends, and formulate data-driven hypotheses. Such abilities allow CA teams to gain a detailed context that enhances both their situational awareness and responsiveness.

The benefits of integrating AI in CAO extend well beyond simplifying data analysis. The capacity of AI to swiftly identify shifts in sentiment and highlight emerging influencers provides a powerful tool for civil engagements with local communities. Traditional methods, while invaluable for their on-the-ground insights, can sometimes fall short in capturing the full spectrum of civilian sentiment in real-time. As Wass de Czege pointed out, "The irony is that complex functions, which have the most difficult feedback requirements, are the least equipped and organized to get it."⁴ In this light, the synergy of AI not only complements but also amplifies these traditional methods, offering a richer understanding of the evolving operational terrain. By harnessing AI to process open-source data rapidly, the Digital Screenline seeks to address this feedback gap, providing CA professionals a broader and more timely perspective to enhance their campaigning efforts.

Resource allocation—a perennial challenge in fluid and complex operations⁵—also stands to gain from this technological synergy. By converting the ocean of open-source data into actionable insights, AI tools enable CA teams to identify where their efforts would be most effective. This aligns the computational power of AI with the human expertise of CA professionals, creating a synergy that results in more informed and sophisticated operations.

In this context, the digitally-augmented reconnaissance capability represents a notable evolution in CA's role in campaigning. By providing a more layered and real-time understanding of unfolding scenarios, CA's ability to interpret and act on campaign data is amplified. The integration of technology with human expertise not only enhances the quality of insights derived from civilian interactions but also underscores the vast potential for further enriching CA operations. This synthesis of technology and field expertise presents a transformative trajectory for the role of CA in modern military terrains.

Architecture and Functional Aspects of the Digital Screenline

The Digital Screenline system, described in this paper, offers a dynamic architecture designed to capture, process, and analyze real-time open-source data streams, emphasizing data authenticity and scalability. To maintain data integrity, DSDigital Screenline integrates directly with sources, including broadcasting stations and digital platforms like Telegram and Twitter, through their

respective APIs. Upon collection, data is transformed using Google’s Vertex AI Chirp Universal Speech Model⁶ for audio-to-text conversion and the Gecko Text Embedding Model⁷ to transform text into vectors. These vectors are stored in Google’s Vertex Matching Engine, optimized for high-dimensional data using the Approximate Nearest Neighbor (ANN)⁸ algorithm, with Firestore providing redundant storage within the Google Cloud ecosystem.

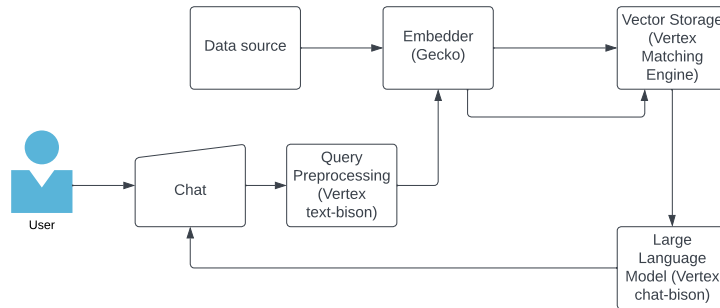


Figure 1- System Architecture

The user interface (UI) is developed using React Typescript, hosted on Google Firebase Hosting, and resembles AI chat tools such as ChatGPT, leveraging the RAG processes⁹ to enhance user interactions. User queries are processed via Google's Bison-Text LLM, with a temperature setting of 0.8 to balance deterministic outputs with variability, enhancing response coherency.¹⁰ The processed LLM inquiry is embedded and matched against the Vertex Matching Engine to provide the most relevant vectors for responses. Digital Screenline promises efficient scalability, supporting over 100 languages in Google Vertex AI,¹¹ ensuring a broad linguistic understanding. The full source code of the system will be made available in a private repository in GitHub.

Methodology and Analysis

In the continually advancing domain of digital intelligence, the significance of drawing from diverse data sources is crucial. A system capable of proficiently aggregating, interpreting, and analyzing data has the potential to significantly contribute to the advancements in civil reconnaissance. The Digital Screenline is designed to be one such system. To better understand its capabilities, this analysis focuses on transcripts from a single 24-hour broadcast window of Hromadske Radio,¹² an independent news/talk radio station based in Kyiv.

To fully appreciate the research approach, one must understand the scope and context of the data selection. By choosing a single day's transcripts from Hromadske Radio, the study aimed to delve into a concentrated segment of the information landscape. This decision had a twofold purpose: firstly, to provide a vivid demonstration of the depth of insights that can be obtained from even a limited dataset; and secondly, to highlight the potential scalability and effectiveness of a fully operational Digital Screenline system. When taken to its envisioned operational capacity, this system would assimilate data from a plethora of sources, spanning diverse media forms, languages, and geographical territories over extensive durations.

Such rigorous data amalgamation aims to produce a sophisticated and detailed analytical output. The insights presented here, derived from a mere day's worth of content, serve as an indication of the system's analytical prowess. The Digital Screenline system's UI, designed with similarities to ChatGPT, provides an interactive platform where users pose direct queries. In a proof-of-concept test, the system was given an initial query (Figure 2).

Upon receiving this query, Digital Screenline initiated a series of operations. The query was first converted into a high-dimensional vector representation, encapsulating the semantic content of the user's inquiry. Using this vectorized query, the system performed an ANN search against the database containing vector representations of the segmented data, which, in this instance, were text excerpts from a radio broadcast.

The purpose of the ANN search is to pinpoint segments in the vector database of radio transcripts that have the closest semantic alignment with the query vector, ensuring the retrieval of the most relevant data. For this specific query, the system identified 50 segments from the broadcast that were most aligned with the topic of agriculture issues in the war context. After identifying these relevant excerpts, the LLM processed the information. Through the RAG approach, the model assimilated insights from the various segments to construct a cohesive response.

User: "Tell me about any significant agriculture issues discussed today relating to the war."

DS: "Based on the transcript, several notable agriculture issues were discussed in relation to the war in Ukraine:

- Much of Ukraine's agricultural land and infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed by the Russian invasion. In particular, the left bank of Kherson Oblast, a major agricultural region, has suffered losses. Irrigation systems have been disrupted, limiting crop options. Overall agricultural production in occupied areas has dropped sharply.
- Demographic losses due to the war have reduced the agricultural workforce in many areas. With fewer workers, it will be difficult to cultivate labor-intensive crops like vegetables. This may lead to more focus on grains and technical crops.
- The occupation of the left bank of Kherson Oblast has significantly impacted Ukraine's vegetable market. Kherson was a major vegetable producer, but has now dropped out of the market due to the war. This has led to shortages and price increases for some vegetables.

Restoring agriculture after the war will require major investments, reforms, and likely changes in what crops and livestock are produced based on available resources. The market situation will play a big role in determining the post-war agricultural economy. In summary, the war has devastated Ukraine's agriculture sector through damage to infrastructure, loss of workers, and loss of production capacity. Major efforts will be needed to rebuild and restructure agriculture as the war eventually ends."

Figure 2 – Initial query.

Continuation in querying is one of the standout features of Digital Screenline, enabling users to undertake deeper dives into specific areas of interest based on initial responses. This functionality is underpinned by the LLM's ability to maintain the context of the entire conversation across multiple turns. In traditional querying systems, each query is often treated in isolation, devoid of context from previous interactions. However, with the Digital Screenline system, the LLM not only recalls prior interactions but also leverages this accumulated context to refine and nuance subsequent responses.

Following the initial response about agriculture issues related to the war, a subsequent query was posed (Figure 3).

User: "Tell me more about the damaged irrigation systems."

DS: "Okay, here are some more details on the damage to irrigation systems discussed:

- The transcript mentions that Russian attacks on the Kakhovka Dam damaged irrigation systems in parts of Kherson Oblast.
- Irrigation infrastructure enabled the cultivation of crops like vegetables, fruits, corn, and soybeans in Kherson. The disruption of these systems drastically reduces viable crop options.
- There's a marked distinction in village size and agricultural specialization between irrigated areas of Kherson's left bank and the non-irrigated right bank. The former specialized in labor-intensive crops reliant on irrigation.
- The data indicates that, due to irrigation, Kherson could produce 4 times more vegetables per capita compared to the broader Ukrainian region. With the systems compromised, the region is now likely limited to cultivating grains and technical crops that don't necessitate irrigation.
- The incapacitation of irrigation might result in the abandonment of certain agricultural lands or their conversion for purposes like cattle grazing if irrigation remains non-functional.

In essence, the damages inflicted on the irrigation systems in occupied Kherson Oblast have stripped the region of its edge in high-value crop production. The rehabilitation of this infrastructure will be pivotal for the resurgence of the regional agricultural economy post-war."

Figure 3 – Follow-up question.

The ability to iterate and refine queries in real-time allows users to quickly explore myriad facets of a topic. For CR purposes, this iterative querying offers an unparalleled advantage. Traditional CR methodologies often involve linear and time-consuming processes, with limited scope for immediate in-depth exploration. The Digital Screenline system, in contrast, empowers users to instantaneously probe any area of interest, ensuring that vital information is neither missed nor delayed, a transformative advancement in the realm of civil reconnaissance.

The third query and its subsequent response further showcase the intrinsic capabilities of Digital Screenline and the underlying LLM (Figure 4). This follow-on query demands not just the retrieval of data from the radio broadcast segments but also the synthesis of that data with broader, contextually relevant knowledge.

In constructing this response, the LLM leveraged its RAG capabilities to pull relevant segments from the broadcast. However, the depth and specificity of the answer suggest that the system also tapped into its extensive training data. This is evident in the detailed economic figures and percentages provided, which likely come from a broader understanding of Ukraine's agricultural economy rather than the radio broadcast alone.

This ability to merge retrieved segments with broader knowledge is a distinguishing feature of the LLM. It is not merely regurgitating information; it is synthesizing data from the immediate context (i.e., the radio broadcast) with its broader knowledge base to generate informed, contextually rich responses to queries as in this example.

User: "Give your best estimates as to the economic impact to Ukraine's GDP and the approximate cost to implement necessary repairs,"

DS: "I will try to provide some rough estimates of the potential economic impact and repair costs based on the general information available:

- Kherson Oblast accounted for around 30-40% of Ukraine's total vegetable production, contributing over \$1 billion annually to GDP before the war. Losing a significant portion of this could lower Ukraine's overall GDP by at least 0.5%.
- Repairing irrigation systems likely requires rebuilding pumping stations, reservoirs, open canals, underground pipes, and drainage systems. Based on typical costs, this could require at least \$200-300 million to restore systems serving 100,000-200,000 hectares of farmland.
- Full restoration for the entire Oblast may cost \$500 million to \$1 billion or more. But this depends heavily on the exact damage assessed post-war.
- The loss of agricultural productivity will also have knock-on effects on regional economies and exports. A 10-20% drop in nationwide vegetable exports could occur, lowering export revenues by \$200-400 million per year.

In total, the damage to irrigation systems and related agricultural fallout may lower Ukraine's annual GDP by around \$2-3 billion for the next several years until full repairs can be made. Please keep in mind these are very rough estimates given limited public data. But hopefully this provides a sense of the general magnitude of the economic impacts based on my knowledge of the sector. I'm happy to discuss any of these points further."

Figure 4 – Detail query.

For reconnaissance purposes, this highlights a significant advantage of LLMs in data retrieval and analysis. Traditional tools would require separate, sequential queries to different datasets to achieve similar insights. The LLM, however, can concurrently process and integrate information from both the specific data source in question and its general training, offering a more holistic view. This efficiency is particularly valuable in dynamic situations where timely, comprehensive insights are crucial.

Challenges and Limitations

The Google Vertex AI platform, being highly scalable, mitigates the hardware limitations often associated with high-throughput operations. However, leveraging RAG on large data sets presents inherent challenges. As datasets grow, especially in domains with prolific data generation like open-source intelligence, LLMs are presented with a deluge of contextually relevant data. Given how state-of-the-art models currently have a ceiling of around 100k tokens for contextualization, it is conceivable that the context window could become saturated, limiting the depth and breadth of analysis.

To address these scalability issues, a layered, pipeline-based system can be designed. Initial stages might involve gross categorization and summarization of the data. For instance, understanding trends in agriculture over a multimonth period may necessitate daily summarizations which are then treated as primary data points for monthly or even yearly analysis. The system would need to incorporate robust embedding strategies, where these summaries are converted to vectors and tagged with metadata. This approach ensures that the system retains the flexibility to either drill down into granular data or scale up for a broader view.

Balancing simplicity and depth in the UI is another technical hurdle. Users need the capacity to specify their analytic focus, be it macroscopic trends or intricate data details. A sophisticated UI must transparently manage the depth of analysis, allowing users to seamlessly switch between detailed raw data or broad summarized insights, potentially leveraging visualization tools to aid comprehension. As AI models, especially LLMs, become more integral in data analysis and decision-making processes, their ethical deployment becomes paramount. Each model comes with its unique set of constraints, both in terms of safety measures and licensing restrictions. For instance, while Meta's Llama 2 LLM might have stringent licensing conditions,¹³ Google's PaLM 2 might deploy aggressive content filters.¹⁴ The practical implication of such constraints can range from reduced utility to potential legal ramifications, particularly when applied in sensitive sectors or geopolitical contexts.

The act of data collection, especially from platforms where there is a tacit or explicit expectation of privacy, presents its own ethical maze. While overt data collection (where the purpose and actor are transparent) is ideal, it is often impractical as it can bias the data or even hinder its collection.¹⁵ Conversely, covert or ambiguously labeled data collection methods, while effective, raise significant ethical and potentially legal challenges. In the context of warfare, these considerations adopt a unique significance, necessitating scrutiny and guidance from members of the Judge Advocate General Corps to ensure compliance with both ethical and legal standards.

The nature of open-source data means it is sourced from an array of contributors with varying degrees of reliability. While it is essential to capture the narrative being presented to the public—because public sentiment and actions often align more with perception than objective truth—distinguishing between genuine and false narratives is equally crucial. The challenge is magnified when considering state actors or entities with vested interests, as they might engage in information warfare or propaganda.

LLMs operate on the data they have been trained on. If this foundational data is biased, incorrect, or misleading, the LLM's outputs will reflect those same biases.¹⁶ Moreover, LLMs, despite their sophistication, can occasionally generate outputs (often termed "hallucinations") that are not strictly grounded in the input data.¹⁷ While techniques like RAG and prompt engineering can reduce such occurrences, they are not panaceas.¹⁸ To further ensure the accuracy and reliability of the model's output, post-processing layers of validation, possibly involving statistical methods or secondary data sources, could be crucial.¹⁹ This step not only serves as a quality control measure but also as a reassurance to end-users about the veracity of the insights.

System Capabilities and Potential Impact

The proposed digital system aims to bolster CA capabilities throughout the spectrum of CAO campaign planning and support activities. By integrating expansive data aggregation, advanced analytics, and adaptable delivery mechanisms, the system can potentially enhance campaign design, execution, assessment, and adaptation.

In the campaign construction phase, the platform might assimilate various data streams, including static sources like radio transcripts and dynamic inputs from social media. Advanced analytics could highlight intricate trends, narratives, and key influencers. This insight can guide campaign architects in designing sophisticated engagement sequences tailored for desired outcomes.

During implementation, real-time monitoring of the operational environment can allow for swift adaptation. Changes in public narratives and incoming media reactions could inform the modulation of messaging and outreach. Geo-spatial mapping of trending topics and influencer networks may help in targeted engagements. Additionally, predictive analytics could forecast potential developments, enabling anticipatory responses.

For assessment, the system can provide configurable metrics over extended durations. Continuous tracking of various elements may yield comprehensive longitudinal datasets. Statistical methods could identify predictive indicators, while interactive visualizations offer deeper insights. Comparative evaluations can measure the impact of different engagement strategies, aiding in refining campaign execution.

At the combatant command level, the merging of overarching insights with localized details promotes globally cohesive yet regionally specific strategies. Macro-level analytics can identify theater-wide trends and cross-border narrative flows, while micro-level insights ensure locale-specific engagements. For service components, hierarchical monitoring can facilitate coordination while supporting decentralized actions. Common operating pictures, especially across JIM lines, provide visibility into narratives and influencer landscapes, aiding synchronization. Local insights can shape strategies specific to regional conditions, aligning with the broader campaign.

The system's multi-tiered approach emphasizes its potential in supporting every command level. Tailored insights can enhance the efficacy of coordinated campaigns. The system remains adaptable, ensuring its relevance as contexts change. Beyond these core functions, features like digital tracking for resource optimization and the documentation of best practices can further refine campaign strategies.

Recommendations

Given the advancements in AI tools, it is now feasible for users of average technical capabilities to engage in system development. The Digital Screenline's potential in contemporary military operations calls for a meticulous, phased transition from a theoretical construct to a functional system. Establishing a cross-functional team that includes CA professionals, intelligence experts, and technically-adept military personnel is crucial. This team can play a central role in identifying user requirements, envisioning operational assimilation, and offering iterative feedback. Their insights will shape technical choices to ensure the system's practicality and doctrinal alignment.

Transitioning from a theoretical model to an operational system requires a methodical approach. Initial endeavors should focus on crafting a minimally viable system for preliminary field testing. The team's insights will be essential in ranking the primary capabilities. This gradual development ensures systematic feature delivery as early test phases provide feedback for needed adjustments.

After meticulous validation via field tests, the system can enter a more extensive deployment phase. This phase might involve reevaluating and upgrading the technical infrastructure to meet larger-scale demands. Readyng the CA community for this widespread launch necessitates in-depth training. This ensures that, as the system's functionalities expand, the users' expertise keeps pace. As the Digital Screenline's capacities grow, there is an immediate need to revise doctrine and instructional resources. The team can directly influence training schemes and utilization principles. This concurrent progression ensures that technology and doctrine mutually reinforce.

To embed a culture of ongoing enhancement, a user practice community should be established. This group can promote proactive engagement, with automated metrics offering insights into user behaviors, which, in turn, direct system enhancements. Routine capability upgrade cycles, guided by user input, will guarantee the system's adaptability to the evolving CA milieu.

Given the dynamic nature of AI, fostering internal technical proficiency in machine learning, data engineering, and cloud infrastructure is imperative. Developing the system in-house, possibly with support from entities like the Army Software Factory of the U.S. Army Futures Command, ensures its progression remains attuned to user needs and field realities. The value of the Digital Screenline also intensifies when integrated with other DoD systems. A cloud-native setup, inherently adaptable, lays the groundwork for such collaborations. Building ties within the joint services sector and with global partners can significantly amplify the system's influence.

Conclusion

The Digital Screenline, as conceptualized and prototyped, offers a promising avenue for the integration of advanced artificial intelligence within the realm of CA operations. It underscores the increasing importance of rapidly assimilating and acting upon broad datasets in military campaigns. Through the capabilities of LLMs and contemporary AI tools, the Digital Screenline seeks to redefine open-source reconnaissance by providing broader and more nuanced insights with reduced resource investments.

The operational implications of the Digital Screenline are substantial. The system equips CA teams with the tools to gain deeper insights into civilian sentiments and the complex dynamics of international relations in real-time. This real-time capability, combined with the system's inherent adaptability, ensures that it remains relevant and effective in varying operational landscapes. As Moriarty and Garcia note, "The 'Human Terrain' remains far too large a reconnaissance objective for any team or the whole of the Civil Affairs Corps to reconnoiter fully."²⁰ The Digital Screenline offers a solution to overcome this vastness through its ability to rapidly process extensive open-source data streams. By leveraging advanced AI, the system can analyze broad datasets spanning diverse geographies, languages, and platforms. This provides a comprehensive perspective that would be impossible for human teams alone to achieve.

Yet, the introduction of such a system is not without challenges. The ethical, legal, and technical considerations associated with the Digital Screenline demand careful attention. Ensuring the integrity and veracity of data, addressing privacy concerns, and navigating the ethical complexities

of AI-driven reconnaissance are paramount. An iterative approach, emphasizing stakeholder engagement, transparency, and adaptability, is essential for addressing these challenges.

The proposed roadmap, spanning from the system's initiation to its broader deployment, provides a structured framework for realizing the potential of the Digital Screenline. Collaboration between multidisciplinary teams, continuous feedback from end-users, and the expertise of technology developers will be integral to this process. Through their collective efforts, the system's development and deployment will be aligned with both current operational needs and future strategic objectives.

In sum, the Digital Screenline represents a significant advancement in campaign civil reconnaissance. As Civil Affairs continues its evolution in the digital age, the integration of such AI-driven capabilities becomes vital. The successful melding of technology with the expertise of CA personnel can set the stage for more informed, strategic, and effective operations in the future.

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A Civil Affairs Campaigning Framework

Major Nicholas Ashley, USA

*We will combine our strengths to achieve maximum effect in deterring acts of aggression—an approach we refer to as integrated deterrence...We will operate our military using a campaigning mindset—sequencing logically linked military activities to advance strategy-aligned priorities.*¹

Introduction

Beginning in the latter half of the Obama presidency and then greatly accelerating through the Trump and Biden Administrations, the focal point of United States foreign policy has been shifting from the Global War on Terror (GWOT) to strategic competition. Where non-state, violent extremist actors previously dominated U.S. national security discourse, concerns now center on assuring continued primacy (or at least relative advantage) over competitor states using all elements of national power in cooperation with allies and partners. Security discourse has coalesced around the euphemism ‘great power competition,’ fixating on the threat posed by the People’s Republic of China as an emerging regional power with global aspirations that threaten the rules-based international order and America’s position in the world. That we are drifting into Cold War version 2.0 is becoming an irresistible analogy,² and as over four decades of U.S.-Soviet rivalry demonstrated, success is unlikely to come quickly or from any singular, decisive event.

Therefore, the United States must prepare for a prolonged effort to secure its interests while managing risks, preventing conflict, and ensuring a stable environment conducive to global prosperity. The U.S. military must adapt to operate in this paradigm. The 2022 *National Security Strategy* (NSS) and *National Defense Strategy* (NDS) lay out two means for doing so: integrated deterrence and campaigning.

The Civil Affairs Corps is well suited to support both these approaches across the competition continuum. But this requires that CA professionals first organize their thinking to better organize their actions. To do so, this paper offers three lines of effort (LoEs) to guide CA forces during competition and support the objectives of ‘winning without fighting’ and, if necessary, prevailing in conflict. First, Civil Affairs forces must seek to understand the civil component of the operational environment (OE) to inform a combined, joint, common operational picture. Second, CA forces must seek to enhance allies’ and partners’ preparations and resiliencies³ in the civil domain for crisis and conflict. Lastly, CA forces must compete for influence and relative advantage within key human, physical, and information dimensions of conflict and competition.

Integrated Deterrence and Campaigning

The Biden Administration’s 2022 NSS frames the military’s primary responsibilities in the nation’s defense as “to defend the homeland, and deter attacks and aggression against the United States,

our allies and partners, while being prepared to fight and win the Nation’s wars should diplomacy and deterrence fail.”⁴ While this adds little new in terms of the U.S. military’s role, it segues neatly into a discussion of the means in the very next sentence: “[t]o do so, we will combine our strengths to achieve maximum effect in deterring acts of aggression—an approach we refer to as integrated deterrence... We will operate our military using a campaigning mindset.”⁵

The NSS describes integrated deterrence as “the seamless combination of capabilities to convince potential adversaries that the costs of their hostile activities outweigh their benefits.”⁶ The addition of the adjective *integrated* highlights the need to frame it more broadly⁷—as occurring simultaneously across domains (military and non-military), across the competition continuum, and across geographic regions while integrating all elements of national power in combination with allies and partners. To achieve these ends, the NSS prescribes *campaigning*.

The 2022 NDS defines campaigning as “the conduct and sequencing of logically linked military initiatives aimed at advancing well-defined, strategy aligned priorities over time.”⁸ Campaigning takes place across domains and the spectrum of conflict and improves the baseline understanding of the OE while shaping perceptions.⁹ This description evokes several important elements. First is linkage, or tying together actions to create and maintain desired conditions in the OE; second is endurance, where actions further the ability to operate over space and time; next is presence, operating forward and persistently in key terrain; and last is synchronization, where actions occur in concert with, and in support of, other elements of U.S. power, the joint force, and allies and partners. Integrated deterrence and campaigning anchor the military’s contribution to U.S. national security objectives. But what does this mean for Civil Affairs forces?

Though not explicitly mentioned, the civil domain permeates every aspect of integrated deterrence and campaigning (along with strategic competition more broadly), and Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) offer a multi-pronged tool for shaping the OE in ‘competition’ and beyond. Consequently, the Civil Affairs Corps is well positioned to provide value within this paradigm. The March 2022 Civil Affairs value proposition information paper offers a useful description of what CA forces offer the joint force across the conflict continuum.¹⁰ In furtherance of a focus on the competition phase, this paper offers the following contribution to a CA value proposition:

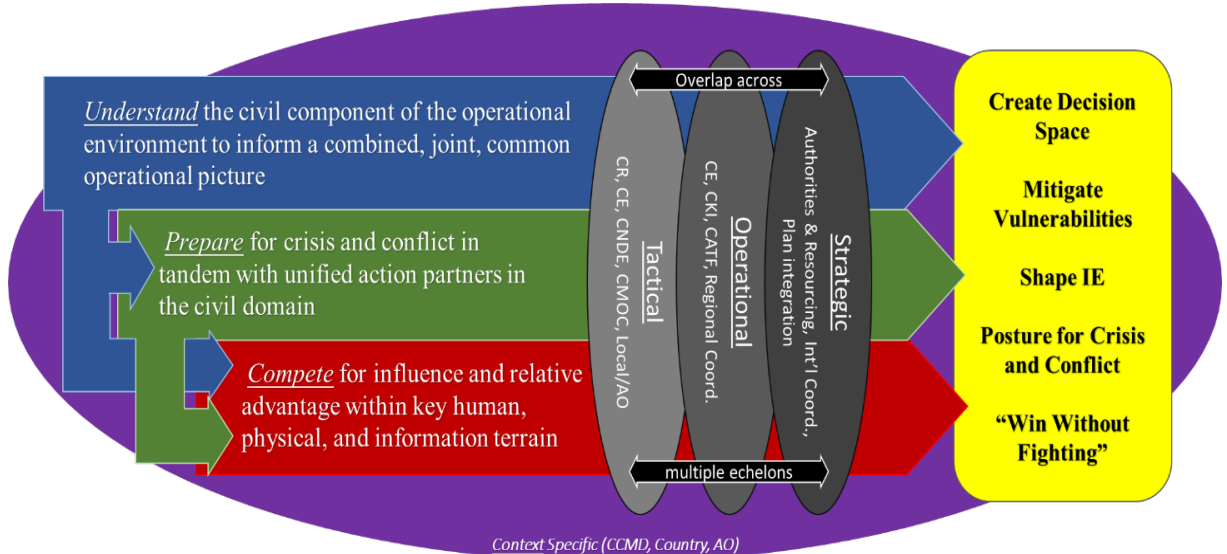
CA forces seek to understand and shape the OE to identify and mitigate conditions that threaten U.S. and partner interests; to facilitate access and presence in key human and geographic terrain; and to shape the information environment and support desired narratives.

So, how can CA forces live up to the aspiration to be a force for winning without fighting? Achieving this requires CA professionals to get themselves organized—to frame the problem-set and then develop activities to create desired conditions in the civil domain. Only then can the CA Corps maximize its value proposition to the joint force.

A Civil Affairs Campaigning Framework

The campaigning framework depicted below is not a prescriptive roadmap; instead, it is a conceptual approach that acknowledges the need for nuance, can be adapted to different environments, and can be implemented across echelons. This framework provides three broad LoEs for planning, sequencing, and executing CAO to create positions of relative advantage in the human, physical, and information dimensions of competition, crisis, and conflict.

A Civil Affairs Campaigning Framework



1. Understand the civil component of the operational environment to inform a combined, joint, common operational picture.
2. Prepare for crisis and conflict in tandem with unified action partners in the civil domain.
3. Compete for influence and relative advantage within key human, physical, and information terrain.

Understand

Only once we begin to comprehend the civil domain can we begin to shape it. Consequently, the foundational LoE, and the one upon which the others build, is the need to understand the civil component of the operational environment. The process of building this understanding helps to inform a combined, joint common operational picture while providing commanders with decision space and the ability to anticipate, shape, and react to challenges and opportunities within the OE. CA forces provide a continuous flow of information that helps to inform planning, operational activities, and assessments.¹¹

CA forces are not alone in this endeavor. Even at the lowest echelons, data from a multitude of information and intelligence sources can overwhelm the capacity of commanders to sort out what is valuable, but Civil Affairs professionals play a key role by helping to cut through the noise and supplying valuable context that can better inform understanding and decision-making. A deeper grasp of civil vulnerabilities, resiliencies, and points of leverage is only possible through the unique access to the civil milieu that CA forces can provide. At echelon, this civil knowledge informs planning efforts and the allocation of resources while helping to provide early warning and indication of emerging crises.

Tactical CA forces leverage their unique access and presence when conducting CAO and security cooperation activities to build a ‘ground-truth’ understanding of the area of operations, to serve as a link to civil networks and information sources, and to inform targeted CAO. At the operational level, CA planners serve as the connective tissue between higher-level headquarters and the tactical elements by integrating civil information into plans and operations and by providing reach-back and over-the-horizon support to those forces on the ground.

Additionally, they work toward the coordination, synchronization, and deconfliction of activities with adjacent stakeholders, partners, and civil actors. Similarly at the theater and strategic levels, civil knowledge informs planning and serves as the basis for integrating external resources and capabilities from the joint force, the interagency, and regional and international actors. At the strategic and operational levels, civil-military coordination mechanisms that enable information sharing are particularly important to unity of effort in competition.

Prepare

By understanding the OE, CA forces further contribute to integrated deterrence by cooperating with allies and partners to prepare for crisis and conflict. CA forces can execute these activities unilaterally but ideally seek to do so in conjunction with other elements of the joint force, partner nation government institutions, and elements of civil society.¹² By taking a ‘by, with, and through’ approach to prepare, and assisting in the preparation of the civil domain for crises—both natural and man-made—CA forces increase combined readiness and interoperability with allies and partners. This effort calls for leveraging civil actors to identify and reinforce resiliencies while illuminating and mitigating vulnerabilities. These efforts operationalize the concept of ‘total defense,’ enabling a whole of society approach to security.

At the tactical level, CAO builds upon the *understand* LoE and leverages targeted projects, programs, and civil engagement, while local government leaders, emergency response networks, and civil society actors provide a means to prepare the civil domain at the individual and community levels to respond to, and more easily bounce back from, disasters, crises, and conflicts.¹³ Central to this is the development of dual-use civil networks during the “competition” phase to create redundancy in terms of essential services and the capability to provide continuity

of governance in times of conflict and crisis, freeing up partner military and governmental resources to deal with other threats (such as an external military invasion).¹⁴

CAO, at the operational level, connects preparations at the tactical level to regional and national level actors, organizations, plans, and rehearsals. This links together efforts that logically build upon one another toward enhancing the partner's capability and capacity to respond to crisis and, by extension, conflict. CA planners also facilitate reach back and build civil-military networks by creating links between the on-the-ground, first line of response and regional and national level counterparts and stakeholders.

Similarly, at theater and strategic levels CA planners integrate higher-level capabilities (e.g., U.S. interagency, Association of Southeastern Asian Nations, or European Union disaster response) into planning, contingencies, and operations. They also advise in the development of plans for responding to crises and developing CAO strategies nested with theater campaign plans and campaign support plans to mitigate civil vulnerabilities prior to crisis onset.

Compete

Civil Affairs forces simultaneously *compete* for influence and positional advantage in key terrain, whether human, physical, or in the information space. Again, persistent presence and access play a crucial role by enabling targeted CAO designed to achieve effects in the information environment, such as through projects, programs, and engagements that reinforce desired narratives and counter adversary mis- and dis-information. Similarly, access to key physical terrain denies adversaries access and footholds extending U.S., allied, and partner influence and improving the joint force's posture in support of integrated deterrence and readiness for crisis. These efforts are mutually reinforcing and enable CA elements to extend influence in the information space in addition to the physical environment.¹⁵

CAO helps gain and sustain tactical advantage by reinforcing the joint force's desired narrative, supporting posture initiatives, and enabling access and presence in key terrain by tapping into civil networks and counterparts from the interagency and partner nation. CA forces function as strategic scouts as well as strategic enablers, gathering atmospheric and indicators from the civil domain in their critical ancillary role as an information related capability while providing valuable insight into key physical nodes that the joint force can utilize when responding in times of crisis.

At the operational and theater strategic levels, CA planners provide directive guidance for the execution of CAO supporting posture initiatives, information advantage, and crisis response. Nesting these efforts at echelon and across regions is critical, and CA forces work in conjunction with CA staff planners at operational and theater level headquarters to not only ensure unity of effort vertically across echelons but also to use relationships with unified action partners to achieve horizontal synchronization and mutually beneficial effects.

Recommendations

Operationalizing this framework calls for changes across multiple areas of the DOTMLPF-P* spectrum. The March 2022 CA value proposition information paper offers worthwhile suggestions in terms of training more closely with conventional Army forces (more on this below) and resourcing combatant commands with adequate quantities of CA forces for competition and in support of contingency plan requirements.¹⁶ However, more change is required beyond these areas to carry out the campaigning framework described above. While the recommendations below are not exhaustive, they provide a starting point for further discussions toward maximizing the utility of CA forces in strategic competition.

Doctrine

CA forces must have the necessary knowledge to enable governance; consequently, doctrine must more fully address this shortfall. Understanding systems and processes that go into governing will better enable CA forces to identify vulnerabilities that create risks to mission and risks to force. Per FM 3-57, transitional governance helps “focus the other core competencies...”¹⁷ Yet, there remains a significant gap between what doctrine purports CA forces can do and the training, education, and ‘know-how’ required to actually advise partner civil stakeholders on governance, defined in Joint Publication 3-24 as “the state’s ability to serve the citizens through the rules, processes, and behavior by which interests are articulated, resources are managed, and power is exercised in a society.”¹⁸ While the Civil Affairs Qualification Course (CAQC) has evolved along with CA doctrine to better address this area, the cursory treatment FM 3-57 gives to this subject is wholly insufficient to equip CA professionals with the intellectual tools they need for competition, crisis, and conflict.¹⁹ This “Say-Do gap” is the first critical shortfall to address.

Organization

These doctrinal changes should drive organizational changes. First is the need to formalize cross-functional formations purposefully built and employed to leverage capabilities across warfighting functions. This calls for recruiting qualified non-38 series volunteers to be a part of CA teams to fill gaps in functional expertise. Engineers, all-source intelligence analysts, and communications personnel are just a sample of potential capabilities that would increase the efficacy of tactical level CA forces, as these areas of expertise would be beneficial to developing civil capabilities in disaster response and beyond. The Security Force Assistance Brigades offer a useful model for building more well-rounded CA teams, where non-38 series personnel would rotate back to the regular Army after completing their assignments (while serving as ambassadors for the CA brand).

Second, reductions in active-duty conventional CA forces over the last decade and the loss of CA billets in conventional organizations increase the risk of active-duty CA forces developing a

* DOTMLPF-P: Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy

myopic, SOF-centric focus while inhibiting support to the broader joint force. Reserve component CA forces can fill some of this gap, but this situation will only worsen with additional reductions to CA billets within the conventional Army. While this partly turns on a question of force employment, Army CA forces should try to mitigate this gap through deliberate assignments to those remaining conventional billets by placing into these positions the right people with the right knowledge and capabilities. Increased multicomponent teaming as well as the greater employment of Army 38G functional specialists in the steady state, as reported at the CA Conference, will no doubt go far to mitigate this gap problem.

Training

Training must support normalization of these changes. CA forces must increase integration with conventional maneuver and maneuver support forces during major training events: combat training center (CTC) rotations, emphasizing those with partner forces participation; Warfighter exercises and major command post exercises; and multi-national exercises with the joint force and partner nations, especially those occurring in theater. The benefit is twofold: the joint force and partners gain exposure to CA capabilities, and CA professionals gain experience working with conventional forces while training for large scale combat operations. Both help to show the throughline between building civil capacity in peacetime and civil resiliency during crisis and conflict.

Secondly, and related to the above point, training must incorporate *applied* governance—specifically, beyond the superficial level seen far too often in training and exercises—especially when other elements of the joint force and partner nations are involved. The active-duty CA force has made significant improvements in this area in recent years; however, this only highlights remaining shortfalls in scenario design outside of training specifically designed for Civil Affairs units. These shortfalls skew the joint force’s understanding of the civil domain’s impacts to military operations. When the simulated civil component is so underdeveloped that commanders can ignore it and see little to no impact on their operations, the wrong lessons get internalized.²⁰

Leadership and Education

These changes require professional military education opportunities beyond CAQC. As discussed above, CAQC has adapted with recent revisions to FM 3-57, to include more focus on transitional governance in the curriculum. However, advanced continuing education remains an institutional gap. While specialists in government functions reside within the reserve component, the active force lacks adequate competence in governance. Long-term success in competition, along with the ability to consolidate gains during conflict, requires knowledge beyond the basic introduction gained during CAQC (though short of the technical experience of a functional expert).²¹ The Special Warfare Center and School must partner with stakeholders from the interagency (USAID, State CSO) along with experts from relevant academic fields and research centers to develop advanced governance studies curricula to produce expertise within the active-duty CA community.

Further, more active-duty CA officers and NCOs must rotate between SOF and conventional assignments, especially at echelons above brigade. The Army must incentive this ‘out-and-back’ approach at each career step. Though they need not go between conventional and SOF assignments without exception, enough personnel need to take this path to prevent the development of SOF bubbles that lead to groupthink and misplaced ideas about CA force employment.²²

Personnel

Maximizing the impact of the changes highlighted above requires adequate human capital with the requisite knowledge to execute the more technical governance missions needed from CA forces. While the changes to PME discussed above will enable Civil Affairs generalists to become more capable of executing this campaigning framework, specialized knowledge in the technical aspects of governance remains essential. This necessitates the recruitment of individuals with highly specific knowledge, expertise, and talents—individuals whose capacities and capabilities the 38G program was designed to pull in.²³

Policy

Outcomes from U.S. and allied military efforts to support development programs during the GWOT should give pause to anyone looking to insert CA forces more directly into this space. State and USAID have the mandate and expertise to own this role, but a capacity gap remains in terms of what interagency partners could do if properly resourced. CA forces have access and local knowledge that can be leveraged when it comes to identifying requirements and aiding in implementation with the interagency. This stresses the need for closer coordination between Civil Affairs forces and partners such as USAID and the State Department.

The 2018 Stabilization Assistance Review moved the ball forward on inter-departmental coordination (at least toward a common frame of reference and understanding of roles and responsibilities), but the CA Corps should build on this effort by more closely collaborating in practice at all levels. Though some coordination mechanisms already exist to some degree, truly close cooperation will only come by going beyond deconfliction toward developing plans and activities that nest across the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

Force employment and force structure

The ways CA forces are used to execute CAO is central to executing the framework described above, but institutional and operational roadblocks to greater integration—between active duty and reserve component Civil Affairs forces on the one hand and then with the joint force on the other—risk full implementation of this campaigning framework. Formalizing a multi-component deployment model is a step in the right direction, as multiple discussions during workshops at the 2023 Civil Affairs Conference illuminated.²⁴ On one end of the spectrum, this could take the form of better integration of CAO into combatant command campaign planning efforts, while at the

other end, this could call for pulling all CA forces into a multi-compo U.S. Army Civil Affairs Command outside of U.S. Special Operations Command. Arguably, achieving true multi-component integration calls for formalized, permanent formations of active duty and reserve component CA forces, but this is likely a bridge too far. Therefore, efforts should focus on the former course of action.

Conclusion

The Civil Affairs Corps needs to organize its thinking to organize its actions. The campaigning framework outlined above provides *a way* for CA professionals to ensure CAO effectively supports joint force requirements. *Understanding* the civil component of the operational environment; *preparing* for crisis and conflict; and *competing* for influence and relative advantage in the human, physical, and information dimensions is central to the value proposition CA forces provide in strategic competition and beyond. A campaigning approach based on the three lines of effort outlined above contributes to integrated deterrence—and stability—while improving the joint force’s position in key human and geographic terrain and setting conditions for the transition to crisis and conflict should deterrence fail.

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Endnotes

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https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-01/ER4_Framework-10.13.2022.pdf.

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¹⁴ *FM 3-57*, 3-20.

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An Ocean Between Us: Civil Affairs from Shore to Shore

by Major J.M. Holmes, USMC

“To encounter at sea such constant storms and havoc and peril of death, and find on land no less constant hostility, deception, and refusal to lend a helping hand! Where is frail man to turn for succor?” – Luis Vaz de Comões, *The Lusiads*, Canto I

Introduction

The world has changed. And yet, it also seems to have reverted to an earlier state. Once again, the world's great nations seem destined for conflict as they seek to compete across the expanses of the sea. After a generation of neglect, the maritime domain is set to be the site of major competition and conflict between the United States (U.S.) and its adversaries. And while another Salamis, Trafalgar, or Midway is unlikely, the effect on the human domain will be profound. Civil affairs (CA) forces have a major role to play when it comes to ensuring access and setting the theater. As a recent Irregular Warfare Initiative article noted: “As populations move towards the littorals, the expertise of civil affairs practitioners is essential in understanding potential vulnerabilities, relevant area studies, and how both may impact maritime operations.”¹ No naval campaign could possibly be complete without an in-depth consideration of civil-military operations (CMO) and the employment of CA forces across the competition continuum.

Look to the Sea

The oceans, the seas, the lakes, and the rivers have always invoked human imagination, fear, respect, bravado, and ingenuity. The water is defined by the land it separates, from riverbanks to opposing shores flanking the oceans. Some 40% of the world's population lives in the littoral zone, that is, within 100km of the coasts.² Population density in the littorals is over twice the world average and is only increasing. However, population estimates in littoral areas are inexact due to the high concentration of informal and transient settlers hoping to find economic opportunities unavailable further inland.

While air travel has replaced days- or weeks-long voyages by sea for passengers, over 80%³ of trade moves by sea. The major straits and canals see billions in trade passing through them annually. The Straits of Malacca see some 25% of the world's trade,⁴ and the Panama Canal serves almost \$300 billion⁵ in shipping each year. The Suez Canal is even more important, with an estimated \$1 trillion⁶ in trade passing through it annually. When the grounded *Ever Given* blocked it in 2021, an estimated \$60 billion⁷ in trade was lost in just a week. Merchant shipping then had to revert to rounding the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa along the same route that Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Diaz mapped in 1488. This is being repeated with the Houthi attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea area, clearly demonstrating the impact of irregular threats from civil areas on land to critical sea lines of communication.

In addition to the trade shipped along their surface, the seas and oceans of the world offer an abundance of natural resources at the basis of national economies and international competition.

The global fishing industry, valued at over \$400 billion in 2022,⁸ is projected to expand at pre-COVID-19 pandemic rates. Meanwhile, some 30% of all oil and natural gas production is conducted by offshore oil rigs.⁹ As onshore reserves are depleted, the hunt for more reserves beneath the waves can only intensify. While costly and dangerous to pursue, the oceans also maintain large deposits of rare earth minerals that may become major assets once the technology to extract them catches up.

The oceans, the seas, the lakes, and the rivers that separate and crisscross the land have always been central to human society, development, trade, warfare, and competition. These major bodies of water represent perhaps the largest global common and serve to determine the rise or fall of any nation that seeks to take advantage of its access or deny it to others. The oceans are potent drivers of the global order, but they are inanimate, unfeeling, and agenda-less. Far more impactful are the people who turn to the oceans for their livelihoods and the livelihoods of their nations. While older civilizations may have prayed to the sea gods for favorable outcomes, CA forces must understand that the people who live and work in the littorals are the key to controlling them.

The Human Dimension in Naval Campaigning

While they wouldn't recognize today's terminology and operational phasing, the Persian fleets at Marathon and Salamis were part of a larger naval campaign waged along the coasts of the Eastern Mediterranean for access and control of land and sea. Both the Persians and their Greek opponents understood the value of the human dimension in campaigning. Greek and Persian narratives fought just as violently as the armies, as agents on both sides attempted to curry favor and influence. Tales of Persian atrocities, desires for subjugation, and even monsters and magicians in their ranks flooded Greek city-states, buoyed by Greek diplomats and poets alike. Such tales certainly made it difficult for Greek leaders who were less interested in fighting to convince their subjects to side with Eastern invaders. On the opposite side, Persian agents attempted to flatter, bribe, threaten, and cajole representatives from important Greek regions to gain support or at least ease their passage. Their efforts to drive wedges between bellicose city-states certainly have parallels in the modern era. Any reading of the historical sources for the Greco-Persian wars is a study of propaganda and the exploitation of the human dimension of the operational environment (OE).

Modern naval theory, at least in the West, is dominated by the work of two main theorists: American naval officer Alfred Thayer Mahan and British reporter and historian Julian Corbett. Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783* examined the role of sea power in the rise and fall of great powers. It argues that supremacy at sea is crucial for the growth and survival of any power seeking influence beyond its borders.¹⁰ His central belief that the main purpose of a navy is to seek out and destroy opposing navies is echoed in the arithmetic “salvo tables” in *Fleet Tactics and Naval Operations*, the U.S. Navy’s central document. Similar influence can be seen in the Navy’s desire to trade amphibious shipping for guided missile destroyers, which, in turn, is at least partially in response to the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) and their own frenetic building spree of missile-equipped cruisers and destroyers.¹¹

In the minds of Mahanists, where the engagement happens is largely irrelevant. No "key terrain" on the high seas can be dominated or controlled to turn the tide of battle. The third edition of *Fleet Tactics and Naval Operations* opens with the admonishment that victory at sea comes down to the adage "Fire effectively first."¹² Naval campaigning refers largely to the movement of carrier strike groups, submarine forces, and surface action groups to ensure they are well-positioned to attack effectively before their opponents when the shooting inevitably starts. We can see the influence of Mahan in the current U.S. Navy's limited interest in integrating CA into campaigning.

Julian Corbett, Mahan's chief competitor, may have the timelier argument. His theories, as posited in *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, feel more current than Mahan's. For Corbett, the purpose of a navy is to influence the land, and vice-versa. Rather than sweeping the opposing fleet from the sea, controlling straits, approaches, and bases renders opposing fleets irrelevant. To Corbett, a fleet should not focus strictly on striking power (albeit important) but instead have a variety of types of ships to fulfill several different missions.¹³ Corbett also puts much higher value on naval infantry and Marine forces to gain positional advantageous and control key terrain, which influences seaward action. Here we can see the elements of an integrated naval campaign where CA forces play a role in supporting fleet actions by setting conditions and ensuring access to key terrain on the land. The influence ashore affects the ability to influence the sea, and vice versa.

A quick survey of U.S. adversaries shows a lot of credence has been given to Corbett's arguments. While the PLAN certainly maintains an aggressive fleet of frigates, cruisers, and destroyers equipped with cruise missiles intended to attack other fleets, its primary strategy seems more based on influence and control than direct action. The PLA maritime militia, coast guard, and "fishing fleet" are clearly not assets to seek battle with U.S. or allied warships. Instead, they are clearly intended to influence, interdict, and control access to important areas.¹⁴ The so-called fishing fleet is clearly designed to antagonize U.S. and allied ships while masquerading as massive civilian fishing fleets in the western Pacific. Even in the event of a true, high-end conflict, the U.S. and its allies would face a quandary when targeting fishing boats that are clearly spying on them as the ready-made information operation of U.S. warships targeting "civilian" vessels will damage the U.S.'s international relationship and influence the human dimension, which, in turn, affects access.

Looking beyond the PLA/PLAN, Iran's fleet of fast attack craft/fast inshore attack craft (FAC/FIAC) is unquestionably a Corbettian force. Even Iran's "larger" combatants and frigates are not intended for actions against organized battlefleets. Instead, they are intended to harass, harry, and distract the main warships while other assets target vulnerable merchant shipping and other traffic.¹⁵ Arguably, Iran's greatest asset is its network of irregular forces like Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Houthis through the Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds or Jerusalem force. These offset Iran's comparative military weakness by supporting irregular warfare against the much more powerful U.S. and its regional allies. Mahan's battlefleet has little to offer in response to an adversary that bribes, supplies, and empowers coastal raiders, terrorists, and pirates holding both warships and merchant ships at risk. The U.S. got an early taste of the danger such elements pose

to even the most modern warships when the *USS Cole* was attacked by an al-Qaeda suicide vessel while refueling in Yemen in 2000.

The Russian Federation is another adherent to Corbett's theories. The two brutal Chechen wars in the mid- to late-1990s proved to Russia's military that it could not count on brute force to influence its former satellites as the Soviet Union had in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and elsewhere. Instead, they had to rely on long-term activities in the information environment to ensure access to areas they needed to control.¹⁶ Russia's Sevastopol navy base in Crimea has represented its only warm water port for centuries, a major calculus in its hybrid and overt warfare against Ukraine.

For the most part, Russian forces sought to expand their influence through irregular or hybrid warfare capabilities. The serendipitous conflict in Syria in the wake of the Arab Spring offered Russia's irregular forces an opportunity to expand their influence over a former ally and for the Russian Navy to establish a base on the Mediterranean at Tarsus.¹⁷ Similar activities below the level of international conflict have allowed Russian influence to grow around the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. It is not an accident that most "breakaway states" are around the Black Sea.

In the oft quoted but rarely understood *Art of War*, the (potentially fictional) Sun Tzu remarks that "The supreme excellence is to subdue the enemy without fighting." While there is a need for the U.S. to maintain forces capable of high-end conflict, their value is not necessarily in the attritionist "one for one" ratio but rather in their effect on the human dimension. The movements and posturing of fleets and naval task forces shouldn't be an end in themselves, but rather coordinated with CA and other information forces as part of an integrated campaign that reduces the need for direct conflict or eliminates it all together. By harnessing the human dimension, U.S. and allied navies can seek to defeat the opposing battlefleets without fighting. The striking power of a fleet may not matter if it is not able to reach the battle zone because it can't pass through straits or access ports for resupply or refueling. Even at the height of naval combat, where fleets trade salvo for salvo, a dedicated cadre of CA forces ensuring access to ports and safe havens will make the difference.

Civil Affairs in the Maritime Domain

"There aren't a lot of people on the ocean." This glib quote sums up the U.S. Navy's attitude toward the human/cognitive dimension of the sea domain that civil affairs forces represent. When it comes to the alignment of forces, there is a valid argument to be made that, in the vastness of the oceans, people are in short supply. However, this massively devalues the influence of the people who live along the coast, in ports and navy bases, and who make their living on the ocean every single day. It would be a far simpler (albeit more violent) world if we could rely on the only actions affecting control of the seas and littorals to be conflict between battlefleets. This is simply not the world we live in. To be equally glib, there are almost no people in the sky, and yet the U.S. Air Force has accepted the importance of the human/cognitive dimension of the air domain by creating its 14F occupational field, if only because of the impact it has on the basing of air forces and the security of those bases. (This field does not include civil affairs but does include related disciplines of psychological operations, operations security, and military deception.¹⁸)

In 2009, while faced with two primarily land-based conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. Navy established the Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command (MCAST) aboard Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, the spiritual home of the Navy's expeditionary forces. This new command combined the Maritime CA Group (MCAG) and the Expeditionary Training Command, established a few years earlier.¹⁹ This organization provided maritime civil affairs teams (MCATs) to both Navy formations and land-based formations with expertise in the maritime environment, from economic exclusion zones to fisheries, to port and harbor operations, to maintenance and construction. Uniquely, the MCATs generally contained a credentialed coxswain who could serve as a harbor master, if needed, and a religious programs specialist who could engage with local religious leaders and support the religious needs of a given coastal population. Allegedly due to cost-competitive requirements, the Navy disbanded MCAST in 2014.

The Navy does maintain information warfare (IW) as a core competency. In fact, in its capstone Component Warfare Construct (CWC), the Navy maintains an Information Warfighting Commander (IWC).²⁰ Perhaps in keeping with the Navy's focus on technical competency, Navy IW includes electronic warfare, cyberspace operations, space operations, intelligence, meteorology and oceanography (METOC), and command and control (C2).²¹ This construct, however, does *not* include any capabilities that focus on influencing the human dimension.

The Marine Corps did, on the other hand, recognize information as a warfighting function in 2017 and establish the 1707/1751/1795 Influence officer/specialist/chief military occupational specialties for officer and enlisted Marines who specialize in the human/cognitive dimension in 2022.²² However, these are in relatively short supply, and assignments to Navy formations are few and far between. All NAVFORs, numbered fleets, and many subordinate formations maintain military information support operations (MISO) planners or "information operations" (IO) planners which, in Navy parlance, means those focused on the human cognitive dimension of the OE. However, these personnel are on temporary duty outside of their normal responsibilities (usually cyber or cryptology) and, in the history of the existing positions, two have ever been trained. For the most part, the Navy has relied on the Army for its CA capability.

As noted in the Interim 2023 *Civil Affairs Conference Report*, in the U.S. India-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) region, the Navy has relied almost exclusively on U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) CA teams on ships and at naval stations to help naval commanders understand and operate in the human dimension. At INDOPACOM, the Fleet Information Warfare Center-Pacific (FIWC-PAC) is the primary coordinating authority for MISO, CA, and various other such capabilities.²³ Until the arrival of 351st Civil Affairs Command (CACOM) CA teams over the past year, the FIWC has seen as few as one Sailor who attended the psychological operations qualification course (POQC). Unfortunately, however, these non-programmed CA teams can remain on station for only a few weeks at a time, replaced by others likewise subject to competing Army demands and constrained by authorities and budgets governing reserve deployments. Both Fleet Marine Forces Pacific (FMFPAC) and Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC) coordinate with FIWC-PAC, which is more or less a courtesy as the FIWC lacks the expertise to provide support.

In the Central Command (CENTCOM) region, where there has been more or less continuous engagement since 1991 (and counter-Iran operations since 1979), at the Naval Forces-Central (NAVCENT) Naval Integrated Fires Element (NIFE), USAR CA teams have maintained a presence with Combined Task Force-51/Fifth Marine Expeditionary Brigade (51/5), which is the coordinating authority and higher headquarters for every amphibious ready group/Marine expeditionary unit (ARG/MEU) that transits through the Fifth Fleet area of operations (AO), as well as ongoing operations such as *Operation Spartan Shield* (OSS), and specified operations such as *Operation Odyssey Lightning* (OOL) in Libya and *Operations Allies Rescue/Welcome* (OAR/OAW) in support of Afghanistan noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO). This formation, despite its demonstrated value, remains unique.

SOC PAC maintains limited CA capabilities, as do most, if not all, component commands. The 95th CA Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) rotates active component CA teams into the region, with increasing use of multicomponent (active-reserve) CA team deployments that are promising. For the most part, though, the "Joint CA Community" still refers almost exclusively to the Army special operations CA forces that operate across all AOs. Marine CA forces are generally uninvolved and, in many cases, unknown, given how small they have been and how much smaller they are becoming in recent years. In common understanding, Marine Forces represent the bridge between the Navy and the Army (and the Air Force). In reality, this linkage does not exist.

Navigating the Stormy Seas

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2022²⁴ reflected an issue that was well known within the Joint Force, especially among those operating in the human/cognitive dimension of conflict and war: the Department of Defense (DoD) is not organized, manned, equipped, or trained to conduct irregular warfare. Accordingly, the DoD was granted funds specifically for irregular warfare, with the expectation that they would determine what this means in the near/immediate future. But what does irregular warfare look like?

There is a long, international history of conflating irregular warfare with unconventional warfare, it's equally ill-defined sub-task. U.S. Title 10, the NDAA, and similar documents often display their authors' limited understanding by allocating all irregular warfare and irregular warfare-like tasks to U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). This is a mistake. While it's true that SOCOM counterterrorism operations are part of irregular warfare, so too are the long-term counterinsurgency operations that conventional Army and Marine forces (and Navy and Air Force) conducted over the last 20 years. Irregular warfare is not exclusively a knife in the dark. Very often, it's a conversation in a stifling office or a handshake agreement during a union meeting.

Make no mistake: civil affairs operations (CAO) are a form of irregular warfare.

There is much discussion of competition "below the level of armed conflict" in the "gray zone." Somewhat ironically, much of this competition occurs at sea or in the littorals. Somehow, recognition of the need for civil engagement within the littorals never seems to quite make it into

these discussions. While it's true that many people do not live on the ocean, hundreds of millions, if not billions, depend on the oceans. Rather than limiting our understanding of engagement in the littorals to humanitarian assistance, our CA forces need to recognize their role in ensuring access and freedom of navigation.

While a Navy destroyer undertaking a patrol through a contested area is one form of freedom of navigation, that same destroyer's ability to port where it pleases or avoid drone or missile fire from unfriendly forces onshore is also a key part of freedom of navigation. Once upon a time, such access came under threat of attack from the U.S. Navy or its allies. Nowadays, this access is entirely dependent on agreements, contracts, and deals. All these are elements of the gray zone and depend on human-to-human engagements.

The U.S. Navy is perhaps the greatest and most powerful navy ever put to sea. However, by envisioning its area of responsibility as strictly beyond the coasts, it is perilously limiting itself. Instead, the Navy and Joint Force must adopt a "shore to shore" approach that ensures access to actual key maritime terrain. The shore influences the ocean and vice-versa. Limiting naval understanding to only one domain is dangerous. Naval campaigning does not begin when jets sortie from aircraft carriers or missiles launch from destroyers. Nor does it end when the jets return to flight decks or ships to port. The ports, straits, canals, and littorals that shape and intersect the maritime environment are just as, if not more, important than the oceans themselves, and campaigning must be seen as a constant competition for influence over this terrain and the people who live and make their living there.

How Do We Get There?

There's an obvious gap in the campaigning of CA forces. In the minds of most commanders, as hammered into them by the Global War on Terror, CA forces do one of two things: conduct humanitarian assistance following a disaster or follow in the wake of kinetic operations as the "apology force." This outdated model will not serve us in the present, let alone the future. CA forces need to be trained and employed across the continuum from the beginning of Phase 0 to help shape and set the theater through major combat operations.

Phase 0 is not a start point in the future. It is right now. Setting the theater in the human domain now is critical for ensuring freedom maneuver and operations in future operations and ensures that the relationship between the operating forces and the civil population, while strained, does not break. CAO do not stop during combat and maintaining these relationships can spell the difference between a campaign's success or failure. It is deeply naïve to assume that major combat operations will lead to disregarding civilians or the human domain.

Current CA doctrine lacks in-depth discussion of operations in the littorals and in the maritime domain. Like most doctrine, a direct line can be drawn through CA doctrine to the experience of the Global War on Terror. While some of those lessons are immutable and constant, doctrine has yet to catch up to current operations and requirements. Understanding how to operate in the

littorals, or perhaps more critically, as part of a naval task force, are major doctrinal gaps. Lest we forget the importance of integration, CA forces may be the best trained and most capable element in each environment; but if they cannot function as part of the whole, they are destined to be sidelined. CA doctrine must be updated to include maritime considerations and, therefore, must be cross referenced with current naval doctrine. For the naval services, which proudly tout the Navy/Marine Corps team, this is an obvious, yet often ignored, area of collaboration.

CA forces suffer from the fact that most of them are based in the continental U.S. and can only mobilize or deploy for a limited time. As a force that pulls heavily on the reserve component of both services, these limitations are further exacerbated. CA operations depend on relationships and are based on trust between the civil populace and the military force. The fact of the matter is that our forces are generally not in theater long enough to develop trust between themselves and the populations with which they are engaging. Whether ninety days, four months, seven months, nine months, even a year, none of these are long enough periods to develop relationships that last.

In a conflict where we are best served by long-term investments and, potentially, changes in international agreements, showing up for a few months at a time is not going to cut it. Our adversaries find their way into the gaps between coverage and highlight the inconsistencies between units and individuals in each AO. If we fail to cover an area, we lose all the progress we have made. With millions, if not billions, of people living or depending on the maritime domain, our CA forces must be prepared to spend most of their time forward deployed, or, in a novel change, aboard ship. By the time ships are reaching foreign ports, CA personnel should have already made the agreements and relationships needed to ensure access. As naval task forces change operational control from Fleet AO to Fleet AO, they should be able to make an easy handover between the CA forces who are already present.

At this point, it is almost hackneyed to say that the U.S. and its allies need to do a better job at regional and cultural familiarity. In defense of the U.S., its adversaries are not particularly culturally adept either. What they are good at is paying people who are. It's probably unrealistic to say that every person who deploys to a country needs to be a 3+/3+ on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) and deeply understand the cultural and local history. However, a greater focus needs to be paid to this aspect, or at the very least, people who already have it need to be leveraged. There is an old joke that if a person reads one book on a region or country, he or she is the de facto expert as no one else will do so. Moving forward, this cannot be acceptable.

Many of the issues identified above exist within the CA community as well. Additionally, CA personnel have unique blind spots and shortfalls that need to be addressed. CA personnel can no longer afford to see themselves as an element apart from a given operation. Instead, CA forces need to consider themselves part of the joint, combined arms concept, or the component warfare construct, depending on their operating environment. CA personnel need to be trained and exposed to targeting and intelligence processes to understand how they fit into the overall mission construct. CA training, and the operations that CA forces ultimately support, need to be coordinated with

other operational elements. This includes naval task forces. CA forces need to be able to understand the maritime environment and articulate their capability in support of a naval campaign, from Phase 0, ensuring access through kinetic operations, into transition and then starting again. The era of CA planners attending a Fleet Battle Problem as a curiosity needs to end.

DoD cannot do this alone. The lead element in any given country is the Department of State, and relationships with State are typically very personality-based. DoD members need to remember their junior partner status when deployed overseas. Similarly, the State Department needs to remember that it is part of a team and that it must give workable guidance to military forces. Understanding issues of sovereignty, fishing rights, and access in the maritime domain at the State level can only help CA forces better support integrated naval campaigning. While CA forces tend to maintain better and more consistent relationships with State's affiliate USAID, most of this is in the form of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. We need to move beyond this and instead focus on support to the integrated country strategies. USAID and State need to be willing to work with CA forces in support of naval campaigns and DoD elements need to be able to integrate their objectives with State and USAID. The rubber stamp of the "whole of government approach" has been floated for more than a decade, but it still has not been achieved. Once upon a time, we were better at this. We need to get there again.

Finally, the U.S. and all its agencies and assets cannot achieve these goals by themselves. Since the earliest days, the U.S. has always prided itself on its allies and partners. Even today, when looking at the balance sheets, the U.S.'s adversaries do not have many friends. The Russian Federation maintains close relations with Belarus, whose conduct in Russia's war with Ukraine has shown it to be an unimpressive partner. Beyond that, other members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) have balked under Russian domination, with Kazakhstan in open revolt in 2021 and Armenia, the sole European member, expressing buyer's remorse on depending solely on Russia for security. Iran's allies and friends exist almost exclusively in the form of proxy forces, terrorist organizations, and militias. Few countries have done as complete a job of isolating themselves from the world as Iran in the last 40 years. Finally, the People's Republic of China almost completely lacks allies. It has many countries dependent on it because of loans or infrastructure investments, but nearly all would look forward to not having to pay that debt.

For all its issues and foibles when it comes to international relations, the U.S. (still) has friends while its adversaries do not.

Conclusion

Let no one tell you that civil affairs and civil engagement do not matter. CA becomes even more important as we move into the era of great power competition and away from counterinsurgency. There are no conflicts that occur in isolation, and we would be fools to assume that the civil environment does not affect how we conduct operations. Perhaps nowhere is this more the case than in the maritime environment. Throughout history, oceans, seas, lakes, and rivers have had an outsized effect on the populations near them. Mastery of this domain has allowed nations to exert

a direct and continuous effect on the international order. Despite—or perhaps because of—the massive changes and developments in the world over the last century, this is as true as it ever was.

Understanding that the waterways are defined by the land that borders them, and vice-versa, will help put the U.S. and its allies on a trajectory to compete in the future. Willing away the current and early-phase operations in anticipation of major conflict is not an option. The current CA force needs to be overhauled to ensure it can operate across the competition continuum in the maritime environment. The Navy, in turn, needs to consider bringing back its own dedicated CA forces and needs to adjust its operational approach to recognize the importance of shore-to-shore operations rather than putting all its focus on naval battles that may never come.

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Training America's Premier Maneuver Force for Winning without Fighting

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Introduction

The 2018 *National Defense Strategy's* Irregular Warfare Annex, published in October 2020, delineates a comprehensive strategy for countering adversaries while avoiding large scale conflict.¹ It emphasized a spectrum of non-lethal methodologies for both conventional and special operations forces, aimed at either preventing or strategically shaping conflicts. This paradigm shift towards Irregular Warfare (IW) has necessitated increased funding for training and education, thereby augmenting the Department of Defense's (DoD) proficiency in this domain. The pivotal role of Civil Affairs (CA) in this context was underscored by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC)), Christopher P. Maier, at the 2023 Civil Affairs Association Roundtable.² He highlighted CA's integral contribution to campaign efforts, specifically in strengthening integrated deterrence strategies.

Given this background, it becomes imperative for U.S. Army Civil Affairs to increase its focus on training and educating its personnel with the necessary IW tools to offer the Joint Force a range of non-lethal options in support of integrated deterrence. This paper aims to provide an academic framework for the Civil Affairs community, facilitating enhanced training and education in Irregular Warfare and Governance Support. Such a framework is designed to foster a robust understanding of nonviolent action, particularly in scenarios prior to the start of armed conflict.

Training Civil Affairs in Irregular Warfare

The ASD (SO/LIC)'s Irregular Warfare Technical Support Directorate (IWTSD) recently invested in developing the Civil Affairs Irregular Warfare and Governance Support courses.³ These courses serve as a training platform for Civil Affairs "campaigning" in alignment with the integrated deterrence frameworks of the National Security Strategy (NSS)⁴ and National Defense Strategy (NDS).⁵ This initiative was a collaboration between the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS), and the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) (95th CA Bde (SO) (A)). This collaborative effort resulted in the development of a four-week Irregular Warfare course and a three-week Governance Support Course. Both courses are adaptable in length to accommodate additional exercises, case study reviews, and varying student proficiency based on operational requirements.

In 2020, the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) Civil Affairs Force Modernization Assessment Functional Solutions Analysis Report identified a need for post-Global War on Terror (GWOT) Civil Affairs capabilities in Irregular Warfare and Governance Support, especially in the context of Great Power Competition. To address this need, new courses developed

by APL were introduced. These courses train CA Soldiers in the use of Operational Art & Design for campaign planning for their contribution to Irregular Warfare (IW). Their primary goals are to shape the civil environment favorably to U.S. interests in situations prior to the start of armed conflict and to identify and analyze activities by threat actors. This training is based on the Joint Special Operations University's (JSOU) Resistance Operating Concept.⁶ It also employs methodologies from the Assessing Revolutionary Insurgent Strategies (ARIS) series⁷ developed by APL, integrating insights from the social, behavioral, and data sciences.

Since 2011, the USASOC G3 Sensitive Activities Division has collaborated with APL to launch the ARIS project. The primary goal of ARIS is to offer IW planners, practitioners, and students a standardized analytic framework that is both value-neutral and academically rigorous. Moreover, ARIS provides an impartial account of insurgencies and revolutions. In 2013, the ARIS team identified a gap: the lack of resources to seamlessly incorporate ARIS research into the IW educational environment. To address this, the team designed a spectrum of educational products catering to varying student levels—beginner, intermediate, and advanced. These products include published works, guided discussion lessons, exercise scenarios, analytic tools, and comprehensive video and resource libraries.⁸

To address the emerging criticality of Civil Affairs as the premier maneuver force in the human dimension for winning without fighting, the Civil Affairs Association and its partners recently invited civil-military professionals to address the questions of 1) How would a full concept of the CA role in campaigning apply to conflict prevention, security cooperation, irregular or gray zone warfare, and major combat operations as well as stabilization and strategic competition? And 2) How would CA measure progress in campaigning?

Civil Affairs, Civil Resistance, and Nonviolent Action

The CA Corps plays a crucial role in integrating civil considerations and knowledge with military operations across different phases of conflict and competition. This integration can be better understood through the lens of civil resistance, particularly as delineated by Gene Sharp's 198 methods⁹ of nonviolent action. Nonviolent action is a proactive strategy that seeks to exert power in conflicts without using physical violence. These methods, involving acts of omission or commission, serve as "nonviolent weapons." While 198 techniques have been identified so far, the evolving nature of nonviolent action suggests that more will be discovered with time. Broadly, these techniques are categorized into three domains: nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and nonviolent intervention.

By integrating the 198 methods of nonviolent action¹⁰ into the CA role, a structured framework for both planning and execution emerges. This not only highlights the significance of nonviolent approaches in spanning the continuum of conflict and competition but also underscores CA's distinct capacity to liaise between military and civilian domains, thereby enhancing the U.S. Army's overall operational effectiveness.

Below is a broad conceptualization of this applied to CA roles...

<p>1. Conflict Prevention & Security Cooperation</p> <p>CA Role: Build relationships, enhance mutual understanding, and gather civil information to de-escalate potential conflicts.</p> <p>Application of Nonviolent Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persuasion: Workshops, joint training, and cultural exchanges to promote shared values and mutual trust. - Non-cooperation: Support partners in denying resources, space, or influence to potential adversaries through targeted sanctions or boycotts. - Intervention: Establish liaison teams or advisory cells to directly intervene in potential flashpoints, ensuring that grievances are addressed without resorting to violence. 	<p>2. Irregular or Gray Zone Warfare</p> <p>CA Role: Address underlying civil issues that irregular actors exploit, thereby denying them the ability to gain influence and control.</p> <p>Application of Nonviolent Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persuasion: Media campaigns to counter misinformation and promote unity. - Non-cooperation: Support local communities in non-compliant behaviors, such as refusing to aid insurgent groups. - Intervention: Facilitate negotiations between aggrieved parties, providing an alternative to violent redress. 	<p>3. Major Combat Operations</p> <p>CA Role: Minimize the impact of combat operations on the civilian populace and maintain the post-conflict environment's stability.</p> <p>Application of Nonviolent Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persuasion: Continuous communication with civilian stakeholders about ongoing military actions and their intended purpose. - Non-cooperation: Encouraging civilians to avoid combat areas or deny resources to the enemy. - Intervention: Rapid response teams to address immediate civilian needs during and after combat operations.
<p>4. Stabilization</p> <p>CA Role: Support the transition from conflict to peace by rebuilding civil structures and fostering local governance.</p> <p>Application of Nonviolent Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persuasion: Advocacy for reconciliation and transitional justice mechanisms. - Non-cooperation: Denying support or legitimacy to spoilers or those against the peace process. - Intervention: Participate in joint patrols, advisory roles, or direct support to re-establish civil services. 	<p>5. Strategic Competition</p> <p>CA Role: Enhance the influence and positioning of the U.S. and its allies by strengthening civil ties and understanding.</p> <p>Application of Nonviolent Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persuasion: Promote democratic values, human rights, and rule of law through media, education, and direct engagements. - Non-cooperation: Support economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, or other nonviolent punitive measures against adversarial states. - Intervention: Strengthen civil society organizations, promote people-to-people ties, and directly engage in areas of U.S. strategic interest. 	

CA forces have several objectives in campaigning: for example, they aim to both understand and leverage the civil component of the environment and to ensure that commanders remain informed and local civilian needs are addressed. In this arena, the importance of setting Specific, Measurable, and Observable (SMO) goals cannot be overstated. These SMO criteria are crucial for gauging progress and ensuring operations align with strategic intent. On the next page is a detailed breakdown of CA roles and how progress in each can be assessed using a mixed method (quantitative/qualitative) approach...

1. Conflict Prevention & Security Cooperation

Goal: Strengthen relationships and understanding with partner nations.

Objectives:

- Conduct a minimum of 10 joint training sessions with partner nation military units within the year.
- Organize at least 6 cultural exchange programs annually.
- Document and report at least 15 instances of potential conflict de-escalations as a result of CA engagements within a 12-month period.

Qualitative: Feedback from partner nations, local leaders, and community stakeholders on the effectiveness of workshops, training sessions, and cultural exchanges.

Quantitative: Number of joint training sessions held, number of participants, number of community engagements, and documented de-escalations of potential conflicts.

2. Irregular or Gray Zone Warfare

Goal: Minimize the influence of irregular actors within the operational environment.

Objectives:

- Counteract/decrease misinformation campaigns by 50% in target areas within six months.
- Facilitate < four negotiation sessions quarterly between aggrieved parties.
- Engage/document monthly feedback from < 20 local stakeholders to assess community sentiment and trust levels.

Qualitative: Local perception analysis of misinformation campaigns, negotiations impact, and trust in CA interventions.

Quantitative: Less misinformation (e.g., fake news), # of facilitated negotiations, stakeholders engaged.

3. Major Combat Operations

Goal: Ensure civilian safety and minimize impact of combat on the civilian populace.

Objectives:

- Inform and evacuate < 80% of civilians from combat zones pre-operations.
- Launch < 3 communication outreach initiatives monthly during operations.

- Address essential civilian needs in post-combat areas < 48 hours of cease-fire.

Qualitative: Feedback from civilian stakeholders on communication effectiveness, satisfaction surveys post-intervention.

Quantitative: # of communication outreach initiatives, civilians assisted, areas where civilians successfully evacuated.

4. Stabilization

Goal: Reestablish stability in post-conflict areas through effective governance and civil service restoration.

Objectives:

- Support the rebuilding or restoration of at least 5 critical civil structures (e.g., schools, clinics) within 3 months post-conflict.
- Facilitate a minimum of 10 local governance meetings each month.
- Achieve a 60% or higher satisfaction rate from communities regarding their sense of safety and governance within six months post-conflict.

Qualitative: Feedback from local governance structures on the effectiveness of support, sentiment analysis from communities about their sense of safety, governance, and service delivery.

Quantitative: Number of civil structures rebuilt or restored, number of local governance meetings facilitated, number of civil services (like schools, clinics) re-established.

5. Strategic Competition

Goal: Enhance U.S. influence and diminish the sway of adversarial states within regions of strategic interest.

Objectives:

- Launch < two media campaigns monthly promoting democratic values.
- Initiate < four educational initiatives quarterly in targeted regions.
- Support or establish partnerships with < eight civil society organizations annually.

Qualitative: Feedback on the impact of media campaigns, education initiatives, and direct engagements. Analysis of regional perceptions regarding U.S. influence vs. adversarial states.

Quantitative: Number of media campaigns launched, number of educational initiatives, number of civil society organizations supported or engagements held.

Beyond a mixed-method approach to gauging CA progress, USASOC’s ARIS project offers profound insights into the dynamics of revolutionary and insurgent movements. A cornerstone of ARIS is the use of Human Factors Analysis (HFA), which delves into the intersections of human behavior, capabilities, constraints, and organizational systems, and their influence on outcomes. Within HFA, the CA's Civil Knowledge Integration (CKI) Teams have already employed Social Network Analysis (SNA) as a notable method to analyze human networks. SNA maps and quantifies relationships and interactions between diverse entities, such as individuals, groups, and organizations. In the context of CA, SNA provides a comprehensive view of stakeholder interplay, shedding light on the efficacy of CA initiatives.

The following approach demonstrates incorporation of Human Factors Analysis outlined in ARIS and the incorporation of SNA into the measurement of progress for CA initiatives and each role...

<p>1. Conflict Prevention & Security Cooperation</p> <p>HFA Application: Analyze individual motivations, group dynamics, and organizational structures within partner nation military units and community stakeholders. This can reveal hidden alliances, animosities, and potential challenges.</p> <p>Measurement of Progress: Monitor changes in the behavior, motivation, and alignment of key individuals and groups following CA interventions, which may indicate growing trust and cooperation or emerging tensions.</p> <p>SNA Application: Map out the network of partner nation military units, local leaders, and community stakeholders. Observe how these connections evolve over time, especially after joint training sessions and cultural exchanges.</p> <p>Measurement of Progress: Quantify the density and strength of relationships before and after CA engagements. An increase in the density of connections can indicate strengthened relationships and cooperation.</p>	<p>2. Irregular or Gray Zone Warfare</p> <p>HFA Application: Examine the psychological and sociological factors driving individuals and groups within the irregular warfare environment. This can help in understanding the appeal of misinformation campaigns and the motivations of key influencers.</p> <p>Measurement of Progress: Track shifts in group dynamics, individual motivations, and overall sentiment as CA interventions counteract misinformation and engage with local communities.</p> <p>SNA Application: Understand the spread and influence of misinformation by mapping out sources of information and their connections to local populations. Identify key influencers and nodes within local communities.</p> <p>Measurement of Progress: Track how the influence and reach of misinformation sources diminish over time. Monitor shifts in influence towards more trusted and verified sources.</p>	<p>3. Major Combat Operations</p> <p>HFA Application: Assess the stressors, fears, and needs of civilian populations in combat zones. Consider the organizational dynamics of response teams and how these might influence their efficacy.</p> <p>Measurement of Progress: Gauge the psychological well-being and trust levels of civilians’ post-evacuation or post-combat intervention, and adjust CA tactics accordingly.</p> <p>SNA Application: Analyze communication networks among civilian stakeholders, rapid response teams, and CA units to ensure effective flow of information.</p> <p>Measurement of Progress: Monitor the reach and spread of communication outreach initiatives. An effective outreach would show a rapid dissemination of information across the network.</p>
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4. Stabilization

HFA Application: Delve into the collective psyche of communities recovering from conflict, studying their trauma, aspirations, and group dynamics. Also, study the organizational structures of local governance to find any bottlenecks or inefficiencies.

Measurement of Progress: Monitor the socio-psychological healing of communities and the efficiency of governance mechanisms as stabilization efforts progress.

SNA Application: Map out the relationships between local governance structures, communities, and external support entities. This can help identify gaps in governance or areas where civil services lack.

Measurement of Progress: Observe how the network evolves as more civil structures are rebuilt and services are re-established. A well-connected and integrated network would indicate effective stabilization efforts.

5. Strategic Competition

HFA Application: Decode the cultural, psychological, and sociological drivers influencing regional perceptions of U.S. versus adversarial state influence. Understand the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of media outlets, educators, and civil society organizations in these regions.

Measurement of Progress: Observe shifts in the dominant narratives and sentiment towards U.S. influence, correlating these with human factors.

SNA Application: Analyze the networks formed around media campaigns, educational initiatives, and civil society partnerships to understand their reach and influence.

Measurement of Progress: Monitor how the influence of U.S.-backed entities grows within the strategic region. A growing influence can be observed through an expanding network with strong connections.

Cross Functional Team Approach

Nadine Bloch's model of Civil Resistance¹¹ centers on the potential of nonviolent action to effect change. Complementing this, Gene Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolent action provides a detailed inventory of tactics deployable within nonviolent resistance campaigns.

The 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) champions the efficacy of cross-functional teams, with the declaration: “We are successful when we employ a cross-functional team of quiet professionals...”¹² Integrating this nonviolent philosophy with U.S. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF)—which includes Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations (PO), and Special Forces (SF)—can harness nonviolent action to further mission goals in line with the principles of civil resistance, as follows:

Strategic Campaign Mission Goal: Promote democratic governance and human rights in a region under authoritarian rule, without the use of force or inciting violence.

Supporting Objectives:

<p>1. Civil Affairs:</p> <p>Objective 1: Establish community engagement programs that foster trust and collaboration between local communities and ARSOF.</p> <p>- Nonviolent action methods: Establishing independent institutions (Method 133), creating alternative markets (Method 71).</p> <p>- Measurement: # of community engagement programs established and the level of participation from local communities.</p> <p>Objective 2: Facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid and essential services to local communities.</p> <p>- Nonviolent action methods: Providing alternative welfare (Method 143).</p> <p>- Measurement: # of humanitarian aid packages distributed and people reached.</p>	<p>2. Psychological Operations:</p> <p>Objective 1: Disseminate information that highlights the authoritarian regime's human rights abuses and promotes democratic values.</p> <p>- Nonviolent action methods: Using press (Method 23), distributing pamphlets, leaflets, and books (Method 30).</p> <p>- Measurement: # of information materials distributed and dissemination reach (e.g., # of views, shares, etc. on digital platforms).</p> <p>Objective 2: Promote dialogue and reconciliation between conflicting parties within the local communities.</p> <p>- Nonviolent action methods: Promoting nonviolent gatherings (Method 47), facilitating group or mass petitions (Method 51).</p> <p>- Measurement: # of dialogue and reconciliation events participants.</p>	<p>3. Special Forces:</p> <p>Objective 1: Train communities in nonviolent resistance strategies/techniques.</p> <p>- Nonviolent action methods: Teaching and practicing non-cooperation (Method 129), developing nonviolent discipline (Method 162).</p> <p>- Measurement: # of training sessions conducted and participants trained.</p> <p>Objective 2: Support creation of local, independent institutions alternative to the authoritarian regime.</p> <p>- Nonviolent action methods: Establishing parallel institutions (Method 198), creating alternative markets (Method 71).</p> <p>- Measurement: # of independent institutions established and community support and participation.</p>
<p>Measuring the Results (Effects):</p> <p>1. Assess the increase in participation of local communities in nonviolent resistance activities and independent institutions.</p> <p>- Measurement: Monitor the attendance and participation in events, activities, and institutions established as part of the mission objectives.</p> <p>2. Monitor the changes in behavior and attitude of local communities towards the authoritarian regime and democratic governance.</p> <p>- Measurement: Analyze the content and tone of local media, social media posts, and public statements made by community leaders.</p>		

To elevate its planning capabilities, the CA Corps does not require adjustments in doctrine, leadership, or organizational structure; it simply demands enhanced training and education. The recently completed APL CA Irregular Warfare and Governance Support Courses, funded by IWTSD, already offer the requisite training framework. Furthermore, this training aligns with the Army Reserve's 29-day Active Duty for Training (ADT) cycle, making it suitable for training COMPO 3 (U.S. Army Reserve) and 38G Military Government Specialists.

Civil Affairs Irregular Warfare Course

The four-week CA IW course provides education on the CA conduct of Irregular Warfare, including relevant theories and concepts, analytical methods for addressing resiliency and human security, resistance and its associated authorities, and information technology used in resistance movements to support planning and civil reconnaissance. Students learn about resistance movements, methods of nonviolent action, and relevant social/behavioral sciences.

The course also examines IW case studies that are relevant to Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) and the science of resistance. Students will focus on contemporary resistance phases and associated activities, including identification, indoctrination, and mobilization, as outlined in the ARIS studies series and Gene Sharp's 198 *Methods of Nonviolent Action*,¹⁰ tied back into the Resistance Operations Concept (ROC).⁶ The course includes practical exercises, case study reviews, and group discussions to develop critical thinking skills within IW concepts related to CA.

The course's curriculum is segmented into diverse modules designed to impart both theoretical knowledge and practical application skills to CA Soldiers. Central to this curriculum is a science-based foundation, emphasizing subjects such as Operational Art & Design campaign planning, psychology, sociology, political science, and Computational Social Sciences (CSS). This robust foundation is pivotal in preparing CA Soldiers, regardless of component, to discern their role in IW and grasp the importance of their support to entities like undergrounds, auxiliaries, and indigenous governments within resistance movements.

A key module in this course focuses on Human Factors Analysis, as prescribed in the ARIS manuals. This module is further categorized into three core subsections: Group and Population Analysis, Social Network Analysis, and Individual and Leadership Analysis. The purpose of this module is to augment ARSOF CA Civil Network Analysis (CNA) skills. The objective is to adeptly identify and analyze the relative significance and sway of nodes (both individuals and groups) within a civil network. This is achieved using a combination of network visualizations and a dual qualitative and quantitative analytical approach.

Furthermore, the Resistance module delves deep into the intricacies of resistance, exploring its theory and real-world application. This encompasses a study of resistance movements: their inception, intent, makeup, function, and evolution. This module consists of an intensive 40 hours of instruction, reinforced with hands-on practical exercises. Notably, its content aligns seamlessly with the directives of the July 2021 FM 3-57 *Civil Affairs Operations*.¹³ This directive emphasizes that CAO plays a pivotal role in strengthening a resistance's legitimacy. It outlines CAO's comprehensive strategy in aiding a resistance Transitional Governance from its nascence, through its growth phase, culminating in its evolution into a stable governing body.

Civil Affairs Governance Support Course

The CA Governance Support Course equips CA Soldiers with the skills to aid in the establishment and enhancement of local government capabilities. It delves into the critical components that

reinforce a governance entity's perceived legitimacy and credibility among its population. In the course, CA Soldiers examine human factors drawing from psychology and human geography, dissect case studies spotlighting resistance tactics, hone their research skills for scrutinizing pertinent policy and legislation, and contemplate intricate notions such as cultural legitimacy. They are also trained in techniques for conducting informational interviews and surveys.

A pivotal component of the course is enabling these Soldiers to evaluate the ramifications and success of their initiatives. This training aligns with and seeks to bolster the "Transitional Governance Competency"¹³ as articulated in the manual, FM 3-57. This competency underscores the role of CA in aiding local actors to sustain stability during periods of competition, bolster resilience during crises, and ensure governance continuity in the throes of armed conflict or during resistance movements.

The course modules offer a comprehensive training program for CA Soldiers. Initially, they are introduced to foundational concepts such as governance, the distinction between governance and governments, legitimacy, and the integral roles of government and civil society. Drawing from real-world regional examples reinforces this foundational knowledge.

Building on these basics, the training then delves into effective communication techniques. Soldiers learn how to adeptly use both written and oral communication to deliver concise analyses of existing governance structures. They are equipped with skills to inform and advise commanders on governance initiatives, termed "Executive Communication." The modules also instruct Soldiers on crafting cables that bridge local resources with national levels, thereby ensuring a robust communication channel with Interagency Partners.

An essential aspect of the curriculum is establishing and maintaining legitimacy with Interagency Partners. The training incorporates key principles from The Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning (JCIC),¹⁴ emphasizing the strategic integration of governance capabilities and resources. Soldiers further refine their understanding of Human Factors Analysis, a vital tool for fostering successful collaborations with partners and NGOs.

Lastly, through hands-on practical exercises, Soldiers navigate the intricacies of cross-cultural contexts. They learn the nuances of integrating capabilities and resources across different cultures, ensuring they are well-prepared to anticipate and mitigate potential risks and challenges in real-world scenarios.

Commonalities Between Courses

Both courses offer an extensive array of resources tailored for instructors and students alike:

1. A diverse selection of scenarios and case studies enrich the learning experience.
2. Instructors receive TRADOC-compliant lesson plans¹⁵ for every course module. These plans encompass learning objectives, references, and comprehensive scripts accompanying each PowerPoint slide, including key talking points. This depth of detail substantially

minimizes the time instructors spend on preparation. Additionally, all referenced materials are made available in PDF format, eliminating the need for any additional purchases.

3. A curated collection of audio-visual content is available for instructors to augment their classroom instruction.
4. Students are provided with all necessary manuals, guides, and articles in .pdf format.

Conclusion

The evolving landscape of conflict and competition necessitates the recalibration of strategic frameworks and operational tools. The Civil Affairs Irregular Warfare and Governance Support courses, a result of the collaborative endeavor between APL, USAJFKSWCS, and the 95th CA Bde (SO) (A), stand as testament to this necessity. These courses, meticulously developed in alignment with the *National Security Strategy* and *National Defense Strategy*, are grounded in both the rich history and anticipated trajectories of Irregular Warfare and Governance Support to meet emerging strategic demands.

CA, with its unique positioning at the crossroads of military and civilian domains, plays an indispensable role in various phases of conflict and competition. Its embrace of Gene Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolent action epitomizes this dynamic role, offering a robust framework for engagement. When combined with the analytical tools and methodologies provided by projects like ARIS, the depth and scope of CA's engagement magnify. Moreover, through Social Network Analysis and Human Factors Analysis, a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the operational environment can be achieved for supported commands.

Furthermore, the recent investments by the Irregular Warfare Technical Support Directorate are not mere reactive measures; they are proactive initiatives aimed at equipping CA Soldiers with the skills, knowledge, and tools to navigate the multifaceted realities of today's global stage. The development of these courses is a significant step forward, laying the groundwork for a more versatile, adaptable, and effective CA force across the Army's Active and Reserve components.

As the nature of military engagement continues to shift from overt conflict to more ambiguous arenas of competition, these courses and the methodologies they introduce will undoubtedly be pivotal in shaping the role of U.S. Army Civil Affairs forces in integrated deterrence, campaign planning, and operational execution. The educational content, by design, nests seamlessly into the current multi-disciplinary science approach of the Civil Affairs Science and Technology Learning Ecosystem (CASTLE) that provides a framework for training and educating future CA Soldiers and units.

The focus on training, collaboration, and a thorough understanding of nonviolent methods ensures that CA remains at the forefront of the U.S. defense strategy, ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

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Campaigning the Campaign Plan – Focusing on the Fundamentals at the Combatant Command by Assessing Civil Affairs Operations, Activities, and Investments

by Major J. David Thompson, USA

Introduction

As military professionals, imagine that there is a tool that enables campaigning across the competition continuum. Imagine that this tool can be used by Civil Affairs forces, other military specialties, interagency colleagues, and other non-military organizations from the tactical to the strategic level. Further, imagine that this tool is free and readily available. The good news is that this tool exists, and this paper teaches you not only what it is but how to incorporate it.

Instead of thinking about campaigning specific to conflict prevention, large scale combat operations, security cooperation, etc., this paper advocates campaigning the campaign plan. Campaigning the campaign plan means ensuring that operations, activities, and investments (OAIs) further the campaign objectives. It then requires working assessments to ensure that the OAIs are meeting the campaign objectives.

This paper does not suggest any updates to doctrine, organization, training, material, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, or policy (DOTMLPF-P). Instead, it encourages Civil Affairs professionals at all levels to use the doctrinally proven methods. This paper advocates for a focus on the fundamentals. Its core belief derives from SOF Truth I (with one minor modification): “[well informed and empowered] humans are more important than hardware.”¹ It also stems from the belief: “what gets tracked gets done.”

This paper reviews the development of indicators—measures of performance (MoPs) and measures of effectiveness (MoEs)—that link tactical operations to a campaign plan. It draws heavily upon Annex K (Operation Assessment Plan) of Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Planning*. It provides the methodology used by the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) Theater Civil Affairs Planning Team (TCAPT) in the Spring 2023 Civil Affairs Summit. The paper then provides a way ahead and some final thoughts. Practitioners from the tactical to the strategic levels—both within and outside of Civil Affairs—can use the lessons gathered to enable campaigning in a data-driven, feedback-enabled manner.

“Campaigning is not business as usual—it is the deliberate effort to synchronize the Department’s activities and investments to aggregate focus and resources to shift conditions in our favor.”² The *2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS)* provides why the Department of Defense (DoD) campaigns. DoD will campaign to gain military advantage, enhance deterrence, and address gray zone challenges. Effective campaigning allows DoD to be judicious about resources and recognizes that the military may not always be the most appropriate response.³

Per the *Joint Concept for Competing (JCC)*, competing is not specific to a particular campaign but rather a set of durable actions that occur over time.⁴ Having indicators supports advanced

integrated campaigning, the idea premised on the “understanding that the Joint Force cannot and should not act alone in strategic competition,” as detailed in the *JCC*.⁵ The necessity of having data to identify trends, vulnerabilities, and opportunities is essential for advanced integrated campaigning, as mentioned throughout the *JCC*.⁶ Therefore, the importance of MoPs and MoEs works across the competition continuum.

Doctrine Review for Indicator Development

DoD defines “campaigning” as: “[t]he persistent conduct of related operations, activities, and investments that align military actions with the other instruments of national power, supporting global integration across the competition continuum in pursuit of strategic objectives.”⁷ This is not to be confused with “campaign,” which DoD defines as: “[a] series of related operations aimed at achieving strategic and operational objectives within a given time and space.”⁸

Yet, both should support the campaign plan, which DoD defines as: “[a] joint operation plan for a series of related major operations aimed at achieving strategic or operational objectives within a given time and space.”⁹ From the definition origins, campaign and campaign plan originate in JP 5-0, *Joint Planning*, while campaigning originates in JP 3-0, *Joint Campaigns and Operations*. The connection between strategy and operations is inherent.

Within DoD, combatant commands represent: 1) the highest level of operational military headquarters, and 2) the lowest level of strategic headquarters. Combatant commands have a campaign plan. This is typically managed by the J5 Director on behalf of the combatant commander. Amongst other things, the campaign plan has a number of campaign objectives. Staff sections and components then work together at campaigning to achieve campaign objectives. A key aspect of campaigning is assessing whether the tasks, from the campaign order, are helping to achieve the campaign objectives, from the campaign plan. To do such, commands need to identify indicators that suggest whether the tasks help achieve the effects and objectives.

There are multiple ways to conduct assessments. There are, however, several accepted and general steps and considerations. Operational assessments are continuous throughout planning and execution.¹⁰ As such, it is important to understand the assessment steps. There are six assessment steps. Step one is to develop the assessment approach. Step two is to develop the assessment plan. Step three is to collect information and intelligence. Step four is to analyze information and intelligence. Step five is to communicate feedback and recommendations. Step six is to adapt plans or operations or campaigns.¹¹ While there are multiple ways to conduct assessments, assessments fundamentally require information to conduct the process. This information is called indicators.¹²

Indicators help suggest whether the tasks are helping to achieve the objectives. Indicators link the tasks to effects and objectives and should be relevant, observable and collectable, responsive, and resourced. Relevant means that it bears a direct relationship. Observable and collectable means that indicators can be detected and measured. Responsive means that indicators should be timely

enough to enable an effective response. Being resourced allows the command to obtain the required information.¹³

Among the several types of indicators used in assessments, two that are familiar to military professionals are MoPs and MoEs. MoPs measure task performance and assess friendly actions. MoPs answer: “[a]re we doing things rights?” MoEs measure the current system over time. MoEs answer: “[a]re we doing the right things to create the conditions in the operating environment that we desire?”¹⁴ Asking these questions ensures military activities are effectively creating the conditions in the operating environment as planned.

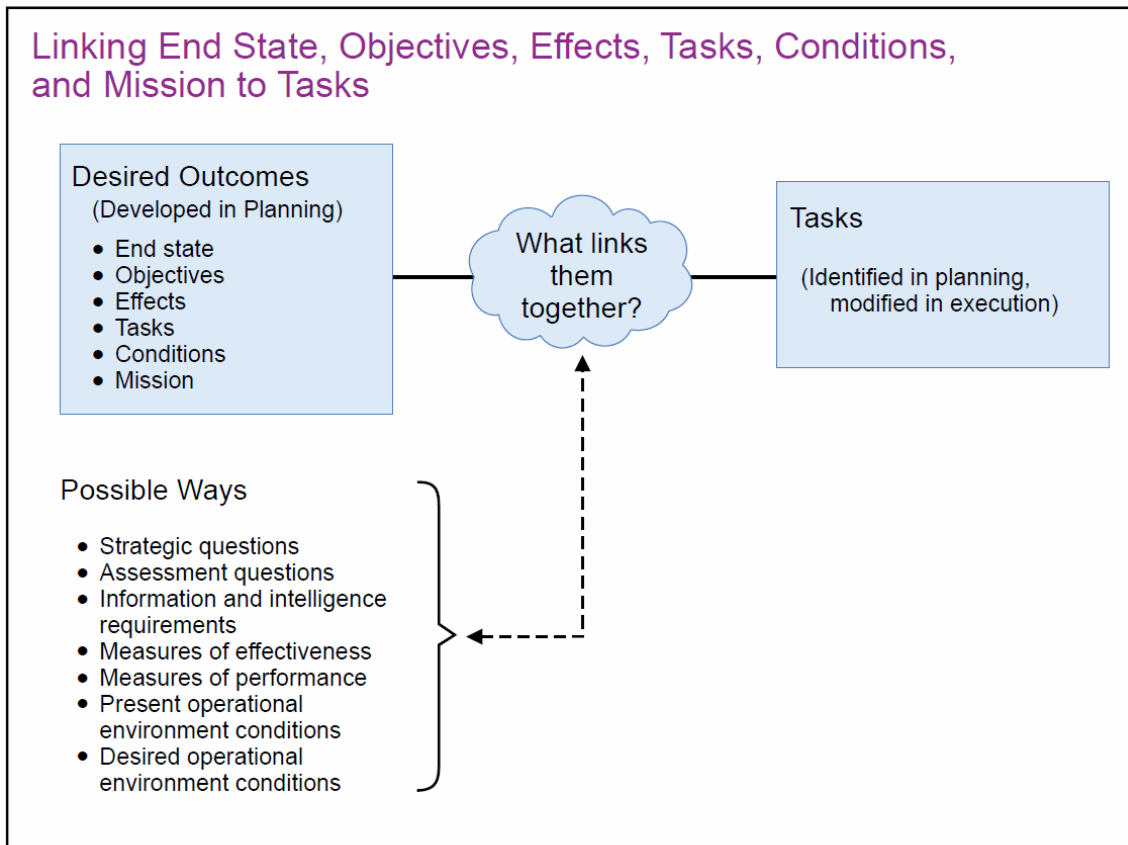


Figure 1¹⁵

There are some best practices when choosing MoPs and MoEs. It is important to recognize that all intelligence or information requirements generate work for down-trace units. A perfect assessment plan will not have the intended effect if subordinates spend all their time answering the information requirements. That is why it is important to use the same indicator for multiple effects or objectives and minimize additional reporting requirements.¹⁶ Also, MoPs and MoEs do not inherently come with funding. It helps to use existing mechanisms to get feedback. Staffs should also choose distinct indicators to not skew results. It is also good to get a mix of quantitative, qualitative, subjective, and objective indicators. Indicators can be: quantitative-objective, quantitative-

subjective, qualitative-objective, and qualitative-subjective. Quantitative information is “[n]umerical information relating to the quantity or amount of something.” Qualitative information reflects, “an observation of, relating to, or involving quality or kind, typically expressed as a word, sentence, description, or code that represents a category.” Subjective information is based on individual interpretation. Objective information is based on facts and precise measurements without distortion of personal feelings.¹⁷

Types of Indicators		
	Quantitative	Qualitative
Objective	Quantitative-Objective	Qualitative-Objective
Subjective	Quantitative-Subjective	Qualitative-Subjective

Table 1

Application Using the USAFRICOM Civil Affairs Summit

In the spring of 2023, USAFRICOM hosted a Civil Affairs Summit. Representatives from Southern European Task Force – Africa (SETAF-AF), Special Operations Command – Africa (SOCAFRICA), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Joint Forces Headquarters, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC)), 352nd Civil Affairs Command, 91st Civil Affairs Battalion (Special Operations) (Airborne), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), and others participated.

The summit spanned five days of work. The first day set the strategic picture. It included briefs on how USAFRICOM makes decisions, deep dives from specific working groups and functionalities in USAFRICOM, and an overview of the summit’s operational planning teams (OPT). The last day included an out-brief, after-action review, and closing comments. The summit was inward focused with two OPTs. The first OPT focused on refining USAFRICOM’s standard operating procedure (SOP) for civil knowledge integration (CKI). The second OPT established indicators—MoPs and MoEs—to intermediate military objectives (IMOs) and subordinate effects. These IMOs and effects support the USAFRICOM Campaign Plan.

Prior to the summit, the USAFRICOM TCAPT drafted IMOs and effects supportive of the USAFRICOM Campaign Plan’s campaign objectives. The IMOs and effects were the intermediate steps to achieving the overarching campaign objectives. These IMOs and effects were specific to Civil Affairs operations (CAO) and civil-military operations (CMO). Participants began by reviewing and refining the IMOs and corresponding effects. This brought the collective brainpower of representatives from multiple organizations—national, regional, and international; government and non-government. The OPT used sub-groups to review the same problem. When the sub-groups came back together, this allowed a circle of voices to critically discuss the IMOs and effects. Eventually, the OPT settled on IMOs and effects specific to CAO and CMO.

Participants then developed MOPs and MOEs to each IMO. The OPT divided participants into groups. Each group included representatives from the various organizations present. The OPT used a series of divergence and convergence—breaking into smaller groups then coming back together—for emergence of indicators. Groups would receive guidance, break away to discuss, come together to share findings, allow debate, and then settle on recommended MoPs and MoEs.

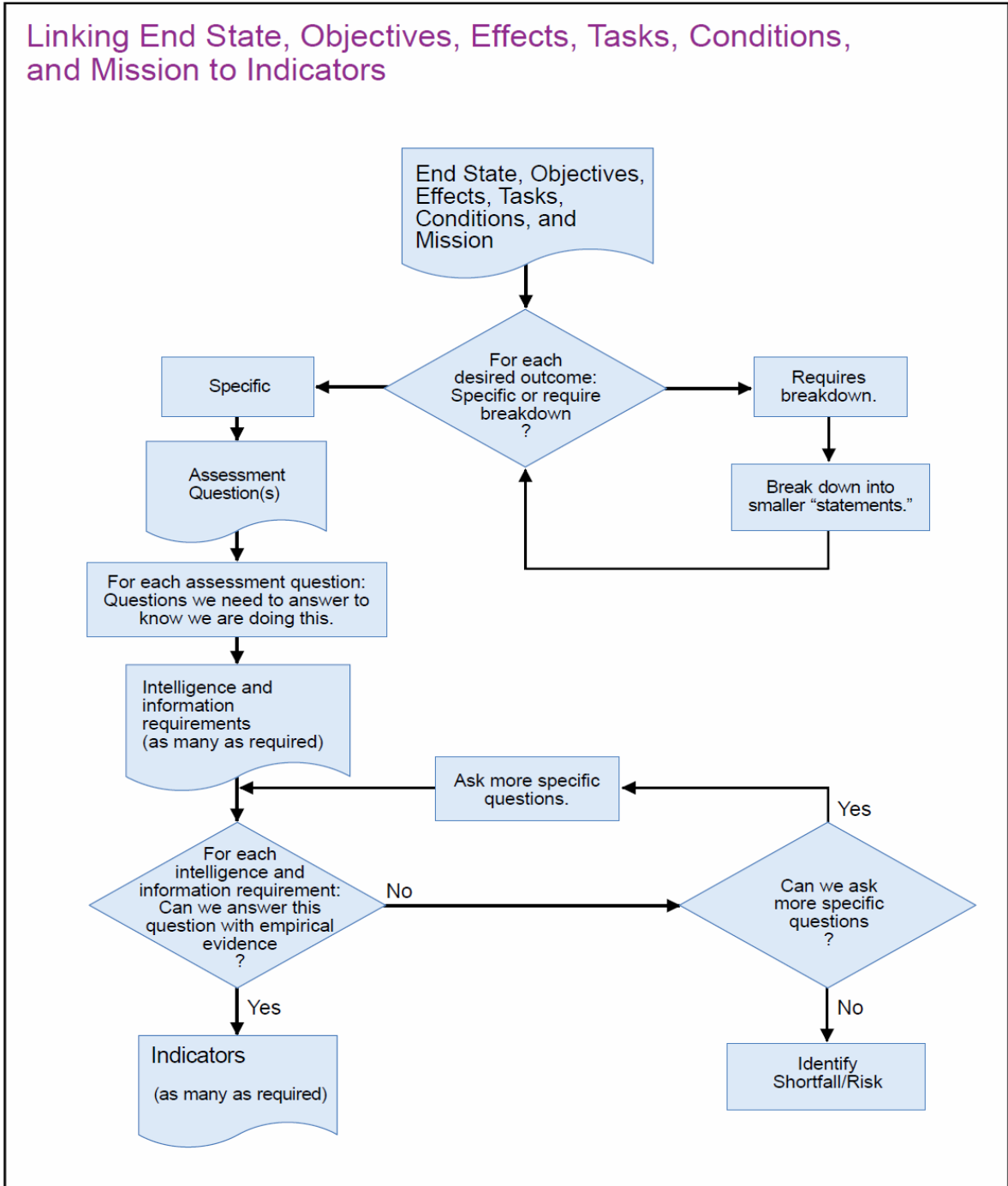


Figure 2¹⁸

For each IMO, groups reviewed whether the IMO and supporting effects were specific enough or needed refinement into smaller statements. If the IMO was sufficiently specific, groups began identifying assessment questions. Assessment questions generally answer: “[h]ow well are we creating our desired effect?”¹⁹ Assessment questions then necessitate information and intelligence requirements, which provide the development of indicators. Groups listed all information and intelligence requirements needed to answer the assessment questions.

If these requirements were answerable by empirical evidence, the groups were able to suggest indicators. If not, the questions needed to be more specific. The figure below depicts a flowchart of the process. Participants repeated this process until every IMO had MOPs and MOEs. This took the course of three afternoon sessions. While the complete product is classified, the product template looked like:

Campaign Objective / Line of Effort	Intermediate Military Objective	Effect	Indicator
CO 1: LoE 1:	G.1.1.	G.1.1.1.	Indicator A
		G.1.1.2.	Indicator B Indicator C
	G.1.2.	G.1.2.1.	Indicator A
		G.1.2.2.	Indicator D Indicator E
	G.1.3.	G.1.3.1.	Indicator C
			Indicator D

Table 2

In the figure above, the campaign objective and line of effort from the base campaign plan are in the far left. These are specified as “CO” and “LoE,” respectively. The IMOs are in the second column. These are the number of intermediate objectives to help achieve the campaign objective. The IMOs are tailored specifically to CMO.

The third column are the number of effects specific to CMO. The combination of multiple effects helps achieve the intermediate military objective. The indicators are on the far right.

Notice that there are five indicators, and several of them are repeated in multiple places. This captures some of the best practices specified above. Each campaign objective would have an analogous chart.

To provide the same chart with notional examples for clarity, see the following chart:

Campaign Objective / Line of Effort	Intermediate Military Objective	Effect	Indicator
<p>CO 1: Develop partners' capability and capacity</p> <p>LoE 1: Work by, with, and through partners</p>	<p>G.1.1. Civil-military operations support strengthening of civil-military coordination.</p>	<p>G.1.1.1. Unified action partners use CA to support Embassy objectives.</p>	<p># of persistent presence locations</p> <p># of episodic engagements</p>
		<p>G.1.1.2. Cooperation between defense, development, and diplomacy.</p>	<p>% of ICS specifying Civil Affairs</p>
	<p>G.1.2. Partner nations actively seek and request civil-military operations training.</p>	<p>G.1.2.1. Partners develop civil-military capability.</p>	<p># of episodic presence locations</p> <p># of train-the-trainers complete</p>
		<p>G.1.2.2. Partners have a trained, resourced civil-military capability.</p>	<p># of partners requesting CMO training</p>
	<p>G.1.3. Unified action partners request peacekeeping operations training.</p>	<p>G.1.3.1. Civil Affairs are incorporated into ICSs.</p>	<p>% of ICS specifying Civil Affairs</p> <p># of train-the-trainers complete</p>

Table 3

The indicators developed were quite wide, given the range of actors present. Indicators include, but are not limited to: number of countries with persistent or episodic engagement; number of Integrated Country Strategies (ICS) that include CAO; number of partners requesting CMO training; social media posts and engagements; Embassies requesting Civil Affairs forces; etc. This allows USAFRICOM to have a wide selection of indicators to get a comprehensive assessment. In the above example, the several indicators are repeated to the effects and IMOs.

Incorporating Results into Official Channels

The USAFRICOM TCAPT uses this product to help write part of Annex G (Civil-Military Operations) to the updated USAFRICOM Campaign Plan. The TCAPT started the IMOs and effects with “G” to clarify against the base campaign plan’s IMOs and effects. This way, subordinate units can link actions to specific effects and IMOs. For example, when an operational or tactical level command wants to link its actions to a specific IMO, the operational or tactical level command can specify that task X was done in furtherance of IMO G.1.1. In a system like Command and Control of the Information Environment (C2IE), program managers can create drop-down options. This allows a combatant command to measure and assess tasks towards objectives over time. Program managers should also be able to have the indicators automatically

populate under assessment criteria for the actions. This lets down-trace units know what information needs to be provided to help inform assessments.

It is the responsibility of the combatant command and components to ensure the tasks given help achieve the effects and objective. Having indicators that range from quantifiable and qualifiable data enable everyone—from tactical units of action to strategic headquarters—to understand how OAI help achieve strategic objectives. Should execution of the tasks not further objectives, then commands have the data to support re-tasking. For example, if civil engagements with local leaders in one area fail to enable shared interest with the host community, commanders can reassign the Civil Affairs Team to another area. After all, Civil Affairs forces can be scarce resources that need to be used most effectively. Ultimately, everyone wants to ensure that the time tactical units spend away from families, putting their lives on the line, helps achieve a desired end state.

Conclusion

Hopefully this paper inspired hope. Not only is it possible for Civil Affairs forces to campaign across the competition continuum, the Civil Affairs Corps is well positioned to lead the way. Tactical operations by Civil Affairs forces deployed across the world can—and should—create strategic effects when correctly campaigned. Civil Affairs forces have the DOTMLPF-P to campaign for integrated deterrence. A deliberate development of MOPs and MOEs that support campaign objectives ensures that task execution leads to desired effects.

As combatant commands have campaign plans that they execute through campaign orders, there is a natural fit within existing battle rhythms to adequately campaign. Combatant commands have boards, bureaus, cells, centers, working groups, operations, and intelligence updates, etc., to help update and inform leadership. Subordinate commands have battle rhythms with similar processes. Incorporating assessment indicators into these processes is the inherent manner for campaigning. Data-driven systems, such as C2IE or other emerging technologies, can help subordinate units tie their tactical missions to strategic effects.

The USAFRICOM TCAPT facilitated a template for others to capitalize on. The USAFRICOM TCAPT's method of facilitating this process is just one way, but it could benefit other combatant commands and subordinate units. Others may use different processes that work better for their organizations. Readers if this paper can feel free to steal the template, make it better, and share it so that we all can grow. Leaders and staffs at echelon—from tactical to strategic—can implement this process. The only resources required are: objectives, whiteboards and markers, brainpower, and time. Ultimately, we owe it to the tactical units on the frontlines to ensure that their sacrifices have positive and lasting strategic effects.

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⁵ *JCC*, 23.

⁶ For example, see: *JCC*, 23, 37, 57-60, 62,

⁷ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Campaigns and Operations*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office 2022), GL-8.

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⁹ JP 5-0, GL-6

¹⁰ JP 5-0, K-20

¹¹ JP 5-0, K-2

¹² JP 5-0, K-17

¹³ JP 5-0, K-17 to K-18

¹⁴ JP 5-0, K-19

¹⁵ JP 5-0, K-18.

¹⁶ JP 5-0, K-19

¹⁷ JP 5-0, k-19 to K-20.

¹⁸ JP 5-0, K-23

¹⁹ JP 5-0, K-22