STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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# TRANSFORMATION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS: REDUCING JOINT FRICTION

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# TRANSFORMATION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS: REDUCING JOINT FRICTION

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## ABSTRACT

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Despite unparalleled success in Operation Enduring Freedom, special operations forces must undergo a rapid transformation to reduce joint operational friction. Joint friction results from employing the current, or legacy, special operations forces against an adversary that uses surprise and asymmetric warfare. In many fundamental ways special operations forces remain legacy forces designed for a different threat—the Soviet Union. They are not optimized for the war on terrorism and the complex future operating environment. These legacy ties create points of operational friction that hinder achieving the new defense strategy's goal of swift and decisive defeat of asymmetric adversaries. This paper examines the implications of the new defense strategy for special operations. It identifies critical areas that generate joint friction: unified command legacy command relationships doctrine; ad hoc operational level joint command and control organizations; and, the use of Service-centric doctrine and procedures to plan and coordinate joint missions. This paper concludes with alternatives that will reduce joint friction and dramatically improve special operations forces' ability to support the defense strategy goal of making "truly dramatic improvements in joint operational effectiveness."

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# TRANSFORMATION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS: REDUCING JOINT FRICTION

> Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate and end by producing a kind of friction that . . . combine to lower the general level of performance.
>
> —von Clausewitz

The Afghan campaign has clearly demonstrated the enduring value of special operations' core competency—unconventional warfare—as an effective and efficient capability to fight the war on terrorism. A small number of special operations forces operating with indigenous forces and receiving Naval and Air Force air support eliminated al Qaeda's Afghan safe haven, terrorist training bases, and support systems. They brought down the Taliban government; they effected a regime change—all in two months. Their success was astonishing.

Notwithstanding Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) successes, however, in many fundamental ways today's special operations forces remain legacy forces designed for a different threat—the Soviet Union. These legacy ties create an operational friction that handicaps special operations forces' ability to conduct joint operations against asymmetric adversaries. Some friction is caused by chance, such as fratricide, the limiting effect of bad weather, and imperfect intelligence resulting in attacks on friendly indigenous forces. Other points of friction are caused by Cold War-era doctrine, organization, and procedures. While friction caused by chance may be difficult to eliminate, the Cold War-era legacy needs to be transformed in order to optimize special operations capabilities for the nascent operating environment. These points of friction include:

- Strategic-level command relationships doctrine for combatant commands' special operations commands that inhibit rapid planning and execution of operations.
- Operational-level ad hoc joint command and control organizations that do not meet the new defense strategy's requirement for rapid joint operations.[1]
- Operational and tactical-level inefficiencies created by using Service-centric doctrine and procedures to plan and execute joint operations.

In the joint environment of special operations, these points of friction accumulate exponentially to produce a joint friction that hinders immediate operations and the swift and decisive defeat of adversaries.

This paper examines the new defense strategy's implications for special operations. It identifies points of joint friction that inhibit special operations' support to the strategy. And it

recommends transformational alternatives to substantially reduce that friction. Understanding the new defense strategy, as described in the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), and identifying those aspects of special operations that inhibit optimal support are the bases for developing transformational alternatives. The objective is to reduce friction in order to achieve the QDR transformation goal of making "truly dramatic improvements in joint operational effectiveness"[2] and to conduct joint operations with the optimum agility and responsiveness required to defeat asymmetric adversaries. This paper focuses on special operations normally conducted by Joint Special Operations Task Forces (JSOTF), and does not address operations of Joint Psychological Operations Task Forces or Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Forces.

## NEW DEFENSE STRATEGY'S IMPLICATIONS FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS

### NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

The National Security Strategy (NSS) grand strategic interests of global security, democracy and economic openness, and freedom across the globe[3] are nearly identical to those of the previous NSS.[4] There is, however, a new grand strategic way to achieve the interests—creating "a balance of power that favors human freedom."[5] This new way assumes that if the world is safer "people will be able to make their own lives better."[6] To create a safer world, the U.S. will help set the conditions for a balance of power by defeating terrorism, building relations with other great powers, and "by encouraging free and open societies on every continent."[7] This is not the global engagement policy that was the grand strategic way of the previous NSS. The earlier policy stated that "We must deploy America's financial, diplomatic and military resources to stand up for peace and security, promote global prosperity, and advance democracy and human rights around the world."[8]

Where global engagement for a "Global Age" was the former NSS' scope, the new NSS focuses on asymmetric adversaries, the war on terrorism, and close relations with other powers. It is a regional, not a global focus, with emphasis on critical regions: Europe, Northeast Asia, East Asian littoral, and Southwest Asia. This change in focus is evident in the five stated national security interests: security of the homeland and U.S. citizens at home and abroad; security of allies and friends; security of the four critical regions; security of lines of communication; and, access to key markets and resources.[9] In support of each of these security interests the U.S. will undertake a new defense strategy to achieve four security goals: assure allies and friends, dissuade competition, deter aggression, and decisively defeat any adversary.

## NEW DEFENSE STRATEGY

Until the National Military Strategy that supports the new NSS is published, the new defense strategy for achieving the NSS' four goals can be best seen in the QDR. Although the QDR was essentially completed before 11 September 2001, its fundamental tenets and future direction for the Department of Defense were "confirm[ed]" by the terror attacks.[10] Other documents, such as the 2002 *Annual Report to the President and the Congress,* speeches, press briefings, and interviews elaborating on this strategy provide the basis for analyzing special operations throughout this paper.

The new defense strategy places special operations in a prominent role because of their unique operational capabilities to counter asymmetric adversaries. To fully support this prominent role, special operations need to become as effective, efficient, and responsive as possible to support the four security goals.[11]

### Assure Allies and Friends

Special operations can be a key way to assure allies and friends. Special operations personnel are regionally focused with in-depth knowledge of regional languages and cultures. They have long-term in-country experience, and they maintain personal relationships that enable special operations forces to work well with indigenous populations. Special operations forces are ideal to "help allies and friends create favorable balances of military power in critical areas of the world."[12] As the QDR notes, "the presence of American forces overseas is one of the most profound symbols of the U.S. commitment to allies and friends."[13] In the past, special operations have been routinely involved in theater engagement plans—now called security cooperation plans. Combatant commanders need to enhance their use of special operations forces to engage militaries and populations to increase indigenous capabilities—and thereby help create a balance of power favorable to the United States. Special operations forces are specifically organized, trained, and educated to do this in a manner that does not intrude on the host nation.

### Dissuade Future Military Competition

Special operations supporting indigenous forces—whether through foreign internal defense with friendly countries, or through unconventional warfare working with indigenous forces trying to overthrow a government—can have a dissuading effect on future military competition. Dissuading competition requires a well-focused theater security cooperation plan executed over

an extended period to build the required indigenous capabilities. Special operations security cooperation activities have the ability to "channel threats in certain directions, and complicate military planning for potential adversaries"[14] by building indigenous military capabilities to enhance the security of friends and allies.

**Deter Threats and Coercion**

When the goal is to deter aggression and coercion, the QDR provides specific ways to achieve this goal. The military is to do this by "enhancing the future capability of forward deployed and stationed forces, coupled with global intelligence, strike, and information assets, in order to deter aggression or coercion with *only modest reinforcement from outside the theater.*"[15] (The italics are added to emphasize a fundamental change in defense strategy—enhancing our forward posture.) Furthermore, the QDR requires forward deployed and stationed forces must "fight from a forward deterrent posture with *immediately employable forces,*"[16] and have joint commands with forces capable of rapid integration.[17] The challenge of requiring forward deployed and stationed forces to "swiftly defeat attacks and impose severe penalties for aggression"[18] is a core tenet of the new defense strategy. In both cases special operations supporting indigenous forces or those using special operations forces to serve as immediately employable forces can deter aggression in its early stages. Defense strategy, however, recognizes that "decisively defeating an adversary will require substantial reinforcement."[19]

While not mentioned in the QDR, the NSS contains an additional reason to enhance forward presence—a tenet from Sun Tsu[20]—the imperative of preemptive operations to "defeat an adversary's plans before he can act on them."[21] The right mix of forward presence capabilities improves a preemptive strike's probability of success since forward forces may be positioned to achieve surprise, which could be more difficult for forces deploying from the United States.

Deterrence has several implications. Special operations need to develop a forward deployed and stationed posture that is able to conduct immediate joint operations without significant augmentation from outside the theater. Equally important, special operations need forward stationed operational-level joint command and control organizations capable of immediate employment of forces.

**Decisively Defeat Any Adversary**

If deterrence fails decisively defeating any adversary will require "substantial augmentation even after transformation."[22] Adversaries, however, can include state or non-state adversaries, and, defeat can include a regime change and/or occupation as seen in Afghanistan. Special operations can support regime change and conduct foreign internal defense operations until a new government can govern effectively.

TRANSFORMATION OPERATIONALIZED

In order to accomplish the new defense strategy's goals, the U.S. military must transform to a force that will deter and defeat terrorists and nascent adversaries who use "surprise, deception, and asymmetric warfare to achieve their goals."[23] The first major battle of the new defense strategy was Mazar-e-Sharif, which the Secretary of Defense called a "transformational battle."[24] The Secretary describes the battle as coalition forces using existing military capabilities from the most:

> advanced laser-guided weapons to antique, 40-year-old B-52s . . . updated with modern electronics—and also to the most rudimentary, a man on horseback. And they used them together in unprecedented ways, with devastating effect on enemy positions, on enemy morale, and this time, on the cause of evil in the world.[25]

Mazar-e-Sharif and other battles in Afghanistan have brought together the war on terrorism, the defense strategy, and transformation—the melding of which has operationalized transformation and moved it from conceptualization about future war into ways and means to achieve the new defense strategy's goals.

At Mazar-e-Sharif in Afghanistan the battle was won by combining high-tech precision-guided munitions, adaptive thinking, warrior ethos of U.S. Special Forces, horses, and indigenous forces—Northern Alliance and other tribal leaders.[26] This battle was transformational because new and old capabilities were put together in different ways to defeat a determined asymmetric adversary. It was also transformational because the campaign plan created a unique mix of agile and responsive joint forces—a Special Forces Group; Naval, Marine, and Air Force support; and an Army battalion—that deployed and were operational quickly, linked-up with indigenous forces, and defeated the Taliban in less time than it would take to deploy a heavy conventional force to Afghanistan. Mazar-e-Sharif demonstrates a key transformation tenet of the QDR—making dramatic improvements in joint operations.[27]

Transformation is accomplished when forces employ new technology, new capabilities, refine existing capabilities, and put old and new things together in a manner that assures allies and friends, dissuades competition, deters adversaries, and, when deterrence fails, decisively defeats our adversaries.

Transformation of joint special operations can be accomplished by reducing or eliminating points of joint friction that occur when legacy doctrine is used against asymmetric adversaries. Points of friction at three doctrinal levels require attention. First, strategic joint command relationships doctrine for combatant command and theater Special Operations Command (SOC) needs to be refined to optimize rapid planning and execution. Second, a new construct needs to replace the operational level legacy ad hoc joint special operations command and control headquarters doctrine in order to meet the new defense strategy's requirement for rapid operations. Third, the operational and tactical level friction created by using Service-centric doctrine and procedures to plan and execute joint operations requires a new construct.

## TRANSFORMATION OF STRATEGIC JOINT COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

Alternatives for transforming strategic-level joint special operations command and control involve two aspects of combatant command doctrine for unified action in Joint Pub 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*. First, revise the UNAAF to firmly establish that theater SOCs are not component organizations. Second, create doctrine to transform theater SOCs into an alternative command structure called an *embedded* subordinate unified command. These doctrinal changes would combine to substantially improve the command relationships between the combatant commander and the theater SOC. Both changes put old and new doctrine together in a different way and transform joint command and control by making dramatic improvements in the responsiveness of joint special operations planning and execution.

The UNAAF is the capstone doctrinal implementer of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, including key provisions that expand joint commander's responsibilities and authorities. The purpose of the UNAAF is to establish doctrine and procedures to "provide for unity of effort, centralized planning and direction, and decentralized execution."[28] It provides doctrine for permanent and temporary joint commands; defines missions, roles, and functions; and establishes command relationships and authorities in order to achieve unity of effort when planning, training, supporting, and employing forces in joint, multinational, and interagency operations. Transforming joint operations would be much more difficult if Goldwater-Nichols had not been enacted because it made major improvements in the ability of the U.S. military to operate as a joint force.

## SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMPONENT FALLACY

Using correct doctrinal terminology to describe organizations is important because organizations have specific roles, tasks, and functions. Capricious use of terminology muddles thinking and creates unfounded expectations. One such doctrinal capriciousness is the reference to a theater SOC as a special operations "component." Joint doctrine uses "component" to describe two organizations: permanent Service components and temporary functional components subordinate to a JTF.

It is fallacious to describe a theater SOC as a component because it does not have the requirement or capability to perform many of the roles, tasks, and functions of a permanent Service component, as required by Title 10, U.S. Code—complex tasks including Service administration, exercise of Service logistics support authority, and Service training. In fact, theater SOCs and their subordinate forces rely on Army, Navy, and Air Force Service components for administrative and logistic support. Moreover, a theater SOC is a subordinate unified command with roles, tasks, and functions that are not assigned to a component, such as operational control of assigned and attached forces, while a Service component exercises administrative control. There are significant role, task, and function differences between Service components and theater SOCs.

Thus, the first transformational change is to clarify in doctrine that the theater SOC is a permanent functional subordinate unified command and not a component organization. The source of confusion is perhaps the Figure 1 reconstruction of the UNAAF illustration of *Possible Components in a Joint Force,* which does not show the theater SOC.[29] Theater SOCs are organized as functional commands to put the special operations function in a single joint command to enable an enduring mission and to exercise operational control of subordinate assigned or attached Army, Navy, and Air Force forces. Yet, the UNAAF's command arrangements chart omits this organizational construct as seen in Figure 1.

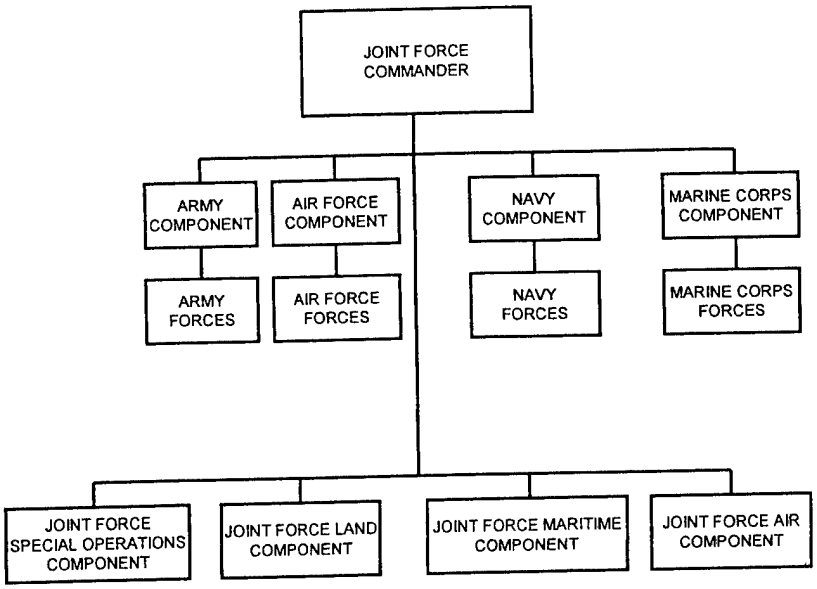


FIGURE 1. POSSIBLE COMPONENTS IN A JOINT FORCE

Perhaps the idea that theater-level special operations organizations are components is created by the UNAAF illustration that indicates only one option for special operations—Joint Force Special Operations Component (JFSOC), which is a temporary functional JTF component.[30] This illustration leads some to conclude that a theater SOC is a permanent component command similar to Army, Navy, and Air Force components of a combatant command. This is not the case.

Figure 2 is an alternative to the current UNAAF illustration. It presents a more complete command arrangement with the theater SOC as a permanent subordinate unified command, on par with but not with the same functions as Service components, and a JFSOC as the temporary special operations functional command of a joint task force.

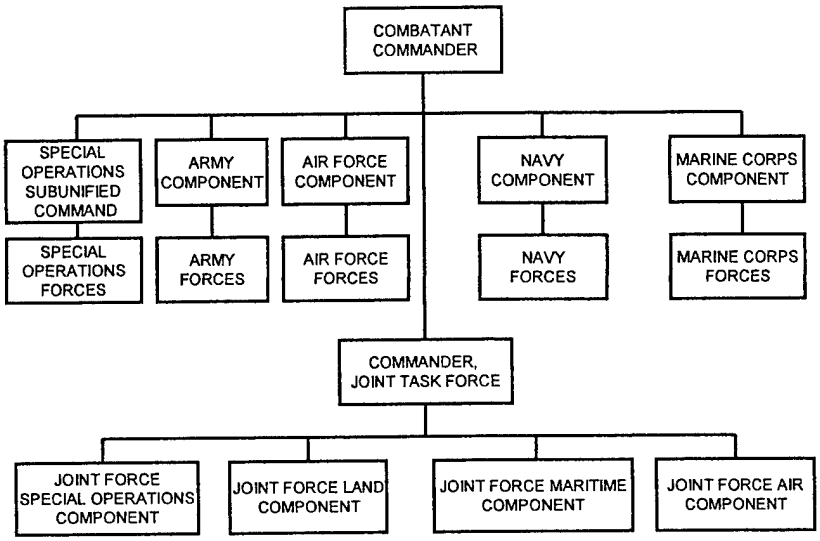


FIGURE 2. POSSIBLE COMBATANT COMMAND ORGANIZATION

## EMBEDDED SUBORDINATE UNIFIED COMMANDS

A transformational alternative at the strategic level is to create a closer arrangement between the combatant command and its theater SOC. The QDR notes several ways to transform organizations—streamline and flatten,[31] change organizational design,[32] and create "new forms of organization[s].[33] Streamlining the relationship between the combatant command and the SOC can be accomplished by bringing the organizations as close together as possible--physically and organizationally. This argument is based on the assumption that a combatant command and theater SOC by their very separateness create time-consuming staffing and coordination requirements, thereby generating a friction that inhibits timely and efficient planning and execution of joint operations. The theater SOC as a separate command routinely coordinates with the combatant command in matters concerning direction of subordinate forces; command arrangements; organization of forces; employment; functions and responsibilities; planning; policies, priorities, and requirements; joint training; and area of operations.[34] To accomplish these functions, the theater SOC spends considerable time ensuring synchronization with the combatant command and compliance with its directions and taskings. Each staff must work through a linear staffing cycle—an organizational framework that creates combatant commands with separate and distinct subordinate joint and Service commands, an architecture that was acceptable when the norm was deliberate planning.

Today, however, the norm is crisis action planning that we see conceptually in U.S. Joint Forces Command's (USJFCOM) Rapid Decisive Operations concept and operationally in OEF. A way to improve crisis action planning is to bring the combatant and subordinate unified commands closer by developing doctrine for a new organization called an *embedded* subordinate unified command, which embeds the theater SOC into the combatant command staff; and, thereby reduces friction created by having two distinct commands.[35] The organization design goal is to integrate the staffs to the maximum extend possible. This requires physical collocation of the two organizations. The key to this change is to dual-hat the theater SOC as a directorate on the combatant command's staff—the Directorate of Special Operations—a directorate on par with the Director of Operations, Director of Plans and Policy, etc. This makes the senior in-theater special operations flag officer the principal advisor, information source, and special operations expert for the combatant commander. With the senior special operations flag officer on the combatant command staff, actions that impact special operations forces can be quickly developed and coordinated because the theater SOC's staff is working side by side with the rest of the combatant command, resolving issues internally, developing plans and recommendations for the combatant commander. This staff arrangement ties special operations as close as possible to the combatant commander to efficiently handle sensitive subjects and time-sensitive missions. It also eliminates the need for other directorates to develop in-house special operations expertise, such as a special operations branch in the Directorate of Operations, since special operations expertise is available in the Directorate of Special Operations.

The theater SOC commander, who is also Director of the Directorate of Special Operations, retains command of the embedded subordinate unified command. Since he is dual-hatted as a director on the combatant command staff and commander of the theater SOC, operational requirements go quickly from the combatant command's Operations Directorate to the Special Operations Directorate, which changes hats to its theater SOC role and provides immediate tasking to special operations units. Thus, in effect, the embedded subordinate unified command concept eliminates one staff layer by integrating the two staffs, thereby establishing the shortest possible chain of command for the combatant commander to execute special operations and contributes to the transformation objective of improving the timeliness of unified action.

## TRANSFORMATION OF OPERATIONAL LEVEL AD HOC COMMAND AND CONTROL

Creating embedded subordinate unified commands for theater-level joint special operations could significantly reduce friction at the unified command level. There is another point of friction in joint special operations command at the next lower echelon that needs to be transformed in order to support a key NSS objective[36] and a defense strategy transformation goal of deterring "aggression and coercion by deploying forward the capacity to swiftly defeat attacks."[37] Historically, special operations have depended upon ad hoc joint command and control organizations at the operational level. History informs us that the ad hoc nature of joint special operations headquarters has been acceptable because swiftness of initial operations has not been a requirement. The history of special operations has many examples of ad hoc command and control organizations with subordinate land, maritime, and air forces. The following examples from World War II, Vietnam, Cold War-era, and Desert Storm illustrate the adequacy of ad hoc command and control organizations for past wars, i.e. "large-scale, sustained combat operations."[38]

### FROM OSS TO DESERT STORM

The World War II operating environment required regaining territory and defeating the Axis Powers—a long-term process. Special operations in World War II were primarily the responsibility of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which was created in June 1942.[39] The OSS in Europe had until mid-1944 to prepare its Special Operations Branch—working with the British Special Operations Executive—to begin a combined operation in France.[40] The operation was called the Jedburgh Mission. Its purpose was to "infiltrate by air (parachute) . . . prior to D-day to organize the guerrilla potential and conduct unconventional operations" in support of the Allied D-day landings in France.[41] While there was a great sense of urgency in World War II, the operating environment provided time to identify the need for joint special operations, establish headquarters, recruit, train, plan, and, when ready, employ forces. Execution of immediate operations in the case of the Special Operations Branch was not a requirement.

The Vietnam War also provided time to establish a joint special operations command and control organization. The complex story of special operations in Southeast Asia begins in the late 1950's with Central Intelligence Agency operations and, later, U.S. military covert missions.[42] In January 1964, President Johnson directed Military Advisory Command Vietnam (MACV) to conduct unconventional operations. For this purpose MACV established the Studies and Observations Group (SOG).[43] This organization was a Joint Unconventional Warfare Task

Force (JUWTF). MACV-SOG employed land, maritime, and air forces against "North Vietnamese, Khmer Rouge, and Pathet Lao forces within their own territory"[44] for over eight years until its deactivation on 30 April 1972. The nature of the Vietnam conflict was a slow incremental process of determining requirements, creating MACV-SOG, training the forces, then employment. It was not a conflict requiring immediate employment of special operations forces.

The JUWTF concept continued through the 1970s and early 1980s, as described in the Joint Chiefs of Staff publications on special operations targeting and mission planning procedures.[45] The rebirth of special operations in 1984, spurred by the failure of the Iran hostage rescue, changed terminology from unconventional warfare to special operations—JUWTF became Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF). The JSOTFs were the key joint special operations command and control organizations during the Cold War-era. Preparations for operations against the Soviets involved numerous JSOTFs. As it turned out, there were many years of deliberate planning, targeting, and countless exercises to train and test the ability of JSOTFs to execute special operations. The adequacy of this arrangement was never given the final test in war with the Soviets.

Another historical example is Special Operations Command Europe's (SOCEUR) JSOTF that Combatant Commander, U.S. European Command established as part of JTF-Proven Force at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey to execute operations during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The JSOTF was created from the SOCEUR staff and augmented with personnel from subordinate operational units and elsewhere. It deployed early in Desert Shield, and, therefore, had almost six months to prepare for operations before Desert Storm began in January 1991. SOCEUR's JSOTF did not encounter a requirement for immediate employment of forces during the early days of Desert Shield,[46] except for occasional combat search and rescue.

## POST DESERT STORM MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR

Given the adequacy of ad hoc joint special operations command and control organizations in wars from the OSS to Desert Storm, how well have they worked in recent Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)? Although the ad hoc JSOTF is a legacy of the Cold War, it is the operational-level joint special operations command and control organization used in the 1990s and remains the doctrine today.[47]

When a combatant commander employs forces he establishes a JTF "when the mission has a specific limited objective and . . . require[s] execution of responsibilities involving a joint force on a significant scale and close integration of effort."[48] The Joint Force Commander organizes subordinate land, maritime, air, and special operations forces under functional

components: Joint Force Land Component Commander, Joint Force Maritime Component Commander, Joint Force Air Component Commander, and Joint Force Special Operations Component Commander (JFSOCC).[49] Although the UNAAF does not provide specific organizational structure for land, maritime, and air components, it does for special operations—the JSOTF.[50] The JFSOCC establishes a JSOTF with a joint staff to exercise operational control of assigned or attached subordinate operational units.[51] A JSOTF is:

> A joint task force composed of special operations units from more than one Service, formed to carry out a specific special operation or prosecute special operations in support of a theater campaign or other operations. The joint special operations task force may have conventional non-special operations units assigned or attached to support the conduct of specific missions.[52]

Like a JTF, a JSOTF is established for specific missions and "dissolved when the purpose for which it was created has been achieved."[53] The ad hoc JSOTF organizes with a staff normally from the theater SOC and augmentees from operational units. Or, if a Service special operations unit is designated as a JSOTF, it is augmented with joint and other-Service personnel.

Review of past special operations in MOOTW like Somalia and Haiti indicates the ad hoc JSOTF doctrinal construct although problematic was adequate. Support to humanitarian assistance in Somalia began in August 1992 with a special forces battalion deploying to Kenya to provide security and a quick reaction force for those delivering relief supplies during Operation Provide Relief. When U.S. participation expanded into Operation Restore Hope (ORH) in December 1992, the special forces battalion moved to Mogadishu and formed Joint Special Operations Forces-Somalia (JSOFOR) and successfully provided command and control of a complex mission "to make initial contact with indigenous factions and leaders; provide information for force protection; and provide area assessments for future relief and security operations . . . [while supporting] nine humanitarian relief sector commanders."[54] As operations transitioned to United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) II in March 1993, special operations expanded to a JSOTF located in Mombasa, Kenya, which supported JTF Somalia, a subordinate organization of U.S. Forces Somalia built upon the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division.[55] The special operations in Somalia continued with Secretary of Defense Aspin's August 1993 deployment of Task Force Ranger with the mission to capture Aideed, an extremely difficult mission since he had gone underground after AC-130 attacks on his stronghold. With a sudden change in U.S. political policy generated by the lost of 17 Task Force Ranger personnel, U.S. forces withdrew from Somalia by March 1995.[56] While there is

considerable literature on the lack of unity of effort in Somalia operations, the special operations command and control organizations—the special forces battalion initially in Kenya, the JSOFOR-Somalia during ORH, and the JSOTF in Mombasa during USOSOM II all experienced a gradual increase in operation tempo that gave time for the command and control organizations to develop adequate joint proficiencies.

The special operations experience in Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti is another MOOTW example of an operation with the lead-time to create an effective ad hoc JSOTF, albeit with difficulties. In preparation for an invasion of Haiti, U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) and 3rd Special Forces Group stood up a Joint Operations Planning Group (JOPG) in February 1994, eight months prior to operations that began on 20 September 1994. The JOPG transitioned, with augmentation, to a JSOTF under the command of BG Richard Potter in August 1994. The JSOTF encountered difficulties including the lack of operational-level joint experience in the special forces group staff and arrival of 77 augmentees just prior to execution. Nevertheless, ad hoc joint command and control meet the requirement. On 1 November 1994, approximately 12 personnel from Special Operations Command Atlantic Command arrived to replace the USASOC personnel. This arrangement continued until July 1995 when, as the operation tapered off, 3rd Special Forces Group assumed command and control of special operations. The special operations forces over a period of more than six months established peace, order, and safety in all of Haiti, except Port al Prince that was the responsibility of conventional Army forces. The story of their support to the people of Haiti and how they brought relief to years of suffering is noteworthy and speaks well of their to unique capabilities. Although difficult to create, the JSOTF concept met the command and control needs for Operation Uphold Democracy.

## OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

So, given fifty years of successful experience with ad hoc joint special operations command and control organizations in war and MOOTW, how well do JSOTFs meet today's requirements? The success of joint special operations in Afghanistan would tend to argue that the present ad hoc JSOTF is adequate. In fact, the current JSOTF doctrine is perhaps the best it has been since Special Operations Command Joint Forces Command (SOCJFCOM) refined it prior to OEF by improving special operations crisis action and time-sensitive mission planning.[57]

But, despite refined doctrine ad hoc JSOTFs are not strategically responsive. The problem with ad hoc JSOTFs is that the war on terrorism and other asymmetric adversaries require immediate execution of effective operations. Ad hoc JSOTFs create an initial joint friction that

hinders early operations because of differences in joint knowledge and experience of composite staffs and dissimilarities between joint and Service doctrine. Moreover, while Service special operations units are strategically responsive, rapidly deployed, and ready for early operations, JSOTFs are not because they are only created when needed. Thus, ad hoc JSOTFs are a weak link in special operations forces' ability to support the QDR goal of immediate and effective joint operations.[58] An example is U.S. Army 5th Special Forces Group's JSOTF-North, which conducted operations in Afghanistan during the early months of OEF. The core of JSOTF-North was the 5th Special Forces Group commander and staff, an organization trained in Army Field Manual (FM) 101-5, *Staff Organization and Operations*, including the Military Decision Making Process that was used at all levels—group, battalion, and operational detachment. 5th Special Forces Group was well trained to coordinate and execute operations as an Army Special Forces Operational Base, a mission it can execute with immediate effectiveness and efficiency. However, there are significant doctrinal process, terminology, and format differences between FM 101-5 and the key JSOTF doctrine—Joint Pub 3-05.2, *Special Operations Targeting and Mission Planning Procedures*. Some examples of joint doctrine that are foreign to FM 101-5 include joint processes, such as the Joint Targeting Coordination Board, and unique procedures and formats including the Initial Assessment, Feasibility Assessment, Special Operations Mission Planning Folder, etc. All these differences contributed to an initial joint friction that required quick adaptability of JSOTF-North Army personnel and augmentation by SOCJFCOM personnel and others to overcome it.

## STANDING JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE

From World War II to Desert Storm, ad hoc organizations have been acceptable. But, as this doctrinal construct was continued in MOOTW in the 1990s, ad hoc organizations became more problematic. Finally, by OEF, the responsiveness required to counter asymmetrical adversaries demonstrates that the era of ad hoc joint special operations command and control organizations needs to end. A way to solve this problem is seen in the current action to solve a similar issue for conventional forces—the problem of ad hoc JTFs.

The Department of Defense is resolving the JTF problem by creating Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ) in each regional combatant command to eliminate the time lost in developing effective and efficient ad hoc JTFs.[59] The SJFHQ should reduce a conventional point of friction by replacing ad hoc JTF with the core of a permanent JTF staff. The SJFHQ's primary functions are to plan for operations in troubled regions; coordinate with the combatant command and other staffs; and be the core staff of a JTF when employment of forces is

required. Because the SJFHQ is permanent it develops staff cohesion; dominant regional knowledge; and personal in-theater military, diplomatic, and civilian relationships.[60] The SJFHQ supports the defense strategy by providing the core of an immediately effective JTF that is able to rapidly coordinate joint conventional operations to swiftly defeat an adversary.

Using the SJFHQ concept as a model, special operations require a similar initiative—permanent Standing Joint Special Operations Task Forces (SJSOTF) in each regional combatant command, able to immediately employ special operations forces to contribute to an adversary's swift defeat. Special operations' prominent role in the war of terrorism and the present ad hoc nature of JSOTFs make the need for permanent operational-level joint special operations headquarters as urgent as the SJFHQ, if not more so.

Unlike the SJFHQ, each SJSOTF needs to be a true task force with all resources required to operate—personnel, communications, command and control systems, administrative airlift service, administrative and logistic support, etc. Assigned to the theater SOC, the SJSOTF will be able to operate in garrison to execute day-to-day training and security cooperation activities, or deploy and employ subordinate forces in smaller-scale contingencies or major combat operations. Key SJSOTF functions include:

- Prepare for future operations as part of a JTF, able to execute immediate operations.
- Execute day-to-day missions, e.g., security cooperation missions, as assigned by the SOCs, thereby relieving the SOC from distracting tactical-level activities.
- Develop proficiency in joint special operations time-sensitive targeting and planning.
- Develop a cohesive staff with dominant knowledge of critical regions.
- Train with subordinate forces for operations against asymmetric adversaries.
- Develop relationships with other headquarters, operational units, host nation military, and diplomatic and civilian organizations.
- Deploy on intra-theater mobility assets and operate in austere environments.

We can no longer afford to put together ad hoc organizations and give them time to jell before executing joint operations. Special operations' role in the worldwide war on terrorism argues for early resourcing of SJSOTFs. While this concept may be compelling, the challenge is finding resources to make it happen. Any expansion of special operations forces requires time, but the importance of transforming joint operational-level command and control requires an early solution.

## TRANSFORMATION OF SERVICE-CENTRIC DOCTRINE AND PROCEDURES

### UNIFIED COMMAND VERSUS SERVICE-LIKE FUNCTIONS

The Nunn-Cohen amendment to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 created U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) as a functional combatant command with the mission of providing trained special operations forces to regional combatant commands. In this respect USSOCOM is similar to USJFCOM whose functions include providing trained joint forces to regional combatant commands. What makes USSOCOM different from USJFCOM and the two other functional combatant commands—U.S. Transportation Command and U.S. Strategic Command—are USSOCOM's Service-like responsibilities:

> develop SOF doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures; conduct specialized courses of instruction for all SOF; train assigned forces and ensure interoperability of equipment and forces; monitor the preparedness of SOF assigned to other unified commands; monitor the promotions, assignments, retention, training and professional development of all SOF personnel; consolidate and submit program and budget proposals for Major Force Program 11; and, develop and acquire special operations-peculiar, equipment, materiel, supplies, and services.[61]

The combatant command functions, not the Service-like functions, have driven USSOCOM's command structure and organization. Like other combatant commands, USSOCOM is organized with three Service components—USASOC, Naval Special Warfare Command, and U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command. This organization is modeled after the UNAAF doctrine for combatant commands, which maintains Service component organizational structures to ensure close ties with parent Services to leverage equipment, personnel management, logistic, and other support.

The paradox of USSOCOM is that its three Service component organization inhibit its ability to produce joint operational forces with integrated doctrine and procedures. Creating the tri-Service USSOCOM in 1987 seemed like the best way to provide trained special operations forces, and execute program, budget, and acquisition responsibilities. Yet, the tripartite Service arrangement belies the axiom that special operations are inherently joint. This creates points of friction when integrating Army, Navy, and Air Force special operations forces for operations under a theater SOC or JSOTF. The effect is seen in the addition of the term "joint" to describe special operations, such as Joint Pub 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, a title whose

redundancy is the product of USSOCOM's friction creating, Service-centric approach to preparing special operations forces.

## OVERCOMING SERVICE-CENTRIC SPECIAL OPERATIONS

In the 1980's special operations led the military in joint doctrine. Special operations had joint doctrine and procedures before Goldwater-Nichols authorized the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff to develop "doctrine for the joint employment of the armed forces.[62] This pre-Goldwater-Nichols doctrine was articulated in JCS publications that are the predecessors of today's Joint Pub 3-05.2, *Special Operations Targeting and Mission Planning*. During the rebirth of special operations in the mid-1980s, these JCS documents were the doctrinal and procedural core of Army, Navy, and Air Force special operations deliberate and crisis action planning. The development of Special Operations Mission Planning Folders used joint formats and procedures that were common doctrine for special operations forces target development and mission planning throughout the regional unified commands.

Yet, today when special operations forces coordinate missions, Service procedures, terminology, and processes collide with joint doctrine to produce inefficiencies and friction. Today there are four sets of special operations doctrine—joint, Army, Navy, and Air Force. A JSOTF coordinating targeting and mission planning uses Joint Pub 3-05.2, its subordinate forces use Service publications, such as Army special operations forces use of FM 101-5. Thus, today's special operations retain legacy Service-centric doctrine and procedures underneath a veneer of joint special operations doctrine that inhibits timely, effective, and efficient joint operations.

Special operations doctrine and procedures need a coherent, single Service-like integrated effort that eliminates Service points of friction. Achieving this requires a return to one set of special operations doctrine, rather than continuing three sets of disparate Service doctrine and a set of joint doctrine. This alternative requires elimination of special operations Service doctrine and creation of a single set of joint special operations doctrine that addresses all three Service component forces. This all encompassing special operations doctrine would also include appropriate integration with conventional Service doctrine, such as Special Operations Command and Control Element integration into conventional Army and U.S. Marine Corps doctrine and procedures.

## CONCLUSION

The special operations community needs to transform the legacy aspects of its organization, doctrine, and procedures that generate joint friction and diminish its ability to conduct effective, efficient, and timely operations against terrorists and other asymmetric adversaries. This paper identifies critical areas that generate joint friction and offers three alternatives: create UNAAF doctrine for an embedded subordinate unified command that in effect eliminates one layer of command by embedding the theater SOC into the combatant command staff structure; establish and forward deploy permanent SJSOTFs in each regional combatant command; and, establish coherent special operations doctrine, organizations, and procedures, vice the present Service-centric approach. These changes will reduce joint friction, enable immediate special operations, and contribute to a key QDR transformational goal of making "truly dramatic improvements in joint operational effectiveness."[63]

WORD COUNT: 6,479

## ENDNOTES

[1] George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington D.C.: The White House, September 2002), 16.

[2] Donald H. Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 30 September 2001), 68.

[3] Bush, iv.

[4] William J. Clinton, *The National Security Strategy for a Global Age*, (Washington D.C.: The White House, December 2000), 1. The grand strategic interests are: "enhancing security at home and abroad, promoting prosperity, and promoting democracy and human rights."

[5] Bush, iii.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Clinton, iii.

[9] Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 2.

[10] Ibid., v.

[11] Ibid., 11.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., 12.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Rumsfled, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2002), Ch 5, 4.

[17] Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 32.

[18] Ibid., iv.

[19] Ibid., 26.

[20] Sun Tsu, 77.

[21] Bush, iv.

[22] Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 26.

[23] Ibid., iv.

[24] Donald H. Rumsfeld, "21st Century Transformation," lecture, Fort McNair, U.S. National War College, 31 January 2002.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Rumsfled, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 68. This is one of GEN Shelton's conclusions contained in his statement supporting the results of the Quadrennial Defense Review—Chapter VIII to the QDR.

[28] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub 0-2* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 10 July 2001), V-2.

[29] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub 0-2*, V-3.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 51. Flattening organizations is discussed in regards to Department of Defense business practices, but also is a good way to improve the efficiency of warfighting organizations.

[32] Ibid., 61.

[33] Ibid, 29.

[34] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub 0-2,* III-7-III-8.

[35] Although not called an embedded subordinate unified command, by early 1987 SOCEUR established the Directorate of Special Operations as part of the USEUCOM staff, while simultaneously retaining its role and function as a subordinate unified command.

[36] Bush, 30.

[37] Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, iv.

[38] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, Joint Pub 3-07* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 16 June 1995), I-1.

[39] Central Intelligence Agency, *The Office of Strategic Services: America' First Intelligence Agency* (Washington D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, May 2000), 2. President Roosevelt established the OSS on 13 June 1942 by reorganizing the Office of the Coordinator of Information "the nations first peacetime, non-departmental intelligence organization."

[40] Aaron Bank, *From OSS to Green Berets: The Birth of Special Forces* (Novato, California: Presidio Press, 1986), 16.

[41] Ibid., 14.

[42] Harve Saal, MACV Studies and Operations Group, Volume I (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Edward Brothers, 1990). See pages 45-79 for a discussion of the myriad of special operations activities before MACV-SOG was established.

[43] Ibid., 150. The original name was Special Operation Group, taken from the earlier days of the OSS. However, for security reasons, the name was soon changed to Studies and Observations Group, retaining the acronym SOG.

[44] Ibid., 79-80.

[45] Although it was not until the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 that we had authorization for joint doctrine, prior to 1986 the special operations community had "joint doctrine" describing JUWTF operations. This pre-Goldwater-Nichols heritage is the predecessor of today's Joint Pub 3-05.2, *Special Operations Targeting and Mission Planning Procedures*, which articulates a JSOTF's doctrine and procedures.

[46] The Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) experience was somewhat different. SOCCENT did not organize as a JSOTF in Desert Shield and Desert Storm, rather it displaced its headquarters from MacDill Air Force Base to King Fahd International Airport from which it conducted operations as a theater SOC.

[47] Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations, Joint Pub 3-05 (Washington D.C.: 17 April 1998).

[48] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub 0-2,* V-10.

[49] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 10 September 2001), II-18.

[50] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures, Joint Pub 5-00.2* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 13 January 1999), IV-2.

[51] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations, Joint Pub 3-05.1* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 19 December 2001), x.

[52] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Joint Pub 1-02* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 12 April 2001), 230.

[53] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Unified Action Armed Forces, Joint Pub 0-2*, V-10.

[54] U.S. Special Operations Command, *United States Special Operations Command History, 15th Anniversary* (Tampa, Florida: U.S. Special Operations Command, 16 April 2002), 48.

[55] Kenneth Allard, *Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned* (Fort McNair, Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, January 1995), 60.

[56] U.S. Special Operations Command History, 49-52.

[57] The time-sensitive mission planning process portion of Joint Pub 3-05.2 (Draft) is the result of the work of Colonel Michael J. Findlay, Commander, SOCJFCOM.

[58] Rumsfeld, *Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, Ch 5, 4.

[59] Rumsfled, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 33-34.

[60] Joint Forces Command, *Joint Experimentation Concept Executive Report: 01-02, Unified Visions 2001: Rapid Decisive Operations in 2007* (Norfolk, Virginia: Joint Forces Command, undated), 12-13.

[61] U.S. Special Operations Command, 9.

[62] Title, 10, U.S. Code, Section 153(a)(5).

[63] Rumsfeld, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 68.

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