

Collaboration in a Comprehensive Approach to Operations: Introduction

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1.0 SETTING THE STAGE

At the NATO Chicago Summit 2012, the Lisbon Summit decisions on a comprehensive approach were confirmed and highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach and continued improvements in governance and development, as well as a political process involving successful reconciliation and reintegration. NATO must work with other actors to contribute to a comprehensive approach that effectively combines political, civilian and military crisis management instruments. Its effective implementation requires all actors to contribute in a concerted effort, based on a shared sense of responsibility, openness and determination, and taking into account their respective strengths, mandates and roles, as well as their decision-making autonomy.

The comprehensive approach (CA) brings together a variety of governmental departments, non-governmental organisations, first responders, members of the private sector, and members of local communities working together to meet an overarching mission goal. The comprehensive approach is rooted in the belief that most conflicts reflect a complexity that cannot be solved by a single approach (e.g., a military). Besides the traditional security component, political, civilian and economic components play a role in contemporary peace and crisis management operations. Practice has shown that the combination of governmental and non-governmental instruments, closely linked to host nation instruments, is required for developing and maintaining secure environments and long-term development. Today's peacebuilding operations are more likely to be successful if the mission is embedded in the approaches of and cooperation with other stakeholders with different backgrounds. By harmonising the different approaches, more answers are generated and more effective mission design is supported, using different expertise, skills, and resources and a wide variety of different instruments. In today's operations the tasks are therefore multiplied; not just the provision of security is needed, but also required are development and governmental activities. These operations include establishing infrastructure, building up the security sector, providing economic assistance and employment, setting up good governance, establishing civil administration and Rule of Law, and so on. Additional drivers for aligning efforts are the reduction of costs by avoiding duplication and addressing conflicting organizational cultures and agendas, faster decision-making since all actors are connected to each other, and a stronger legitimacy of missions for the public by having a broader participative basis.

Although the potential opportunities and benefits of the comprehensive approach are viewed as vital to mission success, many challenges for achieving adequate levels of cooperation exist. These include goal ambiguity, high uncertainty with rapidly evolving events on the ground, time pressure, and high risk. Other

barriers that complicate things include disparate mandates or goals that have to be satisfied, and a multiformity of opinions and ideas, organisational cultures, operational styles, and oversight mechanisms, often perceived as contradicting each other, causing tension between the actors involved. This is not only a military versus civilian issue, but also civilian parties are themselves highly diverse. Also the degree to which NGOs and military personnel can be coherent with each other is limited. Additionally, coordinating different actors requires money, resources and capacity, which are often underestimated, and sometimes simply overlooked. All of these factors provide challenges to forming, leading, aligning, and collaborating in comprehensive environments. As these comprehensive teams form and prepare for deployed operations, it is critical that they rapidly build an operating framework to ensure effective collaboration, such as transparent working procedures and a common understanding of requirements and tasks. Thus, there is a great need to understand the various factors that can facilitate or hinder the development and optimal effectiveness of collaborative relationships within a comprehensive context.

There are thus limits to how much coherence can be achieved, even in areas where it is possible to expand the room of coherence. Consequently, one should not pursue coherence beyond certain limits, because it may actually contribute to inefficiency and ineffectiveness. It might even be said that, in the end, depending on the conditions in which a mission is deployed, a single approach might be more time- and cost-effective

2.0 WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Given the centrality of the comprehensive approach to current and anticipated future NATO operations, NATO RTO HFM (HFM 204) organised a workshop on “Effective Collaboration in Joint, Multinational, Multiagency Teams and Staffs” with a focus on collaboration in a Comprehensive Approach to Operations. The goal of the workshop was to address the human dimension of collaboration in comprehensive approaches to expeditionary and domestic operations. This workshop sought to bring together the latest research in relevant areas, integrating diverse disciplines, and combining those insights with actual operational experiences. The focus of the workshop was on intensive information exchange and focused discussion on critical issues of collaboration in comprehensive approaches. In particular the question was how to appropriately address these issues in order to derive answers, rather than simply a statement of current challenges. The goals of the workshop were:

- to identify the current realities, challenges, and benefits of comprehensive approaches to missions based on operational experiences;
- to identify critical research issues, including knowledge gaps, CA-relevant theoretical models (Complexity Theory, Collective Effort Model, etc.), and measurement/methodological issues;
- to identify relevant measures of effectiveness in comprehensive operations; and
- to identify opportunities for further collaboration.

Fifty-two defence scientists, academics, as well as military, governmental and non-governmental representatives with recent operational experiences participated in the workshop in order to seek answers to the critical issues of collaboration between different stakeholders within the comprehensive approach, to determine what scientific knowledge is available to bring to bear upon this issue, and to determine the focus of future research directions for NATO and national ministries or departments of defence. The workshop builds on the work of HFM-087 and HFM-127 on Command Team Effectiveness (CTEF), operational assessments (Essens, et al. 2005; 2010), HFM-138 and HFM-142 on Adaptability in Coalition Teamwork (Sutton, et al. 2008), and HFM-163 on Improving the Organisational Effectiveness of Coalition Operations (Yanakiiev et al. 2012). New insights in organisational concepts, leadership characteristics and multi-team effectiveness, and key findings from the previous NATO task groups were presented with direct application to the specific challenges inherent in a comprehensive approach.

Three keynote speakers of the workshop were strategically chosen to represent the military perspective of collaborative operations (Brigadier-General Stephen Bowes, Canada), the civilian perspective (Mr. Michel Rentenaar, diplomat, The Netherlands), and the academic perspective (Prof. dr. John Hollenbeck, United States).

General Bowes described a number of problems that had to be dealt with in Afghanistan, such as:

- 1) failing governmental leadership;
- 2) harmful practices by the coalition forces; and
- 3) insurgents breeding doubt about conditions and intentions, emphasising security gaps, and intimidating the population.

He described measures that were taken to deal with the problems, but admitted that a great deal still needs to be done. Mr. Rentenaar in his presentation addressed the many issues that had to be dealt with during the Dutch operation in Uruzgan, Afghanistan, such as good governance, rule of law, and developmental issues. He concluded that the comprehensive approach is no guarantee for success, but that the absence of a comprehensive approach is certainly a guarantee for failure. The third keynote presentation by dr. Hollenbeck dealt with collaboration between diverse functional teams from an academic perspective. The underlying concepts were derived from multi-team systems theory. He presented his research on groups of Air Force captains playing a multi-team system game as part of their training program (for a more detailed description of the three keynote speakers see the technical report by Prof dr Ad Vogelaar, this volume).

The spoken papers, presented at the HFM-204 workshop and here included as chapters in the technical report, address the topic of collaboration in a comprehensive approach to operations, and cover a wide range of issues. Some focus on the history of the comprehensive approach and lessons learned, and some discuss future challenges and review new models and initiatives that may be useful in supporting the comprehensive approach.

Heather Hrychuk and Peter Gizewski (Chapter 1), in “Developing the Comprehensive Approach: Exploring the Lessons of History,” argue that detailed examination of the lessons that past history may hold for the development of the comprehensive approach is increasingly warranted. They argue that such analysis can offer valuable clues into general conditions and strategies under which a comprehensive approach may not only be applicable, but also successful.

Colonel Dwayne K. Hobbs (Chapter 2), in “Observations on the Need for a Comprehensive Approach,” has written an autobiographical account of his observations of the joint, interagency, multinational and public (JIMP) operating environment in order to inform future discussions about the need for a Comprehensive Approach.

Hrach Gregorian and Lara Olson (Chapter 3), in “No One Wants to Be Coordinated: Obstacles to Coherence in Multidimensional Peace Operations,” review the main academic and policy approaches to the challenge of effective peacebuilding. The paper shows that the field is in urgent need of innovative research and novel approaches to address the many questions and dilemmas that have arisen in the post-conflict context.

Adrienne Turnbull and Patrick Ulrich (Chapter 4), in “Canadian Military-Civilian Relationships within Kandahar Province,” provide for a description of the cultural differences in relationships between Canadian military and civilian representatives within Kandahar province based on personal experiences, outlines specific examples of where these differences have resulted in successes or failures, and identifies current and potential solutions for addressing these differences.

David Smith, Lianne McLellan, and Colonel Dwayne K. Hobbs (Chapter 5), in “Cultural Differences between the Canadian Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police,” describe some of the cultural differences between Canada’s military, the Canadian Forces (CF), and Canada’s federal police force, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). They explore some of the reasons behind the differences and discuss how these differences may cause difficulties or create opportunities in joint operations.

Tara L. Holton (Chapter 6), in “Facilitating the Comprehensive Approach between Non-Governmental Organisations and the Canadian forces,” focuses on the findings of a study on the Canadian military-NGO relationship. It includes participants’ perceptions regarding the benefits of the relationship between the CF and NGOs, the role and directions that Civil-Military Cooperation should be taking, the importance of managing optics, differences in organizational culture and structure, the lack of trust between the two organisations, and training and education.

Cecilia Hull (Chapter 7), in “Collaboration in a Comprehensive Intervention: working together in analysis, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation,” presents a single framework for how the comprehensive approach could be implemented: “The Comprehensive Intervention” The paper provides for a model that can be used to facilitate such attitudes within the armed. forces and thus enable the implementation of comprehensive approaches.

Major John Leahy (Chapter 8), in “Designing Behavioural-Based Measures of Effect at the Community Level for COIN Operations: Challenges of Design and Framework integration,” explores the strengths and limitations of the Canadian attempt to build an integrated assessment framework, with a focus on the development and application of community-level metrics and methodologies. Moreover, the paper attempts to make suggestions for future integrated assessments of effects.

Dylan Schmorrow and John A. Boiney (Chapter 9), in “How Human Social Culture Behaviour Modelling Can Support a Comprehensive Approach to Operations,” review the history of the comprehensive approach and related concepts, identify core technical challenges associated with effective implementation of a CA, discuss ways that computational modelling may be leveraged to address those challenges, review selected initiatives and tools that are helping develop models and tools that may be useful in supporting the comprehensive approach, and identify key science and technology gaps.

Stephen Fritz-Millet (LCol ret) (Chapter 10), in “A Trainer’s Perspective on Research and Development in Support of the Comprehensive Approach,” proposes two Lines of Investigation (LOI) for future research and development in support of improving the CF’s effectiveness within a comprehensive approach context. The two LOIs proposed are “human factors considerations in the comprehensive approach” and “a tool to enhance the CF’s effectiveness in comprehensive approach operations.”

Leslie DeChurch, Dan Doty, Toshio Murase, and Miliani Jimenez (Chapter 11), in “The Structural Contingencies of Multi-Team Systems: Leadership, Communication, and Trust,” summarize findings from a stream of research in organisational science that has focused on the complex problems regarding collaboration and integration across many different motivated entities.

Josephine Sassen, Peter Essens, Ward Venrooij, Tijmen Muller and Gillian Visschedijk (Chapter 12), in “High Performance Empowerment in the Comprehensive Approach,” address the issue of ad hoc formation of mission-specific military and military-civilian teams and present a training development to accelerate effective interactions in ad hoc teams.

Following the presentations, four syndicate group sessions discussed specific topics (see Chapters 13-16 for a more detailed description of the four workshop sessions). Group 1 on “Capability Gaps, Knowledge Gaps, and Data Gaps in Collaboration in Comprehensive Approaches to Operations” developed and categorized a detailed list of these gaps in the comprehensive context. Group 2 on “Theories and Models for the

Comprehensive Approach: A Multilevel Framework for Linking Theory and Application,” constructed a framework in which multiple levels at which collaboration takes place could be distinguished and studied in relationship to each other. Group 3 on “Measurement of the Comprehensive Approach Processes in the Field” started from the statement that the comprehensive approach is a kind of philosophy that aims to provide positive organisational outcomes. Measuring the comprehensive approach will have to be context-specific and multi-layered. Finally, Group 4 on the “Development of the Comprehensive Approach” discussed strategies for developing or implementing a comprehensive approach and came up with a seven “pillars” approach to developing the comprehensive approach.

Finally, Prof dr Ad Vogelaar, in the “Technical Evaluation Report: Collaboration in a Comprehensive Approach to Operations,” observed that although the field is developing, systematic knowledge and theoretical underpinnings regarding the comprehensive approach is lacking. He gave several recommendations for future work, including clearer definitions pertaining to the comprehensive approach and a more precise specification of the object of study, attention to theoretical underpinnings and diverse levels of cooperation and time horizons, and the establishment of a follow-up activity that addresses current and future research and how ideas for improving the comprehensive approach may be implemented.

3.0 REFERENCES

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