

The Evolution of Canadian Government Structures Managing Interagency Approaches

Heather Hrychuk
101 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa
CANADA

Heather.Hrychuk@forces.gc.ca

ABSTRACT

This paper will discuss the genesis and evolution of Canada's whole of government approach to the mission in Afghanistan. In doing so, it will highlight the various structures which were used over the course of the mission, as well as the respective successes and challenges of each of the three different governance models – aligned, cohesive and integrated – which were employed. Finally draws some conclusions and lessons learned which may have applicability for the management of future comprehensive missions. Through doing so this paper aims to assist understanding of what structures, processes, and governance models have been developed for managing interactions and collaboration in complex arrangements of partners, as well as their respective strengths and weaknesses.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

There is a general acceptance that the resolution of complex crises in the contemporary security environment requires an integrated approach. Whether termed as interagency, whole of government, or as a comprehensive approach, such approaches aim to coordinate efforts to create synergies, reduce duplication of effort and create a more enduring effect on the ground. From a logical standpoint these coordinated approaches make sense. However, in practice, such approaches are not as simplistic as they purport to be. Organizational silos, institutional practices, varying mandates, capabilities, and discrepancies in funding levels and planning processes can present substantial challenges to such integrated approaches.

Canada for its part has made strides to improve its implementation of interagency approaches, evolving to meet these challenges. With respect to its mission in Afghanistan, this entailed revisiting governance structures and authorities, at both the strategic and operational levels, and ultimately altering them to ensure the interagency approach achieved results.

This paper will discuss the genesis and evolution of Canada's whole of government approach to the mission in Afghanistan. In doing so, it highlights the various structures which were used over the mission's course, as well as the respective successes and challenges of each of the three different governance models – aligned, cohesive and integrated – employed. Finally it highlights the lessons learned which are germane to the management of future comprehensive missions. Through doing so this paper aims to assist understanding of what structures, processes, and governance models have been developed for managing interactions and collaboration in complex arrangements of partners, as well as their respective strengths and weaknesses.

2.0 POLICY EVOLUTION OF CANADIAN WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT CONCEPTS

There is a general acceptance that the resolution of complex crises in the contemporary security environment requires an integrated approach. Whether termed as interagency, horizontal management, cross-

departmental, '3D' (defence, diplomacy and development), whole of government, or more broadly as a comprehensive approach, such approaches aim to coordinate efforts to create synergies, reduce duplication of effort and ultimately create a more enduring effect on the ground.¹

From a logical standpoint, these coordinated approaches make sense. Increased communication and coordination between various organizations will produce results that are more effective. Since efforts are occur across diverse lines of operation, gains should occur in various fields, achieving cost savings and avoiding duplication of effort. However, in practice, such approaches are not as simplistic as they purport to be. Organizational silos, institutional practices, varying mandates, capabilities, funding levels, and planning processes can present substantial challenges to such integrated approaches.

In the Canadian context, notions of 'whole of government' have appeared in the Government's lexicon for almost a decade. Whether articulated as the 3D approach (defence, diplomacy and development), 1C (One Canada or Team Canada), or most recently as whole of government, these terms and the rationale driving their development have not often been fully articulated. Here, the trend towards integrated approaches coincided with interest in assisting failed and failing states. The rationale to engage in states suffering from such afflictions is twofold.² The first rationale relates to the notion of human security, as abject poverty and human rights violations often characterize failed and conflict-affected countries. The second rationale relates to physical and territorial security as events in conflict-affected countries are said to pose a threat to Canada (and to the international system writ large), as the consequences of state failure spills over borders and contributes to regional or global instability. By stabilising failed states and conflict-affected countries Canada's foreign policy objective of reinforcing a secure, rules-based, multilateral system that favours the expansion of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, trade and development are served (Government of Canada, 2005). Furthermore, Canada's defence policy outlines tackling security threats at their source as an important element in protecting the country (Government of Canada, 2008).

While the military has traditionally been viewed as the primary element of national power engaged in crisis management, it is recognized that the military does not have the expertise or capabilities to address these 'root causes,' nor does it necessarily have the desire to do so.³ Accordingly, strategies to address such a broad conceptualisation of security require a merging of traditional security, development and political instruments. In the case of government departments, this presents new bureaucratic practice, as they must "work more closely together—from planning through to execution—so that contributions as disparate as police force training, civil engineering and private sector development combine into one, comprehensive approach to capacity building" (Government of Canada, 2005).

Beyond addressing the roots causes of such complex challenges, integration of Canadian foreign policy tools seems self-evident. It allows a more focused, cohesive package of capabilities to solve international challenges, tackling multiple issues simultaneously while avoiding duplication of effort. Greater coherence of policy and programming amongst national resources would likely provide cost savings, while allowing all participating departments to benefit from each other's specific expertise. A coherent and holistic approach will reduce the burden on individual contributors and through the combination of contributors effectively reduce the total contribution. Beyond this, it may potentially result in a more expeditious mission

¹ In the case of a comprehensive approach, this extends beyond government departments and agencies, to facilitate, whenever possible, the coordination of the efforts of international public and private actors, taking into account that those actors may or may not have goals similar to or compatible with those of Canada. For a description of this concept from a Canadian perspective see, Heather Hrychuk, *Defining the Comprehensive Approach* DRDC CORA LR 2011-14, 14 February 2011.

² For a more in depth discussion of these issues see, Government of Canada, *Sustaining Canada's Engagement in Acutely Fragile States and Conflict Affected Situations* (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2009).

³ The construct of the 3 Block War is often put forth to dispute this fact. However, simply because the military sees itself as having to engage in a range of tasks, it is not argued that the military should always engage in all three tasks all the time. Rather it is context specific/ Further, within the military arguments have been made that engage in non-traditional tasks distracts from core tasks or may deplete traditional capabilities. See for example, Stuart Gordon, "The Changing Role of the Military in Assistance Strategies," *Resettling the Rules of Engagement – Trends and Issues in Military-Humanitarian Relations*, Victoria Wheeler and Adele Harmer eds. (London: Humanitarian Policy Research Group, 2006) p 39-52.

completion. Finally, such approaches could be a potential response to the challenge of overcoming vertical bias. The Privy Council Office underscored this need in 2003 Guidance for Deputy Ministers' stating, "the need to coordinate the responsibilities of several Ministers in order to take certain initiatives is now the rule rather than the exception" (Privy Council Office, 2003).

2.1 The 3D Approach: Defence, Diplomacy and Development

The 2005 *International Policy Statement* concluded that an integrated response, the '3D approach,' is the most appropriate mechanism to ensure policy coherence when dealing with failed states (Government of Canada, 2005). Unfortunately, this recommended course of action lacked substance, and a precise definition, resulting in a lack of shared understanding between the integrated approach's partners, which manifested in the approach's implementation. Despite engaging in consultations during the policy statement's drafting process, the key departments engaged in the very stove piping the concept attempts to avoid by placing differing emphasis on 3D.

The message from the Prime Minister and the Overview chapter, both endorse the 3D concept while presenting divergent definitions. According to the former Prime Minister's foreword, "the best way for Canada to make a difference in post-conflict situations is to pursue a 3D approach, undertaking Defence to strengthen security and stability, pursuing Diplomacy to enhance prospects for nation-building and reconstruction, and making certain that Development contributions are brought to bear in a coordinated and effective way" (Government of Canada, 2005). The Prime Minister implies that the three D's are *tools*, which, if operating in combination, would make a more dramatic impact than they would if undertaken individually. In contrast, the Overview describes 3D as an *approach* to utilize in dealing with failed states, starkly different from the *tools* alluded to in the Prime Minister's foreword. It states that the Government of Canada believes, "an integrated 3D approach, combining diplomacy, defence and development, is the best strategy for supporting states that suffer from a broad range of interconnected problems" (Government of Canada, 2005). By this definition, 3D is more than a set of tools; it is the *method* of combining varying assets for dealing with failed and failing states.

The defence section of the policy statement contains a vision of 3D similar to that of the Overview, as a cooperative approach to security challenges. According to the Department of National Defence (hereafter National Defence), achieving international peace and security in today's security environment will require, "a whole of government approach to international missions, bringing together military and civilian resources in a focused and coherent fashion" (Government of Canada, 2005). However, the defence section later articulates the need for a CF capable of undertaking all three tasks individually,⁴ which raises the question of why is there a need for cooperation and coordination with other departments? Although the security environment may compel the military to implement all 3Ds until the threat level is such that civilian agencies can operate, the defence chapter neglects to discuss such situations.

As the defence definition of 3D diverges between unilateral actions and cooperation with partners, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (hereafter referred to as Foreign Affairs), looks to secure a leadership role in the implementation of 3D through its statements in the policy statement. It states Foreign Affairs' objective as being, "to renew [its] role as interpreter, integrator and chief advocate of Canada's overall international effort, helping to ensure a single coherent approach" (Government of Canada, 2005). To do so, it "will lead in both the formation of Canada's overall international policy and the interdepartmental development of 'whole of government' strategies," confirming Foreign Affairs' desire to assume a leadership role in the development of integrated policies. Unfortunately, such a role could possibly have a detrimental effect on the integrated approach itself, through creating an imbalance of influence during policy development, or more seriously, through threatening the principles of ministerial accountability by removing policy making functions from other departments.

⁴ As stated in the IPS, the "CF will seek to maintain the right mix of military capability to ensure that they can carry out all potential aspects of the 3 block war." "Defence," 27.

There is no mention of the concept within the development chapter of the policy statement, which is perplexing given that the agency is to be a core facet of 3D. Stating an inextricable link between security and development, the chapter does not shy away from intergovernmental cooperation entirely, but focuses on poverty reduction-strategies, as opposed to 3D. Instead, it asserts that development-cooperation plans must include, “a coherent approach to non-aid policies that ensure that global poverty reduction is factored into decision making across government” (Government of Canada, 2005), without further explanation.

2.2 Whole of Government

While no formal change in policy occurred, in time, whole of government terminology replaced 3D, acknowledging that integrated missions would likely involve more than just defence, diplomacy and development partners. However, despite increasing rhetoric and publicity surrounding this integrated approach since its 2007 conception, little progress has occurred towards establishing a common definition or lexicon.

Generally, one can consider the whole of government approach as an all-inclusive government effort, in which staff, resources and material are coordinated towards a national effort. It implies deploying capacity and expertise from across multiple government agencies and departments, to undertake the planning and implementation of government efforts. It is an approach where “a government actively uses formal and/or informal networks across the different agencies within that government to coordinate the design and implementation of the range of interventions that the government’s agencies will be making in order to increase the effectiveness of those interventions in achieving the desired objectives” (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2006).

While the current government has not released a Foreign Policy Statement, public statements demonstrate the shift to whole of government terminology.⁵ However, no definition exists which is accepted government wide, and it has been noted that, “the boundaries and modalities for this approach have not been clearly defined” (Office of the Inspector General, 2007). Not only is whole of government undefined, it has not been uniform in practice, and without clarification the nuances of various manifestations of the approach are often lost. On one end of the whole of government spectrum, it implies a concerted strategy involving every relevant department together with leadership to ensure adherence to the strategy. Implied on the other end is loose coordination and information exchange, so that departments are aware what the others are doing, but without a central leadership. In Canada, the latter conception has been the most prominent, with the exception of the establishment of the Afghanistan Task Force at the Privy Council Office.

3.0 GOVERNANCE OF INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Recent interdepartmental consultations across the Government of Canada have identified three governance models for temporary whole of government coordination of specific interventions (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2009). These models rely on the governance frameworks provided by Foreign Affairs and the Privy Council Office Afghan Task Force. In order of increasing resource and institutional capacity requirements, they are:

1. The **aligned** model for interventions that are intended to be small in scale and short in duration, such as Canada’s engagement in Côte d’Ivoire. This would usually be coordinated by a Director General-level Interagency Cooperation Committee led the appropriate Foreign Affairs section.

⁵ At a broader level, not all academics and policy practitioners have embraced the idea of the whole of government approach. Questions exist as to the motives of participants, charging that the adoption of the whole of government moniker on the part of Foreign Affairs and National Defence has been less than altruistic. Some have posited that the idea of a whole of government approach has only served to allow departments to reinforce their departmental autonomies (Lagasse and Desrosiers, 2011). Moreover questions remain about whether solving the coordination problem will actually solve the root causes of instability and state fragility, as a procedural fix may not overcome philosophical differences and incompatible priorities.

Here, jointly coordinated operational plans would be developed along with exchange of departmental information and perspectives.

2. The **cohesive** model for more significant policy priorities, often involving multilateral intervention in fragile and conflict-affected states. One such example being Canada's continuing engagement in Haiti (apart from the more recent disaster relief effort). This could be also conceived as the follow on to the 'lead department approach,' where, when a crisis arose a lead department was appointed, and through ad hoc interdepartmental committees, would manage the response. More recently such crisis responses would normally be coordinated by Foreign Affairs with an Assistant Deputy Minister-level steering committee providing oversight. The steering committee would have the ability to make recommendations to the various involved departments regarding their respective financial allocations against the whole of government strategy. Further coordination is determined through interdepartmental consultation.
3. The **integrated** model developed for coordinating the high-priority, complex whole of government engagement in Afghanistan. Drawing on the recommendations of the Manley Panel, the Privy Council Office assumed responsibility for coordination and decision-making, in the form of the establishment of the Afghan Task Force which worked in support of Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan.

4.0 STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES OF CANADA'S WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

4.1 In Ottawa: Pre 2008

The 3D approach was congruent with traditional notions of how government operates in Canada; where functional departments operate in their respective area of routine expertise, with liaison where appropriate.⁶ This was consistent with **aligned** model for intervention, where jointly coordinated operational plans develop along with exchange of departmental information and perspectives. However, in the implementation of 3D, individual departmental characteristics played a large role in how policies were developed and implemented, thwarting the application of 3D in a cohesive and complementary manner.

In 2007, acknowledging that the approach resulted in ineffective coordination; the government announced the establishment of an Afghanistan Task Force within Foreign Affairs, mandated to recalibrate the relationship between National Defence and the International Development in Afghanistan (Mulroney, 2007; Schmitz and Phillips, 2008). Specifically the task force had responsibility for policy development and program implementation, bilateral relations, multilateral diplomacy, managing Canada's diplomatic operations, and inter-departmental coordination of these issues.⁷

It assumed that greater synchronization and coordination would occur by instituting a designated coordination point, as opposed to the ad-hoc collaboration amongst equals under 3D. As David Mulroney, a leader in Canadian whole of government efforts, stated, "there needs to be an overall policy construct which sits above 3D [...] and motivates, validates and connects everything Canada does (Mulroney, 2007)." The interdepartmental Coordinator at Foreign Affairs would fill that role through a whole of government approach, ensuring a shift to, "synchronized Canadian engagement on the ground, and this is part of an evolution from different departments doing their stuff in silos a few years ago on international mission [...] one Canadian synchronized coordinated engagement plan from the beginning" (Davis, 2010).

⁶ A more detailed review of 3D is outside the scope of this paper. For details see, Patrick Travers and Taylor Owen, "Between metaphor and Strategy: Canada's Integrated Approach to Peacebuilding in Afghanistan," *International Journal* Summer 2008, p 685-702; Heather Hrychuk, "Combating the Security development nexus? Lessons learned from Afghanistan," *International Journal*, Summer 2009, p 825-842.

⁷ "Prime Minister announces changes in the senior ranks of the Public Service," Government of Canada media release, 26 January 2007. <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=1508>

There are limits to the ability of a department to coordinate its peers, regardless of circumstance. However, academics note that standing inter-agency coordination units *embedded in and with leadership from one department*, rather than a central mechanism *above* the departmental level have difficulty actually achieving inter-departmental coordination (Stewart and Brown, 2007). Declaring that elements of a bureaucracy must answer to a senior official in another department regarding certain deliverables does not change the reality that formal accountabilities - as well as tangible ones such as performance appraisals and promotion prospects - are still the domain of their own department and Minister. Further, current funding mechanisms government departments do not incentivize the yielding of policy "turf" to a peer, nor do departments welcome direction within what they regard as their area of expertise. As such, the 'lead' department has few tools for getting government officials to change their positions, which was the case for Foreign Affairs task force.

Over the course of 2007, the weaknesses inherent Foreign Affairs lead coordination became apparent. "Coordinated strategy and strategic planning was still lacking despite Foreign Affairs' lead," and other departments were not meekly accepting the Foreign Affairs coordinating mandate (Geddes, 2006). In the case of International Development, this should not have come as a surprise given the tense relationship it has maintained with Foreign Affairs throughout its history, in which it constantly struggle to obtain and maintain autonomy.⁸ According to one observer, "every effort to enhance International Development's autonomy... provoked a strong reaction, aimed at putting the Agency under the thumb of External/Foreign Affairs and harnessing aid more fully to commercial and foreign policy priorities" (Morrison, 1998). As such, coordination efforts on Foreign Affairs' part raised fears that development objectives would end up subordinated to security and commercial interests.⁹ Further complicating this was a disparity of financial resources between the departments, Foreign Affairs' lack of any carrot or stick to persuade other departments towards compliance, and an imbalance of personnel devoted to the mission further complicated the situation.¹⁰

The 2007 establishment of the Afghanistan Task Force within Foreign Affairs mirrors with the **cohesive** model, where, when a crisis arose a lead department was appointed, and through ad hoc interdepartmental committees, would manage the response. The steering committee would have the ability to make recommendations to DMs of various involved departments regarding their respective financial allocations against the whole of government strategy. Further coordination is determined through interdepartmental consultation. To this end, connections exist between individual departments, while maintaining their individual attributes and decision-making processes. This improved the degree to which relevant departments interacted; however, there are limits of which one department can coordinate its peers. Without being given power to compel, or incentives to entice, coordination this task force was unable to achieve the coordination that was desirable given the scale of the Canadian commitment in Afghanistan.

⁸ For a discussion of these issues see, Stephen Brown "Creating the World's Best Development Agency? Confusion and Contradictions in CIDA's New Development Policy." *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* Vol. 28, No. 2. p 213-28; or more recently Stephen Brown, "CIDA Under the Gun," *Canada Among Nations 2007: What Room for Manoeuvre?* Jean Daudelin and Daniel Schwanen, eds. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008) See, 172-207.

⁹ The Canadian foreign ministry has also has a long history of friction with DND regarding the deployment and design of peace enforcement missions. For examples, see David A. Lenarcie, "Meeting Each Other Halfway: The Departments of National Defence and External Affairs During the Congo Peacekeeping Mission, 1960-64," York University Centre for International and Strategic Studies Occasional Paper 37 (Toronto, 1996); and John B. Hay, *Conditions of Influence: An Exploratory Study of the Canadian Government's Effect on U.S. Policy in the Case of Intervention in Eastern Zaire*, Master of Arts Thesis, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, May 1999.

¹⁰ In the spring of 2007, Foreign Affairs had two personnel in Kandahar while the military had an authorized strength of more than 2500 troops. Given this lopsided commitment, attempts by Foreign Affairs' headquarters to exercise leadership were not seen as coordination of joint efforts, but meddling in the work of the military. As stated by Anne Fitz-Gerald, if truly integrated planning and implementation is to occur "a 3-D budget, or a joined-up pool of resources, is absolutely necessary." Anne Fitz-Gerald, "The Security-Development Nexus: Implications for Joined-Up Government, *Policy Matters*, Vol. 5. Issue 5 2004. p 22.

4.2 In Ottawa: Post 2008

The weaknesses in the Foreign Affairs lead model prompted a high-level panel to produce ‘the Manley Report,’ recommending that a higher-level structure be established - the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan and the Afghan Task Force.¹¹ As stated by Mulroney, this “changes how we coordinate the various Ottawa-based departments and agencies engaged in Afghanistan. [...] to move beyond the old “3D” approach of defence, development, and diplomacy, to a truly coherent whole of government approach and one that is managed by a committee of Ministers – the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan – coordinated by the Afghanistan Task Force created within the Privy Council Office” (Mulroney, 2011).

It should be noted that the 26 person body was less potent than the model proposed by the Manley Panel, which advocated creating a body to coordinate and track, but also tasked with “directing the activities of all departments and agencies” (Manley et al, 2008). This however, does align with the traditional role and responsibilities of the Privy Council Office, as it lacked formal authority over line departments. Limiting the mandate may have served a secondary purpose of imposing control and coherence to the Afghanistan mission, without facing charges of increasingly centralizing government decision-making and power.¹²

Initially the Task Force set about the first part of its mandate: determining strategic policy and developing policy coherence. At the time, the “group needed to figure out what it is we wanted to work on and prioritize” (Davis, 2009). Recommendations were developed and put forth to the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan outlining six priority areas for the Canadian effort in Afghanistan and three “signature” projects.¹³ While questions were raised whether these represented the best choice of priorities, the fact that they were adopted (and the rapid speed at which they were) was in itself significant given that there had been no whole of government accepted Canadian priorities for the mission prior to this.

The dedicated CCOA was given a mandate to consider diplomatic, defence, development and security issues related to Canada’s mission in Afghanistan, reporting to the Prime Minister on a regular basis. The arrangement reinforced the authority of the Privy Council Office - Afghan Task Force Secretariat, because it not only managed the Cabinet Committee process, it was the sole formal conduit of information to the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan Chair. This process compelled departments to compromise and find accommodations, as none of them was in a position to control the agenda. While departments had direct priority access to cabinet on Afghanistan related issues, allowing information to move up the chain in a timely fashion, the Afghan Task Force acted as the gatekeeper, controlling, what went before the CCOA, and

¹¹ Providing the basis for bipartisan agreement on extending Canada’s mission in Kandahar to 2011, the report stated that, “the Canadian government needs to elevate coordination in Ottawa among Canadian departments and agencies engaged in Afghanistan.... Separate departmental task forces are not the answer to inadequate coordination of Canadian activities. These coordinating efforts would have stronger effect, and achieve greater cross-government coherence, if they were led by the Prime Minister, supported by a cabinet committee and staffed by a single full-time task force. Fulfilling Canada’s commitment in Afghanistan requires the political energy only a Prime Minister can impart. John Manley et al, *Independent Panel on Canada’s Future Role in Afghanistan* (Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2008), p 28. This coordination role is clear in the mandate given to the Task Force, being to provide strategic policy development and integration; coordinate federal government activities and operations in Afghanistan; track implementation of the Government’s strategy; and build coherence and consistency in communicating the mission to Canadians, international audiences and to Afghans. Privy Council Office, “Afghanistan Task Force” <http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/index.asp?lang=eng&page=secretariats&sub=afghanistan&doc=index-eng.htm>

¹² It is generally argued that the concept of increased centralization of power in the Canadian bureaucracy is democratically problematic. See, for example, Donald J. Savoie, *Court Government and the Collapse of Accountability in Canada and the United Kingdom*, University of Toronto Press, 2008.

¹³ The first four priorities focus primarily on Kandahar. Here Canada is helping the Government of Afghanistan to maintain a more secure environment and establish law and order by building the capacity of the Afghan National Army and Police, and support complementary efforts in the areas of justice and corrections. It is also providing jobs, education, and essential services; providing humanitarian assistance to people in need, including refugees; and enhancing the management and security of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Nationally, Canada is helping to build Afghan institutions that are central to our Kandahar priorities and support democratic processes such as elections; and to contribute to Afghan-led political reconciliation efforts aimed at weakening the insurgency and fostering a sustainable peace. See, Government of Canada, “Canada’s Priorities” <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/priorities-priorites/index.aspx?lang=eng>

so was able to frame the decisions placed before ministers. If a Minister of a department with a vested interest held the chairmanship in the initial stages, it would have been difficult to ensure a limited conduit.

Under this approach, the PCO assumed responsibility for coordination and decision-making, through the Afghan Task Force, working in support of Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan. Through establishing a Cabinet Committee, key personalities engaged, and through the working groups, the Afghan Task Force established the process of engaging in bargaining and compromises occurred under the lead of a neutral party. Here, increased interactions fostered common situational awareness and progress was made towards increased coordination, not only between the relevant departments, but also between Ottawa and the field. This was consistent with the idea of an **integrated** model.

4.3 In the Field

If policymaking conducted in Ottawa is to be effective it must filter down to initiatives in the field. Increased information sharing and coordination that does not affect the implementation of activities on the ground is simply traditional policy performed to a higher standard. Through the Afghan Task Force structures in the field took on an increasingly whole of government character. Central to this was the establishment of the Senior Representative of Canada in Kandahar (RoCK), to direct and coordinate all activities of civilian elements in Kandahar. Working under the leadership of the Ambassador, the RoCK works closely with the Commander of the Canadian Forces' Joint Task Force Afghanistan to support the coherent and effective implementation of Canada's objectives. This collaboration aims to ensure that the whole-of-government civilian and military team has successfully synchronized governance, development, and security lines of operation.¹⁴ The RoCK is also assigned objectives which in 2008 included unifying civilian engagement in Kandahar, advancing integrated civil-military planning and developing a unified concept of operations for the PRT (Representative of the Canadian Government in Kandahar, 2008).¹⁵

By October 2008, the military Commander and the first RoCK, wrote a joint operational philosophy document, the Kandahar Action Plan, directing all civilian and military activities toward common goals.¹⁶ Through this, they committed to shared responsibility and accountability for development, prosecution and delivery of integrated civilian military planning and program development as well as for the success of Canada's activities in Kandahar. A "synchronization board" to ensure there would be no duplication between civilian and military efforts in the area (Wells, 2009) supplemented the Plan.

5.0 LESSONS LEARNED

The evolution of Canada's interagency structures responding to the mission in Afghanistan offers lessons not only for its future operations but also for allies. First, however a caveat is required. Each country implementing an interagency approach is unique, involving a particular governance structure, mandates and processes. Therefore, while Canada's lessons may provide useful insights for others, these lessons must be adapted to the countries' specific needs and circumstances. Similarly, those lessons which improve integration at the strategic level may not hold true at the operational or tactical level.

¹⁴ For greater information see, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Canada's Representative," <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/kandahar/represent.aspx?lang=eng>

¹⁵ Simultaneous to this, simplifying and accelerating the project review and approval process and by increasing signing authorities in the field enhanced programming speed. Through doing so, selection and approval processes were decentralized, giving signing authorities up to \$2 million under the direct leadership of the Ambassador and the RoCK (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2008).

¹⁶ Prior to this the operational plan developed by each incoming Commander Joint Task Force Afghanistan operating under Commander CEFCOM, was the key guiding document for Canada's actions in Kandahar, for which the Commander JTF-A was the sole approving authority.

The first lesson would seemingly be intuitive: that all parties engaged in an interagency effort should have a common understanding of the approach they are employing, and of their part within. In the Canadian context, whether that is under the 3D or whole of government moniker, this was not the case. As a result, challenges occurred as all actors held different perceptions of their department's roles and responsibilities, as well as different expectations regarding others roles. If departments are to work together successfully, they must have common expectations to ensure conflict does not erupt and that all participants understand the various departmental boundaries, limitations and capabilities.

The lesson that follows would also seem obvious: that the degree of integration required directly relates to the crisis or engagement the nation is participating in. However, this is not always the case when nations implement an interagency approach. Form follows function, and therefore a smaller scale engagement may not require vast interagency integration. In such cases, having an overarching body such as the Afghanistan Task Force to provide direction and coordination is likely unnecessary and could create additional problems. National levels of interest, ambition and resources should dictate whether an aligned approach is sufficient, or whether the engagement warrants a more formal cohesive approach. In addition, the ability to maintain flexibility in both structures and processes, so that the approach utilized can change if, and when, national interest and ambitions do, is paramount.

This said it is apparent that having a formalized structure is likely a requirement for integrated approaches. While the 3D approach was congruent with traditional notions of how government operates in Canada and was consistent with aligned model for intervention, it was insufficient for the scale of Canada's involvement in Afghanistan. The challenges thwarting 3D's Afghan implementation demonstrate that the creation of integrated policies alone will not solve coordination challenges. Instead, these policies demand clear mechanisms and guidelines to coordinate policy creation, planning and decision-making. Guidelines for both collaboration and decision making between partners is a necessity to avoid issues of personality, or differing organizational beliefs, from disrupting a whole of government approach. Further, without complex changes within governmental structures, involving organizational cultures, operational practices, decision-making processes and mandates, the success of integrated policies will be limited.

A formalized structure is required for two distinct reasons. First, while the 3Ds are interconnected, without a coordination body, each individual department still retains the lead of, and control over, its specific 'D,' its own individual funding scheme and ministerial accountability. With no incentives for cooperation, the call for 3D foreign policy integration may produce a need for each department to stake out its claim as the sole provider of its 'D', aiming to retain dominance in its traditional area of expertise. Such an outlook is hardly a catalyst for interdepartmental cooperation and collaboration.

Second, in a whole of government approach, departments may find themselves wading into unfamiliar territory and engaging in actions traditionally falling under another department's purview. Concerns of encroachment upon traditional departmental activities may initially appear to be a petty bureaucratic turf war. However, within these concerns lies a deeper issue, reflecting a necessity inherent in a successful 3D policy. In undertaking integrated approaches, where disparate parties must cooperate and collaborate, there is a requirement for a minimum level of trust, both in Ottawa and between personnel in the field. This is problematic when these groups must work together across the 3D spectrum, sometimes in one another's primary area of expertise. Without trusting that 3D partners are not attempting to overtake one department's traditional activities, such engagements may seem to be an incursion, as opposed to part of a cooperative integrated effort. A coordination structure can assist in building trust and cooperation.

While having a Minister of one department lead what is to be a whole of government approach may produce difficulties; the lack of a 'head of mission' can create additional complexities beyond disjointed application of strategy and poor coordination. As a brief example, questions arise in terms of accountability, decision-making and programming. If things are unsuccessful, which department shoulders the blame? With no distinct structure for decision-making, it is difficult to determine who, and how, made decisions critical to a

project's success or failure. In the case of a disagreement on programming or projects between departments, who holds authority to be the final arbiter? Beyond this, who ensures that the Government of Canada's resources are put to best use, and not at cross-purposes?

Lack clear leadership implies working more effectively as a network and some degree of self-organization and trust. This may not be dependable when crises abound, when mandates, circumstances, and command authority are unclear, and when Canada's efforts involve resources from many departments and agencies. Public administration tends to be unresponsive or ungraceful when having to manage issues for which no one department is clearly the leader, no matter the skills and dedication of its officials. As stated by Roland Paris, "bureaucracies have a propensity to deal with situations of complexity, novelty and uncertainty by shifting these discussions into more familiar terrain, the realm of rules and procedures," and have a, "tendency to revert to a procedural discourse in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity" (Paris, 2009). Moreover, issues that have no clear home tend to be orphans, left outside the routine of the collective senior management. There is also a risk that the opportunities afforded by a common vision and enhanced synergies will be lost without leadership enabling the process.

Integrated models are not without their own challenges. The 2007 establishment of the Afghanistan Task Force within Foreign Affairs mirrors with the **cohesive** model, where, when a crisis arose a lead department was appointed, and through ad hoc interdepartmental committees, manages the response. This improved the degree to which relevant departments interacted; however, there are limits of which one department can coordinate its peers. Without having power to compel coordination this task force was unable to achieve the coordination that was desirable given the scale of Canada's commitment.

However, models that move towards further integration, such as the Afghan Task Force in the Privy Council Office, are not without potential determinants, as development of such a centralized, and arguably hierarchical, structure is time and resource dependent. Beyond that, while leadership may ensure that participants adhere to a clearly articulated strategy, such adherence may come at the cost of the application of each individual department's specific expertise and the flexibility required to adapt to a changing situation on the ground for the sake of unified action.¹⁷ Put succinctly by Donald Chisholm, "the rigid character of standardized processes inherent in formal centralized structures preclude adaptive responses to surprise and the organizational system suffers accordingly" (Chisholm, 1989).

Furthermore, such coordination can challenge the domestic governance model of some nations. In Canada, which relies on a division between the political executive and the bureaucracy, this was a real issue. By assuming responsibility for the Afghan Task Force, the Privy Council Office assumed an active operational role (traditionally taken by the departments and their respective Ministers), which risked its role of ensuring "non-partisan support to the Prime Minister on all policy and operational issues." (Privy Council Office, 2010). Moreover, the Afghan Task Force appropriated a large measure of the ministerial authority without commensurate accountability, as in Canada it is the Ministers who answer to the public and Parliament for their department's actions, not a temporary task force. In this vein, a coordinated whole-of-government approach can create inappropriate pressures to remove distinctions and override the checks and balances on power within the Canadian government. This issue is compounded when a centralized decision making body may not have the expertise related to the various decision being made which is traditionally resident in the various departments.

Outside of bureaucratic issues, integration is likely insufficient to achieve its objectives without a single overarching strategy. While the ATF was able to achieve this, in many ways the strategy came too late, emerging only in 2009, six years after Canada's mission in Afghanistan began. The national memorandum to cabinet, framework and campaign plan should establish clear objectives and benchmarks that serve to coordinate the efforts and priorities of the departments from the beginning of the mission onward. That said,

¹⁷ This assumes that a strategy has been developed and clearly articulated.

national strategies should fit into a broader international strategy and framework to coordinate the efforts of the international allies and the affected host nation ministries, including the establishment of agreed upon principles. Through doing so, a policy framework, which provides meaningful effects/results (and measures/indicators), can be developed to form the basis of a unified whole of government architecture for planning, monitoring and reporting, ensuring focus and consistency throughout.

Similarly, overarching policy changes are likely required in implementing interagency approaches. Declaring that elements of a bureaucracy must answer to a senior official in another department regarding certain deliverables does not change the reality that formal accountabilities - as well as tangible ones such as performance appraisals and promotion prospects - are still the domain of their own department and Minister. Further, current funding mechanisms for Canadian government departments do not incentivize the yielding of policy "turf" to a peer, nor do departments welcome direction within what they regard as their area of expertise. As such, the 'lead' department has few tools for getting government officials to change their positions, which was the case for Foreign Affairs task force.

Another lesson is that personality matters in integrated approaches. Integrated missions require personal willing to engage with non-traditional colleagues and work to overcome challenges. This is especially important when an overarching body is established to provide direction and coherence. Mulroney's ATF forced departments and the foreign policy establishment to make hard, unpopular decisions. Mulroney however was unapologetic: "Every now and then you have a policy challenge that is so big, where the national interest is so clearly engaged, you have to work clearly and efficiently but you need a special group [ATF] that can actually sometimes bang heads and force departments and agencies and institutions like Canadian Forces to work effectively together" (Grammer, 2012). In instances where organizations are reluctant to work together or make joint decisions, such decisive leadership is required. Elsewise, the overarching framework established to provide direction may prove insufficient to meet its objectives.

When selecting a leader for an interagency approach, it is not only personality that matters, but also experience. While selecting a leader with experience in the conflict area is likely important, it is also paramount to consider the optics of the appointment process. For example, when establishing the Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan, a "neutral" Minister of International Trade was selected as chair. Through doing so, it ensured that no single department could use the position of chair to impose its views or agenda on the others. This has a strong structural impact as neither of the traditional departmental leads on complex missions (Foreign Affairs and National Defence) was in charge (Buchan, 2011). This subsequently ensured that they collaborated on an equal footing and compelled departments to compromise and find accommodations, as none of them was in a position to control the agenda.

Depending on the situation, integration can energize bureaucracy. This was the case of the Afghan Task Force. The realities of moving towards a coordinated approach, and enhanced cooperation to achieve results, inspired personal in Ottawa as well as Kandahar. Task-driven civil servants were part of an "explosion in knowledge and intellectual capital" taking hold in the public service (Olsen, 2006). This resulted in an explosion of ideas and proposed projects to be jointly implemented. While the results of these projects may have been mixed in terms of their impact on the campaign in Afghanistan, the sole fact that individuals were motivated to propose new projects, overcoming the Afghanistan malaise that had taken root in so many departments, is a testament to the benefits integration can provide. However, an energized bureaucracy in this situation may come at a cost through overriding departmental expertise for the sake of unified action, or not allowing for the flexibility the situation demands.

The creation of 'Communities of Practice' can assist in adding interagency coordination, as well as between the operational and strategic level. In the Canadian context communities of practice developed in 2008 aided coordination between departments, as well as between Ottawa and the field. The communities of practice were essentially interdepartmental committees with representation from Kandahar, the Embassy in Kabul and Ottawa, centered upon the six priorities for Afghanistan. While labour-intensive, the communities of

practice created a harmonizing effect, through engaging key personnel in structured information sharing. This allowed for the development of shared understanding of progress and issues relating to the respective priorities. Since Ottawa engaged directly with those implementing the projects issues were resolved more rapidly, and support provided more quickly if required. The communities of practice also provided regular reporting against the benchmarking framework previously discussed which not only focused the work of participants, but also provided Ottawa the relevant information to inform interdepartmental decision-making.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Canadian evolution of the whole of government concept and policy holds lessons for future applications of such integrated approach. Here, the development and application of the concept was stymied by a lack of a clear articulation of what the concept implies, and how it will be achieved. As a result various conceptions of the how to enact whole of government exist, each with their respective strengths and weaknesses. This is problematic when various parties and organizations must interact and work together in challenging environments requiring the application of multiple facets of national power.

In the implementation of 3D, actions were congruent with traditional notions of Canadian Government, where functional departments operate in their respective area of routine expertise, with liaison where appropriate. This was consistent with **aligned** model for intervention, where jointly coordinated operational plans are developed while exchanging of departmental information and perspectives. Literature generally acknowledges that this approach results in ineffective coordination, aligning with the Canadian experience.

The 2007 establishment of the Afghanistan Task Force within Foreign Affairs aimed to overcome the issue of ineffective coordination. This mirrors with the **cohesive** model where, when a crisis arose a lead department was appointed, and through ad hoc interdepartmental committees, would manage the response. Here, increased connections occurred between individual departments, while maintaining their individual attributes and decision-making processes. This improved the degree to which relevant departments interacted; however, there are limits of which one department can coordinate its peers. Without being given power to compel, or incentives to entice, coordination this task force was unable to achieve the coordination that was desirable given the scale of the Canadian commitment in Afghanistan.

The move towards a centralized body managing the whole of government effort following the Manley Panel's advice was consistent with the idea of an **integrated** model. Here, the Privy Council Office assumed responsibility for coordination and decision-making, in the form of the establishment of the Afghan Task Force, working in support of Cabinet Committee on Afghanistan. Through establishing a Cabinet Committee key personalities were engaged, and through the working groups the Afghan Task Force established the process of engaging in bargaining and compromises occurred under the lead of a neutral party. Here, increased interactions fostered common situational awareness and progress was made towards increased coordination between the relevant departments.

While all these models offer benefits and detriments, reviewing them as a whole offers a clear evolution of Canada's whole of government mission in Afghanistan. As the scope and complexity of the mission increased, it was determined additional mechanisms for coordination should be developed. This should not suggest that initial mechanisms were insufficient, but rather that as ambition grew, mechanisms to ensure success evolved appropriately. This evolution should provide guidance for future Canadian Whole of government missions, as depending on scope and scale, already tested mechanisms can be employed in a manner suitable to the challenges at hand.

REFERENCES

- [1] Annan, Kofi. (2006) "Opening First Session of Peacebuilding Commission, Secretary General Stresses Importance of National Ownership, Building Effective Public Institutions," UN Document SG/SM/10533, PBC/2/ www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sgsm10533.doc.htm
- [2] Blanchfeild, Mike. (2011) "Conservatives Shut Down Key Afghanistan Cabinet Committee," *The Globe and Mail*, 6 January 2011.
- [3] Brown, Stephen. (2008) "CIDA Under the Gun," *Canada Among Nations 2007: What Room for Manoeuvre?* Jean Daudelin and Daniel Schwanen, eds. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- [4] Buchan, Gavin. (2011) "Breaking Down the Silos: Managing the Whole of Government Effort in Afghanistan," *Canadian Military Journal*. Vol. 10, No 4.
- [5] Chisholm, Donald. (1989) *Coordination Without Hierarchy: Informal Structures in Multiorganizational Systems*. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- [6] Davis, Jeff. "New Afghan Team, New Afghan Tasks," *Embassy Magazine*, 24 June.
- [7] Davis, Jeff. (2010) "Feds' go-to Team in Afghanistan Part of New Whole-of-Government Strategy," *The Hill Times*, April 19. <http://www.thehilltimes.ca/page/view/afghan-04-19-2010>.
- [8] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. (2006) *Year in Review: Mobilizing Canada's Capacity for International Crisis Response, September 2005 – September 2006* Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.
- [9] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. (2007) *Formative Evaluation of Canada's Global Peace and Security Fund: Sudan – Final Report Unpublished Report Prepared by The Evaluation Division, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade*.
- [10] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. (2008) "Transforming the Mission, Final Report of the "Rolling Start" team (internal Government of Canada document, author's copy).
- [11] Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Canada's Representative," <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/kandahar/represent.aspx?lang=eng>
- [12] Fitz-Gerald, Anne. (2004) "The Security-Development Nexus: Implications for Joined-Up Government, Policy Matters, Vol. 5. Issue 5.
- [13] Geddes, John. (2006) "Bullets Fly, Ottawa Ducks," *Maclean's*, August 28.
- [14] Gordon, Stuart. (2006) "The Changing Role of the Military in Assistance Strategies," *Resettling the Rules of Engagement – Trends and Issues in Military-Humanitarian Relations*, Victoria Wheeler and Adele Harmer eds. London: Humanitarian Policy Research Group.
- [15] Government of Canada. (2005) *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*. Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

- [16] Government of Canada. (2009) *Sustaining Canada's Engagement in Acutely Fragile States and Conflict Affected Situations*. (Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.
- [17] Government of Canada. (2008) *Canada First Defence Strategy*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence.
- [18] Government of Canada. "Canada's Priorities" <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/priorities-priorites/index.aspx?lang=eng>
- [19] Grammer, Nicholas. (2012). *Integrating Civilian-Military Operations: The Comprehensive Approach and the ATF Experience, 2008-2009*. Paper presented to the CPSA Annual Conference. Author's copy.
- [20] Hay, John. (1999). *Conditions of Influence: An Exploratory Study of the Canadian Government's Effect on U.S. Policy in the Case of Intervention in Eastern Zaire*, Ottawa: Norman Paterson School of International Affairs.
- [21] Hrychuk, Heather. (2009) "Combating the Security development nexus? Lessons learned from Afghanistan," *International Journal*, Summer 2009.
- [22] Hrychuk, Heather. (2011) *Defining the Comprehensive Approach* DRDC CORA LR 2011-14, Ottawa: Defence Research and Development Canada.
- [23] Lagasse, Phil and Desrosiers, Marie-Eve. (2011) "Canada and the Bureaucratic Politics of State Fragility," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* Vol. 20, No 4.
- [24] Lenarcie, David. (1996). "Meeting Each Other Halfway: The Departments of National Defence and External Affairs During the Congo Peacekeeping Mission, 1960-64," *Occasional Paper 37*. Toronto, York University Centre for International and Strategic Studies.
- [25] Manley, John et al. (2008) *Independent Panel on Canada's Future Role in Afghanistan*. Ottawa: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada..
- [26] MacKay, Peter. (2006) "Testimony," Proceedings of the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence. 39th Parliament, 1st Session.
- [27] Morrison, David. (1998) *Aid and Ebb Tide: A History of CIDA and Canadian Development Assistance*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press.
- [28] Mulroney, David. (2007) "Canada in Afghanistan: From Collaboration to Integration," speech to the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. 9 May. <http://www.igloo.org/ciia/download/Branches/national/afghanis/davidmul>
- [29] Mulroney, David. (2011) "Interview with David Mulroney," Government of Canada Afghanistan website. <http://www.afghanistan.gc.ca/canada-afghanistan/speeches-discours/yir-1.aspx?lang=en>
- [30] Office of the Inspector General. (2007) *Global Peace and Security Fund: Sudan Evaluation*. Ottawa: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.
- [31] Olsen, R. (2006) *Vertical to Horizontal: a New Workplace Reality* Triarchy Press
- [32] www.triarchypress.com, <http://www.triarchypress.com/pages/articles/Vertical%20and%20horizontal.pdf>

- [33] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2006) *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- [34] Paris, Roland. (2009) “Understanding the Co-ordination Problem in Postwar Statebuilding,” *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*. Roland Paris and Timothy Sick eds. New York: Routledge.
- [35] Patrick, Stewart and Brown, Kaysie. (2007) *Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts? Assessing “Whole of Government” Approaches to Fragile States*. New York: International Peace Academy.
- [36] Privy Council Office of Canada. (2003) *Guidance for Deputy Ministers*. Ottawa: Privy Council Office.
- [37] Savoie, Donald. (2008) *Court Government and the Collapse of Accountability in Canada and the United Kingdom*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- [38] Schacter, Mark. (1999) *Cabinet Decision-Making in Canada: Lessons and Practices*. Ottawa: Institute on Governance <http://www.iog.ca/publications/policybrief1.pdf>;
- [39] Schmitz, Gerald and Phillips, Karin. (2008) *Afghanistan Canada’s Diplomatic Engagement PRB 07-38E*. Ottawa: Parliamentary Information and Research Service.
- [40] Travers, Patrick and Owen, Taylor. (2008) “Between metaphor and Strategy: Canada’s Integrated Approach to Peacebuilding in Afghanistan,” *International Journal*. Summer 2008.
- [41] Treasury Board. (2003) *Annual Report to Parliament: Canada’s Performance 2002*. Ottawa: Treasury Board
- [42] Wells, Paul. (2009) “Q and A: Elissa Golberg,” *Maclean’s*. April 7, www.macleans.ca.

