ADF Experience on Humanitarian Operations: A New Idea?

Neil Greet

In times of humanitarian crisis Australia always strives to relieve human suffering through the immediate efforts of both government and non-government agencies. As part of the national effort the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has delivered a capability that has contributed to the attainment of humanitarian objectives under the mission of protecting Australia's national interests. Now humanitarian missions are a standard component of ADF operations, and the objective is not simply the winning of 'Hearts and Minds', but the infusion of social capital. The challenges of the future will demand that the ADF play a pivotal role in a comprehensive Multi-Agency approach to humanitarian operations.

War and human suffering have been constant companions throughout history. But war is not the only cause of human suffering. The havoc wreaked upon human populations by natural disasters demand an effective and immediate humanitarian response. From colonial times Australian military forces have trained to fight wars but also have been employed to assist civil authorities during humanitarian crises.[1] Since it's inception in 1976, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has engaged in humanitarian work that has advanced Australia's national interests.

So does the Australian community and its elected representatives want the ADF to participate in humanitarian operations as a natural extension of foreign policy and domestic politics? In answering this question it is important to remember that the ADF experience on humanitarian operations is 'a forgotten byline to the real business of combat'. This reinforces a widespread view that humanitarian operations are not the business of warfighters and that non-military government agencies and the philanthropic community are the primary humanitarian actors. A logical extension of this view is that the ADF contribution to humanitarian needs may weaken the ability of the ADF to conduct military operations.

On the other hand, the Australian public and media of late 1999 saw the Australian role in East Timor through a humanitarian lens. Primarily, the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) "was there to create a secure environment for aid to be delivered by others".[2]

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[1] Department of Defence, *Land Warfare Developing Doctrine 3-8-5*, *Defence Force Aid to Civilian Authorities* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2000), p. 1-1.
[2] P. Cosgrove, *General Peter Cosgrove My Story* (Sydney: Harper Collins, 2006), p. 213.

This article explores the priority for humanitarian operations in the ADF capability portfolio. It starts with a short examination of the recent ADF support to domestic and international disaster relief missions. The article then analyses current ADF operations in 'failed states' to demonstrate the contemporary reality of the 'Three Block War and Complex Warfighting.'[3] This analysis shows how embedding humanitarian operations within military missions transcends 'hearts and minds'[4] and is more about creating the social capital required for a return to civil society and to seed the success of future societies. This analysis underpins a brief assessment of what humanitarian operations mean for future ADF capability in particular and for Australian society in general.

Defining Humanitarian Operations

The United Nations (UN) has defined four humanitarian principles:

Humanity, which is the provision of assistance to people in distress without discrimination;

- Impartiality, where action is based solely on need;

- Neutrality, where humanitarian action must not favour any side in an armed conflict; and

- Independence, where humanitarian action must be kept separate from political, economic, military or other objectives.[5]

These four humanitarian principles are underpinned by the philanthropic notion of 'do no harm'[6] and, taken together, constitute the accepted framework for humanitarian operations by Non-Government Organisations (NGO). But this framework may be inimical to the efficient destruction of enemy forces and the achievement of military objectives. Hence the battlespace and humanitarian space may merge at times and at other times be quite disconnected. In a post conflict environment the humanitarian end state desired by NGOs may be at odds with the requirements of the military

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[3] Charles C. Krulak, 'The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War', *Marines Magazine* (January 1999); Australian Army, *Future Land Operational Concept (FLOC) Complex Warfighting* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2004).

[4] Department of Defence, *Land Warfare Developing Doctrine 3-0-1, Counterinsurgency Operations* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2004), p. 2-2. 'Hearts and Minds' is a descriptor of the technique used to separate the insurgents from support in a counterinsurgency campaign.

[5] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Decade; The Challenges for Humanitarian Assistance in the Last Decade and Into The Future*, Volume 1 (New York: United Nations, 2004), p. 76. These four principles are derived from International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) supported by the UN.

[6] NGO principles as expressed through Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)*, Code of Conduct*, available at <http://www.ACFID.asn.au> [Accessed 17 Mar 2008]. Code of Conduct Guidance infers 'Do No Harm' as guidance for delivery of NGO projects but does not define how harm is avoided.

mission prosecuting the orders and intentions of government.[7] The ADF does not attempt to meet every possible humanitarian objective for every actor in the humanitarian space.

Humanitarian operations are always part of any conflict, and the ADF has legal obligations to ameliorate human suffering under the Geneva Conventions, its additional protocols, and various other international treaties which the Australian Government has signed. The 2000 White Paper identified a role for the ADF in the Support of Wider Interests and stated:

> Our land forces would be ideally suited to provide contributions to lower intensity operations including peacekeeping and many types of humanitarian operations.[8]

The 2007 Defence Update reinforced this requirement with a commitment to reinforce military operations with a whole of government approach to humanitarian needs and capacity building in prosecuting the 'War Against Terror'.[9] These commitments constitute implicit recognition by the Australian Government that humanitarian and military operations are increasingly integrated. They also invalidate the traditional view of military humanitarian assistance operations as constrained activities addressing the aftermath of environmental disaster.

These commitments recognise that the ADF may be embroiled in a situation where local arrangements for the delivery of humanitarian relief have collapsed, and the civil police and government structures are incapable of, or unwilling to, provide assistance. In this case robust military force structures are required to meet the twin challenges of humanitarian need and population security. The ADF must combine with the NGOs and UN humanitarian agencies who are intimately involved in such an operation.[10] Humanitarian operations are not an inconvenient necessity of modern day operations, but an essential component of all operations.

Supporting Humanitarian Operations in a Non-Conflict Environment

ADF capabilities may be critical to the 'Whole of Nation' approach required for successful humanitarian operations. Firstly, the ADF can create a secure environment. Then ADF ships, aircraft and vehicles can transport all agencies to the area of need, not just the military. Once on the ground the

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[7] M. Smith, *Civil Military Interaction—Building Civil Society During Conflict*, Reconstruction During Conflict Seminar, Canberra, 2007, p. 3.
[8] Department of Defence, *Defence 2000: White Paper Our Future Defence Force* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2000), p. 52.
[9] Department of Defence, *Australia's National Security: A Defence Update 2007* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2007), p. 16.
[10] Department of Defence, *Land Warfare Doctrine 3-0-2, Peace Support* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 1999), p. 2-2.

ADF can provide a responsive and protected means of support, and enhance the ability to coordinate activities through good command control and communications. It offers comprehensive but constrained medical care until hospitals are established, and can reinstate essential engineering services. These capabilities are maintained at a high state of readiness by the ADF.

Recently, the Australian Government has looked to the ADF to provide the kind of robust planning capability unavailable elsewhere in government or private enterprise. For example, Defence personnel have accumulated considerable experience in producing detailed estimates for operational requirements at short notice. These estimates can assist the preparation of follow on logistic supplies and provide information that can be used by all parties in preparation and conduct of their own activities. This culture of planning benefits all other 'Whole of Nation' actors in the conduct of humanitarian operations.[11]

SUPPORTING DOMESTIC HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

> *Just after midnight on Christmas morning, 1974, Cyclone Tracy hurtled across the Timor Sea and struck the city of Darwin, creating a scene reminiscent of Hiroshima. When the news reached him in far-off Canberra, the Head of the newly established Natural Disasters Organisation, Major General Alan Stretton, set in motion the largest relief operation in Australian history. The RAAF flew experts and supplies into, and refugees out of, the stricken city; and the Australian Navy, loaded with heavy equipment, put its whole Fleet to sea in record time.*
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> E.M. Andrews, *Civil-Military Relations in the Twentieth Century*[12]

The Australian States and Territories have Constitutional responsibility for the protection of the lives and property within their boundaries. Where a disaster renders State or Territory resources inadequate, unavailable or untimely, the Commonwealth accepts a responsibility for providing support when requested.[13] Hence the Australian military forces provided an immediate and necessary response to the domestic disaster of Cyclone Tracy. Army units followed up by providing limited accommodation and services to facilitate reconstruction. As the civilian capacity grew the military withdrew, and the Northern Territory assumed normal governance arrangements in due course.

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[11] K. Gillespie, *Stabilisation Operations Delivering Effects to Win—The Importance of Effective, Immediate and Responsive Reconstruction*, Reconstruction During Conflict Seminar, Canberra, 2007, pp. 10-13.
[12] E.M. Andrews, 'Civil-Military Relations in the Twentieth Century', in M. McKernan and M. Browne (eds.), *Australia Two Centuries of War and Peace* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1988), p. 366.
[13] Department of Defence, *Defence Instruction General (Operational) 5-1, Defence Assistance to the Civil Community—policy and procedures* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2004), p. 3.

Just over thirty-one years later in the early morning of 20 March 2006 Tropical Cyclone Larry struck the coast of Far North Queensland resulting in the State's largest natural disaster in a generation. Hundreds of thousands of people were affected over a vast area, and tens of thousands of people were denied food, shelter, water, power and communications. Homes were destroyed leaving families completely destitute, and every aspect of society was impacted including widespread damage to infrastructure, industry, farms, crops and business. Army Units from the Townsville based 3rd Brigade implemented the emergency response plans supported by Air Force C130s delivering critical supplies. The Queensland Government established a Task Force headed by the recently retired General Peter Cosgrove to coordinate the 'Whole of Government' recovery and reconstruction efforts.[14]

General Cosgrove confronted a war zone without the bombs and bullets.[15] General Cosgrove encouraged lead agencies while observing and analysing the relief efforts to identify overlapping responsibilities and gaps to improve the efficiency of the operations. The 'State of Disaster Declaration' was terminated on 3 April, two weeks after Larry struck, coinciding with restoration of the majority of the power grid and the cessation of Army assistance. In both the Tracy and Larry cyclone disasters the ADF not only delivered immediate capability in the aftermath of the disaster but also provided critical leadership and planning functions pending restoration of normal civilian functions.[16]

The Australian military forces have also made longer term contributions to Australian social capital. For example, in 1981 Army medical units were performing eye surgery in Aboriginal communities long before Fred Hollows championed the cause.[17] In October 1996 members of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation met with the then Prime Minister, the Rt Hon John Howard, to raise concerns about the poor primary health of indigenous Australians. As a consequence the Army worked with the then Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) to assist remote aboriginal communities improve their infrastructure in what came to be known as the ATSIC Army Community Assistance Program (AACAP). Since the inception of AACAP in 1996 over 20 indigenous communities, in some of the most remote areas of the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia have benefited through Army's efforts. Over 100 houses, numerous health clinics, airstrips and essential engineering services such as

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[14] Queensland Government, *The Final Report of the Operation Recovery Task Force—Severe Tropical Cyclone Larry* (Brisbane: Queensland Government, 2007), pp. 6-8.
[15] 'Cosgrove Takes over As Relief Effort in Chaos', *The Australian*, 24 March 2006, p. 1.
[16] P. Hobbs, *Domestic Emergency Support to Cyclone Larry*, Reconstruction During Conflict Seminar, Canberra, 2007, pp. 3-4.
[17] G. Durant-Law, <http://www.durantlaw.info/> [Accessed 17 March 2008]. Mr Durant-Law served with the Royal Australian Medical Corps and was part of an ADF Activity in Western NSW and QLD in 1981 which provided medical assistance to remote indigenous communities, including eye surgery.

power, water and sewerage systems have been delivered across these Communities.[18]

In improving the primary and environmental health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in remote communities the AACAP utilises Defence resources to deliver construction, skills transfer and health support services in an integrated manner using military and civilian contracted resources. The resulting experience with the planning and delivery of integrated effects has greatly influenced many of the very successful non-lethal actions featured in current ADF operations. The ADF has adapted to working and integrating with the various levels of government and the many NGOs working in indigenous communities. AACAP is built upon cultural awareness and the requirement for the ADF to understand different cultures, learn to tolerate such cultural differences, and ultimately adapt to such differences when shaping and conducting its own operations.[19]

Such capacity building is a critical component of humanitarian operations because it provides a path away from aid—"a hand up not a hand out".[20] Support to domestic humanitarian operations provides various challenges to the ADF, and improvements to crisis management by the ADF can still be made.

Major General Alan Stretton, who led the disaster relief response to Cyclone Tracy, subsequently criticised the problematic relationships between all government agencies. He called for improved Commonwealth legal, organisational and policy frameworks.[21] The extensive policy statements of Emergency Management Australia and documents such as the *Defence Instruction Operation 5-1 Defence Assistance to the Civil Community— Policy and Procedures* point to a much improved management strategy for domestic disaster relief in Australia. As the findings of the review of Cyclone Larry Operation Recovery Task Force reveal, "'Whole of Government' efforts can further be improved to ensure unity of effort."[22] In comparison the ADF's role in domestic capacity building activities is less clearly defined. AACAP is an outstanding example of positive domestic humanitarian operations of this nature, but the recent intervention in indigenous communities by the Australian Government, supported by the ADF, remains politically charged. The ADF's role in supporting humanitarian activities in Australia will by necessity continue to evolve to meet domestic challenges.

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[18] Department of Defence, *AACAP Fact Sheet,* pp. 1-3,
<http://www.defence.gov.au/publications> [Accessed 17 March 2008].
[19] N. Beutel, *Domestic Support—The Untold Story of Army ATSIC Community Assistance Program*, Reconstruction During Conflict Seminar, Canberra, 2007, pp. 8-10.
[20] F. Hickling, *Presentation to Royal Australian Engineer Corps Conference*, 2003.
[21] A. Stretton, *The Furious Days: The Relief of Darwin* (Sydney: Collins, 1976).
[22] Queensland Government, *The Final Report of the Operation Recovery Task Force*, p. 21.

SUPPORTING HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS ABROAD

> *The 2005 Kashmir Earthquake occurred on the 8th of October 2005 in Pakistan Administered Kashmir. The earthquake registered a debatable 7.6 or 7.7 on the Richter scale. The Government of Pakistan said there were more than 73,000 people killed, more than 69,000 injured and 3.3 million homeless - many required emergency shelter.*
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> AusAID Website[23]

Pakistan Administered Kashmir was ravaged by conflict and natural disaster when the Australian Government deployed a Joint Task Force on a humanitarian mission as a part of an international force warmly welcomed by Pakistan. The task force headed by Colonel Andrew Sims deployed for four months providing health and logistics support. Sims observed that:

> By its very nature, humanitarian operations yield positive effects as people understand acts of compassion. A comprehensive and active health plan can form the basis of a robust public diplomacy strategy for humanitarian operations.[24]

The Kashmiri mission differed from the historical pattern of ADF humanitarian health operations which typically involve the rapid deployment of a surgical capability in the early stages of a disaster. This provides a substantial up-front capacity, but the humanitarian requirement after the emergency is often more significant. Usually military assets are withdrawn by this stage and the medium term response is civilian led and managed. The Kashmiri mission, however, involved the ADF in primary health care interventions, including vaccination which have a substantial lasting public health impact. In addition the destruction of sanitation infrastructure necessitated construction and adaptation of field hygiene equipment such as incline incinerators, burn latrines and field ablutions as well as establishing, monitoring and enforcing occupational hygiene practices. The Task Force's ability to adapt to this enhanced humanitarian mission was central to its lauded contribution to the international humanitarian operation.[25]

But the humanitarian effort made by Australia in Kashmir was dwarfed by the Australian response to the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami. Australian activity focussed on neighbouring Indonesia. Within the first seventy-two hours the Air Force had flown hazardous missions into devastated areas of Aceh as part of Operation Sumatra Assist and comprehensive cross agency planning commenced in Canberra. The Health Support Company flew out of Richmond on 2 January 2005 and on arrival provided emergency medical care in Banda Aceh. As part of a 'Whole of Government' plan the ADF

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[23] AusAID website, Archived Hot Topics, South Asia Earthquake, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/topic.cfm?ID=7971_9253_3488_4613_717> [Accessed 17 March 2008].

[24] A. Sims, *JTF 632 Post Operational Report*, Annex G (HEALTH), April 2006, p. 1.

[25] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

raised a Combined Joint Task Force commanded by Brigadier David Chalmers. The main body of the Task Force deployed on HMAS *Kanimbla* and arrived on station near Banda Aceh on 13 January 2005,[26] a remarkable organisational and deployment achievement.

HMAS *Kanimbla,* with a regular crew of approximately 240 men and women, two Sea King Helicopters and two landing craft carried a detachment of 150 engineers (1st Combat Engineer Regiment, based in Darwin) and key equipment to Banda Aceh. The engineers worked in support of the Indonesian Government authorities, restoring essential services in tsunami-affected areas. Together the engineer and medical teams focused on delivery of basic sanitation and shelter in selected camps, for those Acehnese worst affected by the tsunami.[27] The ADF teams were part of a coordinated approach with Indonesian authorities and NGOs to improve overall conditions in some of the displaced persons camps:[28]

> This was a war zone before it became a disaster zone…If you have not been there, I do not believe you can have the vaguest comprehension of what this was like. Even experience in Cyclone Tracy would not really prepare you for what this was like.[29]

The ADF was clearly one of the Australian Government's most important assets in providing an immediate response to the Boxing Day Tsunami. Particularly significant here was the history of conflict ranging from sporadic instances of violence to concentrated military operations prosecuted by the Islamic separatist movement in Aceh, the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). The devastation of Aceh by the tsunami created a vacuum that GAM could have exploited to the detriment of Indonesian sovereignty. The ADF as a trained warfighting capability was able to adapt to the very real threats posed by GAM without having to fight. Other government agencies such as the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and the Department of Foreign Affairs along with many NGOs from Australia played a substantial role in the overall Australian relief effort. But it was the ability of the ADF to adapt to local threats, while allowing the humanitarian mission to continue that points to the ADF's unique and important contribution to humanitarian operations.[30]

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[26] Department of Defence, various media releases December 2004 to February 2005, <http://www.defence.gov.au/media/> [Accessed 17 March 2008].

[27] I.R. Cumming, *1 CER Post Operational Report—OP Sumatra Assist,* June 2005, pp. 1-3.

[28] Department of Defence, *Defence Annual Report 2004 – 05, Year in Review Special Feature Operation Sumatra Assist* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2005).

[29] R. Moffit, *Report Number 133 Inquiry into Australia's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami,* (Canberra: Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Parliament House, 2006), Chapter 3, p. 17.

[30] Gillespie, *Stabilisation Operations Delivering Effects to Win—The Importance of Effective, Immediate and Responsive Reconstruction*, pp. 12-13.

The decisions by the Australian Government to provide humanitarian assistance for emergency relief overseas has been a salient feature of Australia's international relationships. Critically, the government will look to the ADF to support international humanitarian operations in environment where natural disaster and conflict (or the effects of conflict) coincide.

But to make the most of this potential benefit, the ADF will need to operate within a 'Whole of Nation' framework which includes other international bodies and NGOs. The Australian Council for International Development told the recent hearing into Peacekeeping by the Joint Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade that although NGOs had a good working relationship with the ADF at senior levels, there was still much to be gained from greater interchange between civil and military organisations.[31] The greatest organisational and functional challenge for the ADF in support of international humanitarian operations remains the civil/military interface.

Humanitarian Operations in Failed States

> *…few of the important problems of our time have, in the final analysis, been finally solved by military power alone.*
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> John F. Kennedy[32]

Since the end of the Cold War, the concept for employment of western military forces has evolved from warfighting in a contained theatre of operation towards multi-dimensional operations. Non-military agencies have tended to have a higher profile and they have even constituted the lead agency or grouping for the entire operation.[33] Against this background it is significant that, since 1999, Australia has conducted operations predominantly in failed or failing states. The missions cover a spectrum, ranging from the invasion of Iraq in 2003 at the conventional warfighting end of the spectrum to distinct humanitarian missions such as Operation Sumatra Assist at the other end of the spectrum. Multi-dimensional operations in failed and failing states are currently the business of the ADF.

Fragile states, whether in conflict or otherwise, have long posed a problem for international security. Now, however, "the chief threats...to world order come from weak, collapsed, or failed states"[34] and the Defence Update 2007

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[31] P. O'Callaghan, *Australia's Involvement in Peacekeeping Operations* (Canberra: Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Parliament House, 2007), p. 13. The Report has not published with the dissolution of Parliament in October 2007.

[32] J.F. Kennedy, *Remarks to the Graduating Class of the U.S. Naval Academy*, Annapolis, MD, 7 June 1961, <www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/publicpapers/1961/jfk232_61.html> [Accessed 17 March 2008].

[33] Department of Defence, *Land Warfare Doctrine 1, Fundamentals of Land Warfare* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2008), para. 1.20 - 1.23.

[34] F. Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 7.

considers failed state vulnerabilities to be a pressing security threat.[35] Fragile states can be characterised by poor governance, weak economies, dilapidated or non-existent infrastructure and a fractured society. This vacuum allows poverty and disease—particularly AIDS and potentially pandemics—to flourish and provides a permissive environment for trans-national crime and terrorism. Displaced populations can also exacerbate internal crises or create pressure on neighbouring states. There are several vulnerable states in Australia's region, but the ripple effect of fragile states can be felt across the world.[36] But although the problem of failed states may be familiar, the solutions are never easy to implement and entail a demanding combination of diplomacy and military power against the backdrop of urgent and persistent humanitarian need.

In fractured societies, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, insecurity is the norm and 'post-conflict' can be a tenuous state of affairs at best. Colin Gray argues, for example, that counter-insurgency is about protecting the public—counter-insurgency will work only when terrorists and insurgents lose public sympathy.[37] By extension, those fighting the insurgent must gain the trust of a disaffected, terrified public. Hence, conducting a humanitarian operation in the face of the challenges of an insurgency is not about indulging 'hearts and minds' which suit the military end state. The humanitarian objective must work in concert with the military mission to create what the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development has defined as social capital is defined, comprising the following elements:

- Economic—focusing on people's incentive to invest in social capital;

- Political—focusing on the role of institutions, and of political and social norms, in shaping human behaviour;

- Sociological—focusing on trust, reciprocity and citizenship; and

- Anthropological—focusing on establishing social order.[38]

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[35] Department of Defence, *Australia's National Security: A Defence Update 2007,* p. 15.
[36] B. Nelson, *Building Future International Stability, A Need for Nations to Emerge from the Shadows of Conflict—An Australian Government Viewpoint*, Presentation to Reconstruction During Conflict Seminar, Canberra, 2007, p. 2. Estimates contained in a study of the economic impact of state failure suggests that failed states lose 2.6 per cent of growth per year—and an additional 1.6 per cent if in conflict. See L. Chauvet, P. Collier, and A. Hoeffler, *Paradise Lost: The Costs of State Failure in the Pacific* (Paris: World Institute for Development Economics Research, 2007), p. 9.
[37] C. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2006), p. 22.
[38] Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, *The Wellbeing of Nations: the Role of Human and Social Capital* (Paris: OECD, 2001).

As the ADF has found in current operations in Southern Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands, it is difficult to reconstruct a civil society and to foster the attendant social capital while simultaneously conducting military operations.

AFGHANISTAN

Southern Afghanistan in 2008 remains a hotbed of Taliban and insurgent activity, which the ADF combats daily. In 2002 Australia committed a Special Forces Group to Afghanistan, as part of Operation Slipper. The Special Forces were withdrawn in 2003 and then returned in 2006. The Australian Government increased its commitment to Afghanistan with the deployment of a Reconstruction Task Force (RTF) in September 2006. The RTF is focussed on reconstruction and community-based projects in Oruzgan Province and contributes to the Netherlands' Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT). The PRT forms part of the long term strategy to defeat the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the objectives are:

- Maintain the legitimacy of the central government while reaching beyond Kabul to where infrastructure is lacking.

- Ensure combat, construction and national and multinational aid components are coordinated at the local level, with latitude to determine strategies and tasks appropriate to local needs.

- Engage three lines of effort: security sector reform, local governance and reconstruction and development.

Within the PRT framework, the Australian RTF represents a significant attempt to contribute to a multi-layered approach to the defeat of the insurgency in Afghanistan. The RTF comprises approximately 385 personnel undertaking command, engineering, security and operational support. It does not operate in isolation, with lift, enabling capabilities and associated support provided by other elements of the ADF in Afghanistan and Iraq. The RTF delivers direct support to the local population, as well as helping build social capital through:

- refurbishments and additions to the Tarin Kowt Hospital;

- repairs and improvements to schools;

- construction of Uruzgan Provincial Government buildings;

- construction of roads and bridges;

- establishment of a Trade Training School in which ADF tradesmen instruct locals in basic carpentry, plumbing, electrical repairs and small motors maintenance;

- training of Afghan National Army engineers allowing them to contribute to our construction projects, encouraging further local support for RTF operations; and

- conduct of 'quick impact projects' in local villages—pre-fabricated projects such as water tanks, shelters, mosque renovations and other small installations—that have generated considerable local goodwill.[39]

The first deployment of the RTF was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Mick Ryan, who pursued a *top down—bottom up* approach. This entailed the RTF working concurrently to enhance the legitimacy of the indigenous government (top down) while ensuring credibility for the forces undertaking reconstruction in the eyes of the people (bottom up). Influencing the local population is an integral part of reconstruction operations. The cultivation of the positive image of friendly forces among the local people sets the environment for achieving effects. This is not easy where there is a deep suspicion of foreign intervention. For this reason, Ryan saw the informing of local people about infrastructure development and capacity building as a vital component of his strategy for success. Reconstruction targeted for the benefit of the public is a "critically significant element in the defeat of violent extremists".[40]

Tactically, a military force can win engagements by killing or capturing an insurgent emplacing an improvised explosive device, and it can win battles by targeting, disrupting, and killing insurgent cells. But it can only win the campaign if the local populace reveals insurgent and terrorist cells and accordingly deny sanctuary. Acting on opportunities for direct infusion of visible and tangible signs of progress with repair (or creation) of basic services through use of local contractors and labour (creating jobs) is a critical component to denying the insurgent a base of support. Creating symbols of true progress by establishing basic local services and providing employment within areas ripe for insurgent recruitment directly attack the insurgent support base. This effort achieves a two-pronged result; of providing a job alternative to the locals who had no job and it produces visible signs of progress. Earning say $5 to $7 a day from a contractor to feed your family becomes a viable alternative to say $300 a month from the black market or insurgent, payable on occasion, to emplace an improvised explosive device.[41]

The RTF is an example of military-led reconstruction operations, which maximises the employment of non-lethal effects to improve the lives of Afghanis. The non-lethal effects must be undertaken concurrently with

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[39] Nelson, *Building Future International Stability*, pp. 5-8.
[40] M. Ryan, 'The Military and Reconstruction Operations,' *Parameters*, vol. XXXVII, no. 4 (Winter 2007-08), pp. 3-4.
[41] P.W. Chiarelli and P.R. Michaelis, 'Winning the Peace The Requirement for Full-Spectrum Operations,' *Military Review* (July-August 2005), p. 9.

security operations, and it is this concurrent nature of humanitarian and population security operations that is so extraordinarily difficult to implement. A multi-dimensional operation cannot be conducted as a sequential series of events—deploy, engage, clear, build, with the expectation of a logical outcome of success. These operations have a far greater sense of purpose and cause.

Synchronisation and coordination of the battlespace is not done to win the war, but to win the peace. Penetration of the insurgents battle plan does not occur merely through synchronisation of the battlefield functions, but through local infrastructure improvement; training of security forces, understanding and educating the fundamentals of democracy; creating long lasting jobs that will carry beyond short-term infrastructure improvement; and, an information operations campaign that support the cultural realities of the area of operations. If that can be achieved then the capacity building projects of AusAID, and other international agencies, become the primary focus of a 'Whole of Government' strategy.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

In 2003 the Solomon Islands exhibited many of the conditions of a failing state, while stopping well short of the deterioration now characterizing Iraq and Afghanistan. Hence the Australian Government saw intervention in the Solomon Islands as a necessary act of stabilisation. Australia employed an internationally legitimate 'Whole of Government' solution, with the deployment of an Australian Federal Police (AFP)-led Task Group in 2003. Operation Anode was the ADF's contribution to the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI).

The ADF deployed to the Solomon Islands in July 2003 in support of the AFP, Australian Protective Service and Australian Government civilian officials. The contingent's first priority was to restore law and order, a precondition for subsequent assistance to the Solomon Islands Government in reforming key institutions. ADF personnel including elements from the 2nd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment (RAR), the Navy's minehunter vessels and the Air Force's Caribou detachment worked with forces from Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

Within a year, RAMSI had restored public confidence in the Solomon Islands' Government. The ADF, in particular, the 2nd RAR Battle Group provided the security umbrella on the ground. This secure environment allowed the arrests of key militants and the confiscation and public destruction of over 3 700 firearms. The speedy improvement in the security situation allowed the phased withdrawal of military forces and the transition to contracted administrative and logistic support for the AFP. A smaller combined ADF and regional military force, including an infantry platoon on quick reaction force duties, remained in the Solomon Islands in support of the continuing police-led activities.

The focus of RAMSI then shifted from restoring law and order to building durable governance mechanisms and stimulating economic growth. The Australian Government supported this endeavour by providing specialist contributions to RAMSI designed to advance reforms in health, infrastructure, policing, justice and economic and financial management. Fundamentally, law and order within an umbrella of implicit and explicit military security allowed RAMSI to undertake and continue operations to this day. The ADF is consistently a key component in the delivery of a 'Whole of Government' strategy which addresses the security threat of failed or failing states.[42]

Current ADF operations in failed states have led Mr Mike Smith, the recent CEO of Austcare, to argue that the ADF can never claim to be conducting purely humanitarian operations as defined by the UN in terms of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.[43] Rather, the ADF helps achieve military goals which create the environment for humanitarian outcomes. That is, military-led reconstruction tasks must not only support military missions but must also create the environment for long term capacity building.

To generalise, contemporary operations are characterised by seemingly endless, but connected, layers of complexity. A skilful enemy can, and has, exploited the failure of military power to adequately address the needs of the population, which disadvantages the military mission. Faced with the lessons of current operations, the ADF now emphasises the need for a closer multi-agency approach, which is much greater than what is required for 'traditional warfighting' operations.[44] The ADF's Chief of Staff Committee recognised this requirement and endorsed the *Adaptive Campaigning* strategy in December 2006.

Adaptive Campaigning is defined as: "Actions taken by the Land Force as part of the military contribution to a Whole of Government approach to resolving conflicts." The five interdependent and mutually reinforcing lines of operation are: *Joint Land Combat*, *Population Support*, *Indigenous Capacity Building*, *Population Protection*, *and Public Information*.[45] The next challenge for the Australian Government is to build the 'Whole of Government' framework in which 'Adaptive Campaigning' is but one component.

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[42] Department of Defence, *Defence Annual Report 2003 – 04, Year in Review Operation Anode* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2005).
[43] M. Smith, *Non-Government Organisations and Defence,* Royal United Services Institute Presentation, Russell Offices, Canberra, 23 January 2008, p. 5.
[44] Department of Defence, *Developing Doctrine LWD 3-0-3, Land Tactics* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2008), Chapter 14, p 2*.*
[45] Department of Defence, *Adaptive Campaigning The Land Force Response to Complex Warfighting* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2006), p. 1.

The Next Evolution of Humanitarian Operations: 'Infusion of Social Capital'

> *The first few years of the 21st century have demonstrated that the challenges we face in the strategic environment take many forms. Some are traditional, and relate to state-on-state tensions over territory, resources or the balance and distribution of power. Some are old challenges in new guises, such as the emergence of new terrorist groups and potentially pandemic diseases. Some are natural dangers, such as cyclones, earthquakes, and tsunamis. The uncertainty of the future operating environment requires us to develop new solutions to old and new challenges.*
>
> Department of Defence, *Joint Operations for the 21st Century*[46]

The Chief of the Defence Force described these challenges in the Future Joint Operations Concept, and the lessons of current operations point to an environment which is increasingly complex and dynamic. Hostility and opposition will manifest themselves in a variety of forms, from confrontation, through crisis, to conflict. The ADF in future conflicts will be required to grasp much more than the Clausewitzian notion that "War is…, a continuation of political activity by other means".[47] Future operations will increasingly acknowledge the human centrality of conflict and the ADF will be required to cope with the notion of operations as an infusion of social capital.

This will blur the tradition between military and civilian or host nation responsibilities. It will require the ADF to plan and execute multi-national, joint and inter-agency operations in cooperation with a multitude of other actors in the operations space. The increasing diversity of operations in terms of location, demography and threat will mean that high demands will be placed on the ADF's abilities to understand and adapt to constantly evolving areas of operations. A comprehensive understanding of social, political, geographic and cultural issues will be essential for the realisation of desired stability effects. It is through this understanding that the ADF will be more effectively prepared to contribute to tasks, such as interim governance, restoration of essential services, reconstruction and a reform of host nation institutions.

Experience with operations in failed states suggests that military contributions to future conflict will be most effective when all parties are contributing to a truly cross government and internationally agreed plan. Without this, the practical ability of the Australian Government to provide a comprehensive response at the tactical level is limited and the actions of the

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[46] Department of Defence, *Joint Operations for the 21st Century* (Canberra: Department of Defence, 2007), p. 1.

[47] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War,* edited and translated by M. Howard and P. Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 78.

ADF, AusAID and NGOs will potentially diverge and be counter productive. This does not mean exclusive adherence to the military plan but rather adoption of what the United Kingdom has called a Comprehensive Approach, involving:

> *Commonly understood principles and collaborative processes that enhance the likelihood of favourable and enduring outcomes within a particular situation.*[48]

Realising the Future Joint Operating Concept will require the ADF to fully embrace humanitarian operations as both part of a multi-agency approach and a mandatory commitment of resources during operations. This will also include equipping elements to provide humanitarian support. For example, ADF medical units might include paediatric nurses and will need to be equipped with paediatric supplies. Soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen will be challenged by the demands of a society acutely aware of humanitarian rights and needs, and the Commander of the future will embrace the infusion of social capital as a fundamental driver of strategic, operational and tactical plans. Integrated multi-agency operations will be the norm.

Individual ADF Experience and Australian Society Influences

Analysis of the nature of the humanitarian operations must be cognisant of the evolving nature of Australian society and, within that context, of the individual's role in ADF humanitarian operations. This requires answers to such questions as how an individual is affected when asked to decide between the responsibilities of an agent of humanitarianism and an agent of war? Does the deep experience of one effect the capacity to carry out the other? Is it possible to justify war as a form of humanitarianism? Does working to alleviate innocent human suffering make a better soldier? Or does the so-called collateral damage of war make military humanitarianism a moral hypocrisy?

While answering these questions is beyond the scope of this article, the experience of Graham Durant-Law, who served on the ADF Operation Tamar as part of the UN intervention into Rwanda in 1994 and 1995 is instructive. According to Durant-Law, ethical decisions at all levels of command underpinned daily operational activities. Ethics were more than a background state of mind shaping the psychology of decision making; it was intrinsically linked to every task. Never was this link between ethics, morality

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[48] Ministry of Defence, *The Comprehensive Approach,* Joint Discussion Note 4/05 (Shrivenham: Ministry of Defence, 2006), p. 1-5. The UK definition is broader than just government agencies, the term is often thought of as synonymous with a 'Whole of Government' or 'Inter-Agency' approach. The *spirit* of the term is an inclusive approach where all instruments of power, influence, support or action are harmonised in a unified approach to resolving a problem.

and war more graphically demonstrated than on 22 and 23 April 1995 at the Camp Kibeho massacre. Members of the ADF were present at this horrific event where over 4 000 people were brutally murdered. The Australian soldiers were unable to protect the refugees. Durant-Law reflects on this observation by one of the witnesses:

> but the incident I remember most was a mother with a small baby tapping my rifle then tapping her baby's head in what I believe was an attempt to get me to shoot her baby. It was then that I realised how desperate those people were.[49]

Humanitarian operations are not a distraction for the ADF; they entail a very real toll on personnel: For example, 674 members of the ADF served in Rwanda in two contingents from August 1994 to August 1995. Just over fifty have ongoing psychological problems requiring periodic assistance. Two have suicided and three are semi-permanent residents of psychiatric hospitals.[50]

Conclusion: A Worthy ADF Experience

Humanitarian operations are not merely an extension of politics but an infusion of social capital. It is not a case of structuring for peacekeeping and being found wanting in warfighting. The agile future ADF must be equipped and train for both. The duality of requirements will affect future policy, organisational, and training needs of the ADF. Indeed it will challenge some aspects of the evolving culture of the ADF. These challenges are similar to the demands of the Network Centric Warfare concepts, which are technology based, but rely on the human dimension for success. Adaptive organisations in ad hoc networks will not be easy to develop. Multi-Agency requirements and the nexus of the civil/military interface remains a key area for improvement by government. Enabling the future ADF to respond to humanitarian operations fused within military missions will be challenging.

Colonel Neil Greet graduated into the Royal Australian Engineers in December 1985. His command appointments have been the 21st Construction Squadron and the 6th Engineer Support Regiment. He has served operationally, with INTERFET in 1999/2000, and more recently as the Deputy Chief Engineer Multi National Corps—Iraq in 2006. Neil.Greet@defence.gov.au.

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[49] G. Durant-Law, *Rwanda An Ethical and Leadership Challenge,* Presentation to Australian Command and Staff Course, Canberra, April 2005, p. 17, <http://www.durantlaw.info/> [Accessed 17 March 2008].
[50] Ibid., p. 23.