NEWSLETTER

Lessons and Best Practices

Operation United Assistance Setting the Theater:

Creating Conditions for Success in West Africa

CENTER FOR ARMY LESSONS LEARNED

SUPPORTING THE WARFIGHTER

Operation United Assistance
Setting the Theater:
Creating Conditions for Success
in West Africa

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Foreword

> "Even as we deal with crises and challenges in other parts of the world that often dominate our headlines, even as we acknowledge the real hardships that so many Africans face every day, we have to make sure that we're seizing the extraordinary potential of today's Africa, which is the youngest and fastest-growing of the continents."
>
> — President Barack Obama, 28 JUL 2014

As this collection of articles goes to press, the Department of Defense (DOD) is winding down its support for Operation United Assistance (OUA), the United States whole-of-government approach to combating the Ebola epidemic in Western Africa. While the U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) turned over control of the Joint Force Command to the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division in late October 2014, West Africa is still a part of our area of responsibility and very much on our radar screens. We recently completed the African Land Forces Summit (ALFS) in Dakar, Senegal, with chiefs of land forces from 36 African nations, a testament to the interest and need to address security challenges in a collaborative manner. Without the strong partnerships whose foundation is events such as ALFS, we would not have been able to be so successful in helping the people of Liberia. U.S. Army GEN David G. Perkins spoke at the summit and surprised no one when he reminded everyone that Africa is probably the most complex environment in which to operate.

Not since World War II has the U.S. military been required to set the theater in Africa. But even more impressive than the empirical accomplishments are the resiliency demonstrated by the people of Liberia in taking the fight to the enemy and the hope which U.S. and international organizations brought to these wonderful people. This publication represents our efforts to share lessons from OUA. I think you will see that a common thread is a need to foster the capabilities resulting from innovative leadership and adaptive organizations.

CSM Jeffery Stitzel and I wish to convey our deep appreciation and gratitude to the Soldiers, Civilians, and Families of USARAF who stepped up in a big way during a global crisis and continue to demonstrate excellence every day. For 40 days we managed DOD forces working side-by-side with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States Embassy in Monrovia, and our great Liberian counterparts. I cannot overemphasize the importance of our mission, and we were glad to be on the team. U.S. Ambassador Deborah Malac; the President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf; and the Liberian Army's Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Daniel Ziankahn, demonstrated proactive and compassionate leadership in bringing the fight to this disease.

In a very short time, the international and intergovernmental community demonstrated strong commitment in aiding the nation of Liberia to control this crisis. Our engineering efforts showed visible and measurable results. In support of USAID, we were given the mission to construct 17 Ebola treatment units (ETUs). These ETUs provide medical care to Liberians who have contracted Ebola. Our partners in this effort, the members of the Armed Forces of Liberia, who were willing and eager to help their fellow countrymen. We worked side-by-side with our Liberian hosts and quickly built on our already special relationship, established through our theater security cooperation program. Additionally, a 25-bed hospital, the Monrovia Medical Unit, was constructed to provide medical care to healthcare workers. We also developed a program to train healthcare workers who safely provide direct medical care to patients. To support these efforts, we constructed a Logistical Support Area in Monrovia and moved people and supplies through an Intermediate Staging Base in Dakar.

As we traveled around the great nation of Liberia, I was deeply awed by the resilience shown by the Liberian people who willingly worked together with international organizations and other nations to contain and defeat the threat. I truly believe our assistance helped them quickly contain and control this enemy, so Liberians can, once again, confidently work toward their national potential.

As with any operation or activity, force protection was a top priority for this command as we supported both our government and the government of Liberia. As part of the military, we know there is always some risk inherent in every mission, and our support of OUA was no different. We mitigated most of the risk through prudent contact restrictions and stringent medical/hygiene procedures that helped protect our Soldiers and Civilians. Our staff met with the local hospital staff, regional health officials, the city officials, and Italian national officials to ensure we had a joint U.S.-Italian protocol in place. We had excellent collaboration with our Italian public officials and medical counterparts. I had every confidence in the procedures we set in place to ensure that both the affected member receives the best care available and that the individual will be isolated to prevent contagion.

We did not achieve these successes alone. Joint Force Command-United Assistance integrated the efforts of Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, and Marines to support this U.S. government effort. I can't say enough good things about the U.S. Air Force pilots and crews, who brought us personnel and supplies; the U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (SeaBees), which rapidly erected the Monrovia Medical Unit; or the U.S. Marine Corps aviators, who helped make our efforts successful. We were always in direct support of the lead agency, the USAID, and its Disaster Assistance Response Team. I was also humbled by the selfless, cheerful, and hope-filled service of Ambassador Malac and the entire embassy team, who work in Liberia every single day.

And then, there is the great nation of Liberia. When I arrived in Monrovia in mid-September 2014, what I found surprised me, because I discovered things you don't read or hear about in the news. I saw tremendous leadership in the local national government and a well-planned roadmap for success. I saw unbridled enthusiasm in the Armed Forces of Liberia, a professional force eager to get in the fight and help their brothers and sisters. But what I saw most of all was a people who faced the most devastating Ebola outbreak in history with unparalleled strength and courage. I was impressed everywhere I went, always greeted with warm smiles and kind words. Stores were open and children played and waved, people worked hard at their jobs, and families stayed together.

It was with great anticipation that the USARAF team looked forward to returning to Vicenza, Italy, and the Veneto region. Even in redeployment, force protection continued to be our number one priority, and we brought people back in a flow that ensured safety, minimized risk, and

reunited Soldiers with loved ones as soon as possible. There were probably some inconveniences that resulted, but the welfare of our Soldiers, Family members, and community members was paramount as we prepared for a joyful reunion.

USARAF – Bringing the Army Team to Africa

Darryl A. Williams
MG, U.S. Army
U.S. Army Africa

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Chapter 1

Operation United Assistance: The Integration of Operational Art into Crisis Action Planning

LTC L. Trice Burkes, U.S. Army Africa
G-35 Future Operations Branch

> At the request of the Liberian government, we're going to establish a military command center in Liberia to support civilian efforts across the region — similar to our response after the Haiti earthquake. It's going to be commanded by Major General Darryl Williams, commander of our Army forces in Africa.
>
> — President Barack Obama[1]

The U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) operational planning team (OPT) effectively and efficiently conducted crisis action planning[2] (CAP) in support of Operation United Assistance (OUA) through its demonstrated mastery of operational art.[3] USARAF's OPT demonstrated mastery of operational art constructs through simultaneous conceptual and detailed planning efforts, rapid assimilation of sister-service augmentation planners into the OPT, and collaborative planning efforts with various strategic- and operational-level commands. The OPT leveraged intellectual doctrinal tools for its use to frame the Ebola virus disease (EVD) problem and subsequently provided the commander viable options to accomplish USARAF's mission. First, the OPT conducted conceptual planning using the Army Design Methodology (ADM),[4] executed detailed planning using a hybrid of the military decisionmaking process (MDMP) and Joint operation planning process (JOPP), and used the adaptive planning and execution (APEX) system as the construct for orders production. Second, USARAF quickly assimilated sister-service planners into the OPT through efficient integration processes, leveraging planning enablers on station for a Lion Focus 14 exercise,[5] and maximized efforts within the OPT to task-organize planners congruent with subject matter expertise. Third, the OPT was dynamic in its approach to collaboratively plan with strategic- and operational-level commands to organize combat power[6] through force tailoring, task organizing, and the establishment of mutual support.

The USARAF G-35 established an OPT on 18 AUG 2014 to gather information regarding Ebola in West Africa — specifically, EVD effects on the countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. Reporting during this timeframe suggested more than 2,400 men, women, and children were suspected to have died. Additionally, clinics and treatment centers were overwhelmed, with respective public healthcare systems at maximum capacity. According to open-source reports, patients were turned away from treatment centers and people were dying in the streets.[7] As a result, Ebola was characterized as an epidemic never seen before and spiraling out of control.[8] In turn, the OPT commenced an analysis of Ebola's devastation to West Africa, which facilitates conceptual planning.

Demonstrating Operational Art

The OPT demonstrated mastery of operational art through simultaneous conceptual and detailed planning efforts as demonstrated through the use of ADM, MDMP, JOPP, and the APEX system as the Joint construct for orders production. The OPT lead was identified from USARAF's G-35 Future Operations (FUOPS) branch, and the OPT comprised functional subject matter experts from intelligence, logistics, medical, signal communications, staff judge advocate, operational protection, public affairs, information operations, engineering, human resources, and civil affairs. Problem framing is a precept of conceptual planning, which assisted the OPT with gaining situational understanding and awareness of Ebola's effects on the West African countries of

Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. This allowed the OPT to analyze the elements of operational art[9] as Ebola was an ill-structured and ill-defined problem for USARAF's OPT to define for operational approach development.

Minimal strategic guidance was issued during the onset of conceptual planning. Therefore, the OPT focused on understanding the operational environment (OE) within the aforementioned EVD-affected countries. The USARAF's G-2 OPT increased understanding of the OE through analyses of an EVD-affected country's political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure elements. Fortunately, the OPT was able to focus on truly creating situational understanding and awareness, which was vital for subsequent planning efforts to develop an operational approach. Additionally, the OPT used theory, history, and doctrine to develop a conceptual planning framework to facilitate development of an operational approach to counter EVD. Thus, the OPT demonstrated a profound mastery and appreciation of operational art.

The OPT leader leveraged the precepts of theorist Carl von Clausewitz, the historical perspective of *Operation Unified Response: Support to Haiti*, and the doctrinal principles of Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*; JP 3-33, *Joint Task Force Headquarters*; Field Manual (FM) 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*; Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*; Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 5-0, *The Operations Process*; and Army Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (ATTP) 5-01, *Commander and Staff Officer Guide*. Clausewitz's book, *On War*, provides a basic construct to understand chance and friction, the trinity, civil-military relations, and center of gravity. According to Clausewitzian theory, the USARAF commander would require a demonstration of exemplary civil-military relations skills to foster a unity-of-effort environment through the whole U.S. government approach and integration of the government of Liberia, private corporations, non-governmental agencies, and the United Nations. Finally, the OPT assessed the people of Liberia as the center of gravity to focus EVD-containment efforts. Historically, Operation Unified Response-Support to Haiti efforts provided viable lessons learned to facilitate the OPT's conceptual planning development.

A magnitude 7.0 earthquake, centered under the capital city of Port-au-Prince, hit the Caribbean country of Haiti on 12 JAN 2010 at 4:53 p.m. The death toll was estimated at over 230,000 persons. In several minutes, the largest earthquake to engulf the region in 200 years destroyed the country's government systems and several organizations that were there assisting them. Among the dead were senior leaders of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the government of Haiti (GoH). Additionally, among the lost were 14 of 16 GoH ministry buildings and an estimated 97,000 dwellings, with 188,000 damaged. Over 700,000 people were displaced within Port-au-Prince alone. The people and the GoH were in shock, and a relief effort was made more challenging by a decimated local government. The international community and U.S. government provided immediate response consisting of over 140 nations and 1,000 non-governmental organizations, private organizations, and charities. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was designated as lead Federal agency to coordinate U.S. government actions to provide, respond, and recover assistance to the Haitian government. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) issued an execute order (EXORD 2236) on 13 JAN 2010, authorizing U.S. military humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations for Haiti. On 14 JAN 2010, U.S. Southern Command obtained Secretary of Defense approval to establish Joint Task Force Haiti to lead the Department of Defense (DOD) mission within Haiti.

Comparatively, on 16 SEP 2014, President Obama's remarks regarding the Ebola outbreak provided the OPT enough strategic guidance to develop the following operational approach (President Obama announced a major increase in the U.S. response to Ebola at the request of the Liberian government with the assistance of USARAF):

- Establish a military command center in Liberia to support civilian efforts across the region — similar to the U.S. response after the Haiti earthquake.

- Bring expertise in command and control, logistics, and engineering.

- Create an air bridge to expedite the movement of health workers and medical supplies into West Africa.

- Establish a staging area in Senegal to help distribute personnel and aid on the ground more quickly.

- Create a new training site to train thousands of healthcare workers so they can effectively and safely care for more patients.

- Build additional Ebola treatment units.

Upon completion of President Obama's speech, the OPT developed an operational approach[10] in support of OUA. Subsequently, USARAF's OPT was under enormous time constraints to conduct detailed planning using the intellectual tools of MDMP, JOPP, and orders production while simultaneously establishing a Joint force command headquarters supporting OUA.

Assimilating Sister-Service Planners

USARAF quickly assimilated sister-service planners into the OPT through efficient integration processes, leveraging planning enablers on station for USARAF's Lion Focus 14 exercise, and rigorously maximized efforts to task-organize augmentee planners within the OPT congruent with their functional expertise. The timing of USARAF's transition to a Joint force headquarters was optimal as Joint planners were on station and integrated into the Lion Focus 14 exercise. Lion Focus was constructed for the execution of two divergent planning efforts, which encompassed noncombatant evacuation operations and mass atrocity response operations. After four days of Lion Focus staff training, exercise participants immediately transitioned efforts to establishing a Joint force command headquarters in support of OUA.

The G-35 FUOPS branch chief immediately assembled the team into a "real world" OPT to plan operations in support of the USAID to assist the government of Liberia with countering EVD. The OPT integrated key planners from the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command (JECC), Air Force Africa's air component coordination element, Special Operations Command Africa, and Marine Forces Africa to transform the OPT from an Army service component command (ASCC) "Green" planning team into a Joint planning team (JPT), "Purple," with adequate capacity to commence detailed crisis action planning. The JECC arrived with a robust task-organized team of planners astute in engineering, rule of law, public affairs, logistics, civil affairs, and strategy. Additionally, the JECC's lead planner was a practitioner of Joint doctrine and provided phenomenal insights to maximize crisis action planning efforts. Detailed planning efforts were focused along four lines of effort identified as command and control, engineering support, medical (training) support, and sustainment.

USARAF's unofficial designation as Joint Force Command-United Assistance (JFC-UA) was the trigger to broaden the JPT's planning efforts by maximizing Joint doctrine, Joint language, and Joint force providers as sourcing solutions. The JPT maximized a hybrid of Army doctrinal publications and Joint publications to facilitate planning efforts. However, JP 5-0, JP 3-0, and the APEX system were primarily used for planning efforts. Upon completion of the JPT's

mission analysis briefing to the commander, JFC-UA/USARAF, the approved mission was to provide support to USAID-led humanitarian assistance efforts in order to assist the overall U.S. government's effort to contain EVD in Liberia and West Africa. Approximately 48 hours later, the JPT received course of action (COA) approval from the commander, JFC-UA/USARAF, and initiated orders production. Within 72 hours of COA approval, the JPT with JFC-UA's chief of staff/USARAF (G-3/5/7) provided a rehearsal of concept (ROC) drill to the commander, JFC-UA/USARAF, and U.S. AFRICOM deputy (J-3). The ROC drill provided a forum to confirm and validate accomplishment of key tasks, validate deployment of forces in the optimal sequence to accomplish key tasks, and an opportunity for task force representatives to back brief the JFC-UA commander on the concept of operations.

Organizing Combat Power

The JPT was dynamic in its approach to collaboratively plan with various strategic and operational-level commands to organize combat power through force tailoring, task organization, and mutual support establishment. Often the commander, JFC-UA/USARAF, primary staff members, and JPT planners were enamored with the concept of generating combat power. However, the generation of combat power is impeded without integrating conceptual and detailed planning methodologies to efficiently organize combat power. The JPT exhaustively organized combat power through force tailoring,[11] task organizing,[12] and mutual support planning considerations.[13] Additionally, the JPT exclusively collaborated with Forces Command, U.S. Africa Command, the Joint staff, and Transportation Command to efficiently organize combat power in support of OUA. The JPT assisted the forward command element of the commander, JFC-UA/USARAF, with setting the Joint operations area (JOA) by meticulous organization of combat power initiatives. Through detailed crisis action planning, the JPT maximized force tailoring through two complementary requirements: selecting the right forces and deploying forces in the optimal sequence.

Specifically, the JPT maximized detailed planning to influence force selection through a request-for-forces process. The JPT planners worked closely with USARAF's global force management (GFM) experts to refine force tailoring processes. A vital aspect to ensuring deployment of forces in optimal sequence was a daily JFC-UA force flow working group. The force flow working group was a critical detailed planning forum, chaired by the JFC-UA Chief of Staff/USARAF (G-3/5/7), to verify time-phased force flow deployment data (TPFDD). Once the TPFDD was verified, USARAF's GFM experts forwarded the data to U.S. Africa Command for validation. The force flow working group was a detailed planning session and a critical venue for organizing and generating combat power to support the JFC-UA/USARAF mission requirements in Liberia. Priority of force flow to set the JOA consisted of capabilities for delivery of mobile laboratories, construction of a Monrovia medical unit and Ebola treatment units, medical training support, and logistics.

Transition

Subsequently, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) was identified to assume command of OUA. Shortly thereafter, 12 planners from the 101st Airborne Division arrived in Vicenza, Italy. In concert with 101st Airborne Division planners, the JPT methodically developed a planning sequel focused on transitioning JFC-UA from USARAF to Eagle Forward.[14] The JPT and 101st planners attained COA approval of JFC-UA's headquarters transition tasks on 20 OCT 2014. Upon initial stages of setting the JOA, JPT core members continued to refine planning products and developed branch plans to assist Eagle Forward's assumption of JFC-UA. Additionally, the JPT developed and transitioned two critical branch plans, which addressed countering violent extremist organizations and non-combatant evacuation operations within the EVD-affected

countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. On 25 OCT 2014, USARAF returned to its core ASCC Title 10 role and executive agent tasks supporting JFC-UA.

Despite the OPT's impeccable planning efforts, the following stress points became evident as the USARAF headquarters transitioned from a theater security-cooperation entity into an operational planning headquarters:

- The USARAF headquarters struggled with task organizing into a Joint force command headquarters. Thus, USARAF primary staff did not allocate adequate personnel "depth" to establish and sustain a 24-hour Joint operations center (JOC).

- As a result of inefficient staffing of the JOC, USARAF's OPT simultaneously functioned as both a JFC-UA Joint staff rear echelon and a planning element. This dual role exemplified enormous challenges as the OPT was immersed in both planning and current operations execution. However, the collective OPT, with assistance from the USARAF current operations integration cell, filled staffing gaps to accomplish the JFC-UA/USARAF commander's mission in support of OUA. Currently, USARAF is analyzing and redesigning its staff structure to increase personnel depth within the JOC.[15]

Conclusion

USARAF's OPT transitioned from an ASCC-centric planning element into JFC-UA's JPT. Regardless of its naming convention, USARAF's OPT effectively and efficiently conducted crisis action planning in support of OUA through a demonstrated mastery of operational art. USARAF's OPT illuminated its mastery of operational art constructs through the following:

- Simultaneous conceptual and detailed planning efforts.

- Rapid assimilation of sister-service augmentation planners into the OPT.

- Collaborative planning efforts with various strategic and operational-level commands.

Specifically, the OPT conducted conceptual planning using the ADM, executed detailed planning using a hybrid of the MDMP and JOPP, and used the APEX system as the construct for orders production.

Endnotes

1. Remarks by President Barack Obama on the Ebola outbreak, 16 SEP 2014, accessed at website: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/20a4/09.16/remarks-president-ebola-outbreak, on 14 JAN 2015.

2. Crisis Action Planning (CAP) provides the CJCS and combatant commanders a process for getting vital decision-making information up the chain of command to the U.S. President and Secretary of Defense.

3. Operational art is the cognitive approach by commanders and staffs — supported by their skill, knowledge, experience, creativity, and judgment — to develop strategies, campaigns, and operations to organize and employ military forces by integrating ends, ways, and means (JP 5-0).

4. The ADM is a methodology for applying critical and creative thinking to understand, visualize, and describe problems and approaches to solving them (ADP 5-0). Army design methodology is particularly useful as an aid to conceptual planning, but must be integrated with the detailed planning typically associated with the MDMP to produce executable plans.

5. Lion Focus is a two-week validation exercise in Europe. The main exercise goal is to improve USARAF planning processes to conduct operations. Lion Focus scenarios test the command's staff from routine tasks to contingencies such as non-combatant evacuation and disaster relief.

6. Combat power is the total means of destructive, constructive, and information capabilities that a military unit or formation can apply at a given time (ADRP 3-0).

7. Information taken from website: http://www.cnn.com/2014/08/01/health/ebola-outbreak-questions, on 18 AUG 2014.

8. Ibid.

9. The elements of operational art support the commander in identifying objectives that link tactical missions to the desired end state. These elements help refine and focus the operational approach that forms the basis for developing a detailed plan or order (ADRP 5-0, *The Operations Process*).

10. An operational approach provides the foundation for the commander's planning guidance to staff and other partners. Next, it provides the model for execution of the campaign or operation and assessment development. Lastly, an operational approach enables a better understanding of the OE and the problem (JP 5-0).

11. Force tailoring is a process of determining the right mix of forces and the sequence of their deployment in support of a Joint force commander (ADRP 3-0).

12. Task organizing is the act of designing an operating force, support staff, or sustainment package of specific size and composition to meet a unique task or mission (ADRP 3-0).

13. Mutual support is that support which units render each other against an enemy, because of assigned tasks, positions relative to each other and to the enemy, and inherent capabilities (JP 3-31, *Command and Control for Joint Land Operations*). In Army doctrine, mutual support is a planning consideration related to force disposition, not a command relationship. Mutual support has two aspects — supporting range and supporting distance. Understanding mutual support and accepting risk during operations are fundamental to the art of tactics (ADRP 3-0).

14. Eagle Forward was the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) unit designation as the command element for OUA.

15. The USARAF staff redesign initiative is a direct result of thorough after action reviews to create staff efficiencies as an operational headquarters.

Chapter 2

Communicating Ebola: Lessons in Public Affairs Contingency Operations While Setting the Theater in an Expeditionary Environment

**COL David P. Doherty, U.S. Army Africa and Operation United Assistance Director of Public Affairs and
Michael P. Whetston, U.S. Army Africa Deputy Public Affairs Officer**

What began as a planned two-day reconnaissance for a handful of key leaders to gain situational awareness quickly changed once we got the call. The White House wanted to know as soon as our general landed in Liberia. The President of the United States would identify MG Darryl A. Williams as the commander of Operation United Assistance (OUA) and the U.S. Joint forces Command (JFC) commanding general in a press conference. Media interest would now certainly spike much sooner and in much greater volume than anticipated. Never before had an Army Service Component Command (ASCC) set a theater in a place like Liberia. The country's dilapidated road network, unemployment rates surging at nearly 80 percent, and a persistent deadly virus had captured the world's attention and stoked its fears. This was going to be a difficult task for any army, and the eyes of the world would be watching through the international media's unwavering lens. Needless to say, this two-day fact finding trip quickly evolved into something different — a 40-day operation, where the newest ASCC would establish the theater for up to 3,000 follow-on service members as outlined in the President's speech. Public Affairs (PA) operations in this complex, ambiguous environment would be challenging, but ultimately would be a key contributor in impacting the communication tone and the narrative about U.S. government support in West Africa.

Background

U.S. Army Africa (USARAF), based in Vicenza, Italy, is the smallest, newest, and arguably one of the most unique ASCCs in the U.S. Army. It's a headquarters of nearly 600 with approximately 30 percent of its structure leveraging the department's civilian workforce. USARAF includes no assigned organic forces, so it relies heavily on external sourcing solutions. As a command and control element, USARAF is funded, staffed, and resourced to coordinate land force operations throughout the African continent. The organization maintains the function of a deployable command post, for short-term contingency operations up to 90 days in duration. Likewise, the USARAF PA section is staffed similarly, with an emphasis on command information and planning capabilities. PA Soldiers earmarked for contingency operations include one field grade officer, one senior noncommissioned officer, and two enlisted broadcast specialists. Associated equipment for these deployable soldiers is sourced from the main organization.

In a short time, the international and intergovernmental community demonstrated extraordinary commitment and resolve in aiding the nation of Liberia with this crisis. Our military efforts showed visible and measurable results. In support of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), we were given the mission to construct 17 Ebola treatment units (ETUs). These ETUs provide medical care to Liberians who have contracted Ebola. Our partners in this effort were the members of the Armed Forces of Liberia, who were eager to help their fellow countrymen. Additionally, a 25-bed hospital, the Monrovia Medical Unit, was constructed to provide medical care to healthcare workers. Finally, we helped develop a program to train healthcare workers, who would safely provide direct medical care to patients. We did not make this progress alone. The JFC OUA integrated the efforts of Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, and Marines to support this U.S. government effort. We were in direct support of the lead agency, the USAID, and its disaster assistance response team (DART).

Planning and Deployment

The overall condensed planning timeline for OUA and subsequent high-level public announcements contributed to some initial challenges within the community. Early versions of written guidance were restrictive, which hampered the JFC ability to adequately respond to the deluge of media interview requests. Furthermore, the leaders' reconnaissance included no PA leaders or planners, and members of international media were lodged in the same hotel as this advanced team. Mission analysis was cursory, and a large portion of staff energy was focused on requesting manning to execute this operation without a completed understanding of the required capability or the capacity to support such capability. No PA estimate was included within the initial planning guidance.

USARAF PA personnel who deployed to OUA included a planner on the Torch Party, the public affairs officer on the first main body flight, and a senior noncommissioned photojournalist on the second main body flight. The noncommissioned officer was bumped to a subsequent flight and a combat camera still- and video-specialist was added to the group. Lack of infrastructure, limited living spaces, and priority of effort all contributed to restrictive force flow decisions. Requests for Joint Public Affairs Support Element (JPASE) augmentation, as well as a public affairs detachment (PAD), were made based on estimated requirements.

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) had been identified as the follow-on force, but they were unable to submit a request for forces (RFF) on their own behalf. The division concluded that a mobile public affairs detachment (MPAD) would probably provide more of the required resources than a PAD, so the MPAD was added to the RFF later. The JPASE deployed initially to Italy for direct coordination and then to Monrovia two weeks after the arrival of the USARAF main body; however, the MPAD was not sourced, and the PAD arrived nearly three weeks after the USARAF-to-101st Airborne Division transition.

The media environment clearly was such that it required the right capability in the earliest stages of this operation. This was a bit of a paradigm shift for an organization that is sourced and accustomed to an emphasis on planning and command information. Command information requirements from the highest level also should be considered in the PA plan. Requirements for visual imagery will be a focal point of Joint staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense press conferences, and depending upon availability of PA enablers, may require other resources to fulfill.

Public Information

Although flooded initially with media requests for interviews with the commanding general, the JFC was able to manage media activities with minimal personnel due largely to effective coordination with the public affairs offices of the U.S. Embassy, USAID, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and U.S. Public Health Service. An early decision was made that the three primaries (JFC, the U.S. Embassy, and USAID) would all conduct media interviews together. This decision proved to be a powerful tool that enabled the team to field questions within their area of expertise and effectively portray a "whole-of-government" approach. Furthermore, it allowed a limited number of public affairs professionals to leverage one another's capabilities and develop a manageable planning and execution timeline. This combined approach did have its own challenges, as a level of flexibility and control was sacrificed for conservation of effort.

Scheduling interviews for the three primary leaders also proved challenging, as did ensuring continuity of message and leader preparation. Each challenge was ultimately mitigated through a collaborative approach by both the primary leaders and associated staff members — the effects seemed to justify the means. However, it was not until the JPASE arrived into the Joint

operating area that this construct was truly solidified. The JPASE's arrival enabled not only the JFC, but the Embassy and USAID as well, to develop a longer-range schedule, add predictability to key leaders' calendars, and ultimately impact the narrative to reflect a proactive, whole-of-government approach into media reporting. JPASE was clearly a key contributor to the successes in media relations in Liberia, and its arrival signified a marked shift in the communication environment.

Early media reporting tended to be skewed and portrayed military resources as too late and too slow to affect the outcome of the spread of the Ebola virus disease (EVD). Local press focused on word-of-mouth, suspicions with the military's objective, and unverified, unconfirmed sources. Washington, D.C.-based inquiries (both internal and external) and lack of early international broadcast news agencies enhanced these stigmas. Early high-profile interviews also were canceled by the media, as one of their cameramen contracted Ebola and another agency decided to focus on a different topic. The key interviews that enabled us to directly and successfully impact media reporting included a tour with local and international press to the Bong County ETU, a live-to-tape Ambassador and Commanding General interview with the CNN news network, and a USA Today report on the state of progress in combating the EVD.

These interviews permitted the command the opportunity to tell the story from the military perspective. The interviews also reached the larger U.S.-based public in an effort to not only reflect the Department of Defense (DOD) mission and capabilities, but also calmed unfounded fears and educated the public about the EVD. Early identification of potential candidates for interview who would resonate with various audiences was a key contribution to media interaction. Identification of military "personalities," who possessed the acumen, expertise, charisma, and overall camera presence, greatly assisted media reporting. These sources should be identified at the earliest stages of the intelligence preparation of the battlespace process and captured within the PA plan.

A New Frontier

Another unique dynamic observed during OUA was the type and manner of media interest. International media focused primarily on direct interview requests with the commanding general and requests for media members to be embedded with units. While the command group interview requests were largely manageable, media embed requests remained a challenge. International media, primarily from the Washington, D.C., area, failed to grasp the austere, expeditionary nature of the operating environment in Liberia. Land-lease agreements, host-nation sovereignty, and a permissive operating environment all contributed to free media access for those media willing to assume the risk. Furthermore, our own living and working conditions were largely hotel-based — conference rooms and existing office structures. Recurring military flights were also unpredictable throughout the theater. All of these conditions prevented embed opportunities (as opposed to those typically seen in mature theaters like Iraq or Afghanistan).

Lack of clear doctrine or common definition of "media embed" contributed to misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations among various media personnel. As a result, the environment in Liberia required media members to procure their own flights, arrange personal lodging, hire transportation and drivers, and sustain themselves. While the U.S. Embassy could facilitate and provide the outside media with recommendations to address their logistical concerns, and we could provide access, escorts, and context to military support to operations, none of this truly met the "spirit" of how international media viewed their access to embedded opportunities.

Clearly, this was a new operating environment and many media personnel failed to grasp the true expeditionary nature of operations on the African continent, instead relying (mistakenly) on their own experiences of living with Soldiers on forward operating bases during Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom (OEF).

Setting the Theater

The speed at which USARAF was directed, planned, formed, and executed as a JFC was one of the most interesting aspects of OUA. As the ASCC for the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), USARAF exercised and validated a key core competency for the first time — setting the theater for follow-on forces.

This validation was also played out within the public affairs program. Setting the theater in this environment entailed providing audio, visual, conceptual, credible, and timely information to a variety of internal and external audiences. Mitigating fear and informing others about the true nature of the EVD was largely the responsibility of the interagency partners; however, we assumed a big role for DOD in supporting these efforts.

An area of mission analysis that was missing early in the planning cycle was an accurate picture of the media landscape supported by a deliberate public affairs estimate. USARAF assumed the mission as the JFC, largely based on G-2 analysis instead of communication estimates. While this analysis did provide an overarching picture of Liberia, it did not incorporate specific details essential to public affairs activities such as a thorough media analysis. ASCCs are not staffed to adequately develop PA estimates for countries throughout a continent the size, scale, and scope of Africa; however, other resources including the geographic combatant command could be leveraged to provide better clarity in the communication environment during initial planning. Regardless of any shortcomings in planning, we nested well among the U.S. Embassy and USAID, which helped set the communication and information environment for the 101st Airborne Division.

The addition of the JPASE and the RFF (for a PAD) enabled a smooth transition during the transfer of authority. The JPASE acted as a bridge-to-the-bridge between USARAF and the 101st Airborne Division, and the PAD was an enduring sourcing solution with the capability of developing command information products to augment media relations (and operations) efforts. These PA enablers were critical to the narrative — without them, we would have been unable to affect the communication environment or the growing narrative in the world media.

The JPASE and other external enablers greatly enhanced unit capability and credibility, and helped the media accurately report information. These enablers should be considered a top priority for deployment in any contingency operation. ASCCs require these PA enablers in order to successfully research, plan, implement, and evaluate an effective public affairs program in an expeditionary environment. Competing staff interests will always exist, yet the speed with which information is transmitted during contingency operations, compounded by the risk of misinformation, makes these PA enablers a critical component of any command's line of effort.

Coordination and Reachback

Another key component to public affairs operations during OUA was executed by our USARAF team in Italy. This team was essential in coordinating efforts at the operational and strategic levels between the JFC-Forward, USAFRICOM, European Command, Army Public Affairs, Army National Guard, DOD Public Affairs, the Joint staff, and ultimately, the 101st Airborne Division and III Corps Public Affairs. Key functions of the JFC-Rear included monitoring the media environment, coordinating public affairs operations, developing products, and getting those products cleared and disseminated. A single document produced by the JFC-Rear PA team

that tracked progress in all these functions on a near-daily basis was invaluable to everyone's situational awareness until the Media Operations Center became self-sufficient.

While 16 SEP 2014 sticks in most people's minds as the beginning of OUA, the Ebola crisis began to creep into our collective consciousness as early as 7 AUG 2014 with the distribution of an Ebola information paper. Within that first week, we (JFC-Main and JFC-Rear) started coordination with USAFRICOM, the Italian base commander, and U.S. Army Europe. With no assigned forces, nearly every public affairs capability brought to the table was a new relationship. Ultimately, all you can do is share contact rosters and move out smartly — nearly every problem can be solved if you know how to contact the right people (and file formats are compatible across all organizations). Fortuitously, USARAF was already engaged in a command post exercise called Lion Focus 14 to put the contingency command post through its paces as a prelude to certification later in the fiscal year. This brought the key players together in a focused environment and had another key benefit of having Joint-staff trainers here to observe and mentor. The JPASE was also in Italy, which provided a focused opportunity for face-to-face coordination and mental war gaming prior to the element's deployment to operate the Media Operations Center in Monrovia. Coordination for the 101st Airborne Division's relief of USARAF public affairs operations began as early as 23 SEP 2014, as USARAF planners initiated contact with the 101st Airborne Division's public affairs office.

The JFC-Main in Italy also served as a focal point for all queries and information, both up and down the chain, because initial communication capability for forward elements was Blackberry-only and forward elements could not access the LionNet's unclassified portal to pull down documents and resources. Additionally, USARAF's PA team provided a subsequent level of clearance for release of products and managed the day-to-day activities of the ASCC PA program, as other activities of the command had to be managed concurrently with those in Liberia.

The public affairs posture was initially response-to-query with release authority for information retained at the DOD Public Affairs level. That had to change, and change quickly, because media queries were coming in at a rapid rate and media were known to be in the same hotel as the JFC-Forward team. By 19 SEP 2014, MG Williams was cleared to do media interviews along with Ambassador Deborah Malac and the DART leader, Bill Berger, in order to demonstrate the U.S. "whole-of-government" approach to operations in Liberia.

The public affairs posture quickly changed to active in order to support getting this good news story out, but a time lag in pushing the release authority down to the JFC hindered our efforts to get the story out. Ultimately, we were able to resolve this, and JFC-Forward conducted the first successful Joint press conference on 25 SEP 2014, three days before DOD Public Affairs anticipated.

Another coordination issue concerned media embeds and embarks, which has been briefly touched on. After about a dozen years in Southwest Asia covering OIF and OEF, the media were accustomed to embedding with units, but that was not possible with OUA. The lack of infrastructure and life support for international forces dictated a very small footprint. Similarly, there was no shortage of requests from the Defense Media Activity and the Armed Forces Network-Europe to send teams to provide coverage; without sufficient life support, it was too risky to send these service members. With a lack of units flowing into theater, the whole concept of embeds was unhinged as media now had to provide their own transportation, subsistence, and security in an uncertain crisis environment.

Command Information

Social media proved to be an even larger part of our command information program than it normally plays. With the initial lack of capability to produce print stories, we relied heavily on a lone still photographer and several staff with personal point-and-shoot cameras, tablet cameras, or camera phones. While these products probably won't win any public affairs awards, they were critical in the early days to help each level of public affairs tell the story. With "time available" being a scarce commodity and limited personnel on hand, we used a strategy often referred to in sports as "flooding the zone." With external and internal audiences clamoring for information, feeding the beast was an important aspect of informing the public (who generally reacted favorably to any information). At the early stages, it wasn't so important that the content was produced by us or was meaningful, but by posting often and on a United States media consumption cycle (Eastern Daylight Time), we were able to stay "top of mind" in a saturated media environment. We went from one or two posts daily (weekdays) prior to OUA to an average of just over four posts a day (weekends included) from 19 SEP 2014 to 14 OCT 2014, as the 101st Airborne Division was falling in on our foxholes for the upcoming transfer of authority on 25 OCT 2014. Interestingly, for the 45 days prior to 16 SEP 2014, when President Barack Obama announced that USARAF and MG Williams would lead the OUA effort for DOD, we received 283 likes to our Facebook page and even that was a measurable increase over steady state operations. For the 45 days after 16 SEP 2014, however, we received 826 likes, a nearly three-fold increase over the previous 45 days. There isn't necessarily a causal linkage between flooding the zone and the three-fold increase, but it does provide some correlational data that supports a potential relationship worth leveraging.

Assessment

Speaking of numbers, often the "800-pound gorilla" that communicators ignore is the question of assessment, not because we don't care, but because it wasn't factored into the planning or we've moved on to the next crisis or opportunity. Were our communications in OUA successful? That might depend on whom you ask, and when, because judgments about communication effectiveness are often not based on empirical analysis, but rather on subjective assessments and anecdotal evidence.

Ideally assessment is factored into planning and the development of communication objectives that support operational objectives. Very candidly, we did that on the fly and kept tweaking as new missions were received from USAID or new requirements were uncovered from a host of other sources.

Judging effectiveness can prove difficult — often what is easily measured is ultimately meaningless and what is meaningful cannot be measured without additional resources. For example, by the time we transitioned OUA to the 101st Airborne Division, in 39 days of OUA we performed the following actions:

- Answered 62 queries.
- Produced five news releases.
- Facilitated 35 media interviews.
- Conducted 19 media site visits.
- Participated in three press conferences.

Note: These numbers do not include the products and events produced back home in Italy to support deployment, redeployment, and reintegration.

Were some of the stories negative? Perhaps, but in nearly 100 percent of the stories, the information was factual and balanced, which is often the true gold standard of public communication. People, including news media and politicians, are entitled to make judgments, but if the information is factual and balanced, we must not engage in proverbial knee-jerk reactions to counter the story. Just maintain the drum beat of communication and stick to the plan unless analysis of trends dictates otherwise or objectives are clearly not being achieved.

Did we turn the tide of opinion in Liberia? Based on anecdotal evidence and media analysis… yes. Did we keep the American public and the chain of command informed of DOD operations in Liberia? Absolutely. Did we keep the local American and Italian community members informed about news that could affect them? Undoubtedly, we did, as reintegration occurred largely without any hiccups.

The question then becomes, could we have done better? Unequivocally, the answer is yes, but for the first time setting the theater for the smallest and newest ASCC, we probably exceeded expectations. More importantly, we got everyone there and back safely, initiated a very complex mission, successfully handed it off to follow-on forces, and reintegrated back into our local community safely and without incident, setting the initial standard for how DOD would conduct reintegration across the Services. As you will see throughout this bulletin, we have very aggressively captured lessons learned from which we will develop policies, procedures, and products should we ever be directed to perform a similar role.

Chapter 3

Operation United Assistance: Joint and Strategic Partners Enabling Success
CPT Ross M. Hertlein

The U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) mission to combat the Ebola virus disease (EVD) has given the people of Liberia hope; Department of Defense (DOD) support and U.S. government (USG) leadership have energized other foreign governments, the international community, and non-governmental organizations alike. Operation United Assistance (OUA) required the rapid response of DOD utilizing the unique skills and abilities of the military. The DOD's logistics abilities, specifically in the mobility/transportation vein, set us apart from every other organization in the world. U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) etched their place in history by being part of the largest U.S. military operation in support of infectious disease control. Integral to this effort was "theater opening," an inherent mission under the purview of Army Service Component Command (ASCC). The ability of ASCCs to provide the DOD with this ability enables the USG to confront a range of contingencies worldwide in support of the policy.

A critical aspect to theater opening is ensuring that ASCCs are properly structured and resourced in order to meet the most likely policy requirements for their region. Despite resource challenges, USARAF achieved immediate impact, without subordinate forces, by utilizing Joint and strategic partners during OUA to contain this epidemic. In 30 days, while serving jointly as the ASCC and the Joint Forces Command (JFC), USARAF established two mobile laboratories and the 25-bed Monrovia Medical Unit; laid the foundations for building, managing, and sustaining Ebola treatment units; established life support areas; opened aerial and sea ports of debarkation; and emplaced the framework necessary to sustain the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) mission without any assigned subordinate forces. The successes and challenges of opening the Liberian theater are somewhat unique to this mission; however, future operations to the continent of Africa, and worldwide, will no doubt benefit from USARAF's efforts and flexibility offered by the DOD Joint and strategic elements brought to bear.

Africa encompasses 54 countries, numerous governance challenges, significant land mass, harsh weather, limited infrastructure, poor lines of communication, and zero permanently assigned/stationed U.S. logistics forces to employ in the African area of responsibility (AOR). USARAF's lack of logistics enablers assigned to the organization creates daily requirements for submitting requests for support, assistance, and friendly forces to accomplish complex, Joint missions throughout the continent. The non-habitual nature of support in Africa limits the continuity of effort and familiarity with the nations involved and their procedures, overall complicating and delaying operations during planning and execution. The U.S. interests in Africa are extensive in terms of enhancing stability, while protecting U.S. personnel and property and maintaining an ability to react to contingency operations to include epidemic and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) operations. The request for forces process does not allow for the immediate deployment of logistic personnel and units to the continent without going through complex and lengthy request and approval processes. As a theater opening force, it is essential to have ready access to logistics enablers early in the operation to set the stage for support of follow-on forces, and in USARAF's case this was only available through Joint logistics enterprise.

The volume of supplies required during HA/DR operations has the potential to overload existing distribution networks due to mass and time. Without a strong and efficient supervising and controlling organization at the onset, networks will clog and responsiveness will suffer with life-threatening results. Military usage of intermediate staging bases, surface movements (ground

and sea), and inter- and intra-theater fixed- and rotary-wing airlifts maximize the flow of supplies while preventing an overloading or damaging of the limited infrastructure, maintaining an ability to scale efforts as required. Through the employment of Joint Task Force Port Opening (JTF-PO) capabilities, the JFC was able to open aerial logistics nodes in Liberia and Senegal.

**Figure 3-1. JTF-PO airman receiving medical supplies
at Roberts International Airport, Liberia.**

While the U.S. military will continue to lead in sustaining the majority of the requirements for the Ebola fight in Liberia over the next six months, it is the global reach of organizations such as the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) that allowed for the success of the USG's rapid response once ordered by the President. It is possible that DOD will continue to provide supply chain management for USAID's continued mission to support the Government of Liberia for the foreseeable future, which will entail continued efforts on the part of the Army Sustainment Command to set steady state operations in West Africa.

This mission is not normally associated with the military, but recent operations in Haiti, Indonesia, and now Liberia have made immediate HA/DR support a high-visibility mission the DOD must be prepared to execute and cannot fail. The DOD must embrace HA/DR missions as another means to justify the U.S. need for responsive worldwide logistics and mission command capabilities in a period of force reduction and budget constraints. Future missions of this nature will occur, and will test other ASCC logistics planning and execution abilities worldwide.

The ability of the DOD to move supplies worldwide focused on Liberia at the end of September 2014. By 20 OCT 2014, the mobility division of USARAF had requested, tracked, and received 51 strategic airlift flights of over 1,500 short tons within the Joint operations area, while over 750 additional 20-foot equivalents were enroute by sea due to efforts by DLA and Surface Deployment and Distribution Command. The ability to receive aerial cargo into Liberia was only possible due to the aforementioned requests and timely arrival of the JTF-PO. Without this Air

Force/Army element on the ground, the JFC would not have been able to accomplish any of its achievements within the first 30 days. By early November 2014, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) had two military sealift command vessels moving to Liberia with over 1,500 additional pieces of cargo. Again, due to the efforts of strategic logistics partners, the JFC immediately moved necessary supplies and vessels to the theater within the first 30 days in order to support the mission.

Figure 3-2. Strategic airlift C-17 loading in Pisa, Italy, bound for the Joint area of operation in Liberia.

USTRANSCOM, Army Materiel Command, DLA, JTF-PO, the 123rd Contingency Response Group (CRG), and a range of other strategic and Joint operational partners proved to be the critical force multipliers during OUA that bridged gaps between the immediate requirements and available forces. Maintaining these forces is key to future operations, and all ASCCs must develop functional relationships with these strategic partners because it will be essential to mission success as resources are reduced across the DOD. Another essential tool utilized throughout OUA was the leveraging of contract capabilities in substitute for a military footprint, which enabled the performance of construction, storage, and distribution operations required and compensated for the lack of subordinate units. Additionally, USARAF/JFC used local area knowledge in the U.S. Embassy to procure needed common supplies and services on the Liberian economy through local procurement initiatives to further close the gaps. As of 31 OCT 2014, the JFC Operational Contracting Support (OCS) had executed 96 contract actions valued at over $61 million in support of OUA.

While USARAF is neither staffed nor structured to perform the role as both the ASCC and the JFC, this stop-gap measure was highly effective while at the same time placing great strain on the organization to maintain day-to-day commitments. During OUA, the USARAF G-4 directorate was required to plan for as well as staff the Joint Force Command (JFC) within the Joint operations area (JOA) across four countries — Senegal, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia — without additional personnel. For over 45 days, the G-4 directorate was required to "dual hat" in order to cover both ASCC and JFC roles during 24/7 operations. The sustainment operation division, fusion division, and mobility division are continuing to perform strategic, operational, and tactical operations in support of the JFC while supporting steady-state USARAF

requirements. This lack of staff depth brought other operations to a near standstill in the USAFRICOM AOR.

Key to overcoming this challenge was the experience and professionalism of key staff elements that provided the directorates with the ability to plan and execute operations across the spectrum of strategic, operational, and tactical levels. Without a dedicated or habitually-related theater or expeditionary sustainment command in USARAF, the staff is required to not only plan, but also manage and command operations for forces spread over multiple countries to ensure sustainment and coordination. As executed, USARAF maintained its entire AOR while also executing OUA for a month in four locations across two continents, separated by not only space, but also time, and with a reduced force structure. Mission success was highly dependent on the force of character and experiences of certain staff directorate chiefs and the ability to leverage key Joint forces such as the JTF-PO, the CRG, and the Joint Communications Support Element.

From the USARAF G-4's perspective, personnel was the foremost challenge to wearing both the ASCC and JFC hats. The need for the ASCC to be fully staffed with seasoned, experienced logisticians is critical to the success of the organization. The multitude of missions, theater security cooperation (TSC), OCS, exercises, train and equip events, development of logistics professional development schools, multiple active operations throughout western and central Africa, Title X support for the Republic of Djibouti, Africa, and so on are complex issues where the common theme throughout is logistics. This logistics center of gravity for all ASCC operations on the continent necessitates leadership with extensive experience in sustainment.

USARAF's G-4 directorate staffing is one-third professional Department of the Army civilians and two-thirds active duty military. The current G-4 scope of responsibility ranges from the strategic down to the tactical execution. Planning, policy, TSC, sustainment operations, staff assistance visits, mobility operations, and current operations span the entire continent and stretch the military workforce to the limit. An appropriate amount of personnel with requisite experience is critical to the G-4 staff. Select critical positions in G-4 directorates require personnel with command experience. It is recommended that the deputy commanding generals for ASCCs should be full-time logisticians to emphasize the importance of sustainment in planning and execution, and furthermore to fuse the various staff efforts into a unified purpose. The USARAF G-4, director of logistics, position should be coded for former brigade commanders, as in other ASCCs. The sustainment operations division chief and the deputy plans, exercises, programs, and policy chief likewise should be coded for former battalion commanders. The wealth of experience and knowledge these senior logisticians have is essential in providing the leadership, guidance, and mentorship required to ensure USARAF is postured for success while planning and executing deliberate and contingency operations in Africa. Fully manned staff sections are equally essential in operations such as OUA where sections must dedicate large portions of personnel in support of specific missions.

A majority of nations worldwide are very similar to Liberia in that these nations have limited infrastructure (airports, seaports, and road networks) and less than robust governmental assets (law enforcement, healthcare, informational/educational workforces) to cope with large scale HA/DR events. HA/DR events by their very nature are damaging to and overwhelm the infrastructures and systems necessary to combat those very events. Logistics support is central to HA/DR, and OUA was and continues to be no exception. Planning, anticipating, forecasting, coordinating, and integrating within ASCCs must include the whole of the strategic community; the DLA,USTRANSCOM, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassies, USAID, the United Nations, international participants, non-governmental organizations, and others within the JOA are essential to progress and success. Even the nature of the permissive environment, such as Liberia, can impede rather than enable operations as land usage necessitates research,

agreements, and negotiations with commercial parties and the local governments. It is imperative to assign logistics forces to USARAF and other ASCCs directly or substantially increase the flexibility of current force sharing in order to support future missions and provide commanders the assets to effectively execute missions.

The Defense Readiness Reporting System has highlighted significant logistical shortcomings over the past years without resolution. Ideally, USARAF is assigned a theater sustainment command (Field Manual 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*), sustainment brigade headquarters, and combat sustainment support battalion headquarters, or at a minimum, have those forces habitually aligned and available as part of the regional-aligned-force concept to facilitate steady state and contingency operations across the African continent.

As formations are reduced across the DOD, it is important to ensure that we are still postured to confront all the challenges and missions that will be assigned to the U.S. military. The Joint and strategic logistics forces utilized during OUA are the fulcrum upon which success balances. Without these forces or their own habitually assigned units, USARAF, or any ASCC, accepts increased risk to its ability to respond and execute USG policy. As the DOD examines the lessons from OUA, it is imperative that we strengthen the abilities in our ASCCs and maintain the Joint forces and abilities that make the DOD relevant worldwide.

Chapter 4

Lessons in Establishing a Training Center to Counter a Pandemic
MAJ Michael Gacheru, USARAF (G-3, Training) Operations Officer

On 27 OCT 2014, the Department of Defense (DOD) Ebola Training Center (ETC) was opened and received its first class of 91 clinicians and non-clinicians in Paynesville, Liberia, at the National Police Training Center (NPTC).

This class consisted of 58 healthcare workers, 12 Ebola treatment unit (ETU) support staff, and 21 future cadre for the training center. These students received five days of training based on the World Health Organization (WHO) program of instruction. The training provided three days of classroom instruction followed by two days of hands-on instruction in a mock ETU. The majority of these students were healthcare volunteers who, at the conclusion of training, were sent out across Liberia to serve as the core staff at ETUs nationwide.

The training provided at the ETC focused on proper operating procedures in ETUs and, more importantly, the correct donning and doffing of personal protective equipment and the decontamination process for staff members. ETU members are at most risk of contracting the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) during this process.

On 16 SEP 2014, President Barack Obama announced that the United States Government would establish a military command center in Liberia to support civilian efforts in West Africa, and within hours United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) had published an order directing U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) to lead this effort.

One of the key tasks in the order was to establish an ETC capable of training up to 500 medical healthcare personnel per week, no later than 21 OCT 2014. In subsequent fragmentary orders, this was reduced to 200 medical healthcare personnel and was further modified to include the capability to export the training center and curriculum to austere locations across Liberia.

The USARAF G-3 training division was given lead on this portion of the mission, and with this guidance we were on task to meet the commander's intent to support the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in its efforts to work with the government of Liberia to rid the country of the pandemic.

From 20 SEP through 27 OCT 2014, Team Training began the arduous task of establishing the first DOD ETC in Monrovia, Liberia. Team Training — consisting of one U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, one major, and one sergeant major — worked together to plan, resource, establish, and ultimately transition the training center to the 86th Combat Support Hospital (CSH), Fort Campbell, Ky.

The following observations provide some insight into the process of establishing the training center and share some of the lessons learned during this process.

Planning (20 SEP – 4 OCT 2014)

Upon receipt of the order, we immediately began working with the USARAF surgeon cell to identify the requirements and determine the proper student-to-instructor ratio to achieve the desired outcome. Our assessment determined that we needed a one to 10 instructor-to-student ratio to deliver the course material effectively. We further assessed that the best delivery method was to build several 10-man teams of three medical noncommissioned officers and seven enlisted medics to serve as assistant instructors to train up to 50 students at a time.

First Lesson

This is when we learned our first lesson — the importance of coordinating with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil authorities in developing a civic assistance plan. In this particular case, we found working with the WHO and the Liberian Ministry of Health (MoH) specifically important. Because our initial training team structure was not developed using a comprehensive approach working with our partners, it did not account for the unique protocols and specialty skills required of our teams to provide training to future ETU clinicians. Once we realized the weakness in our plan, the initial request for forces (RFF) was modified to include the missing specialty skills.
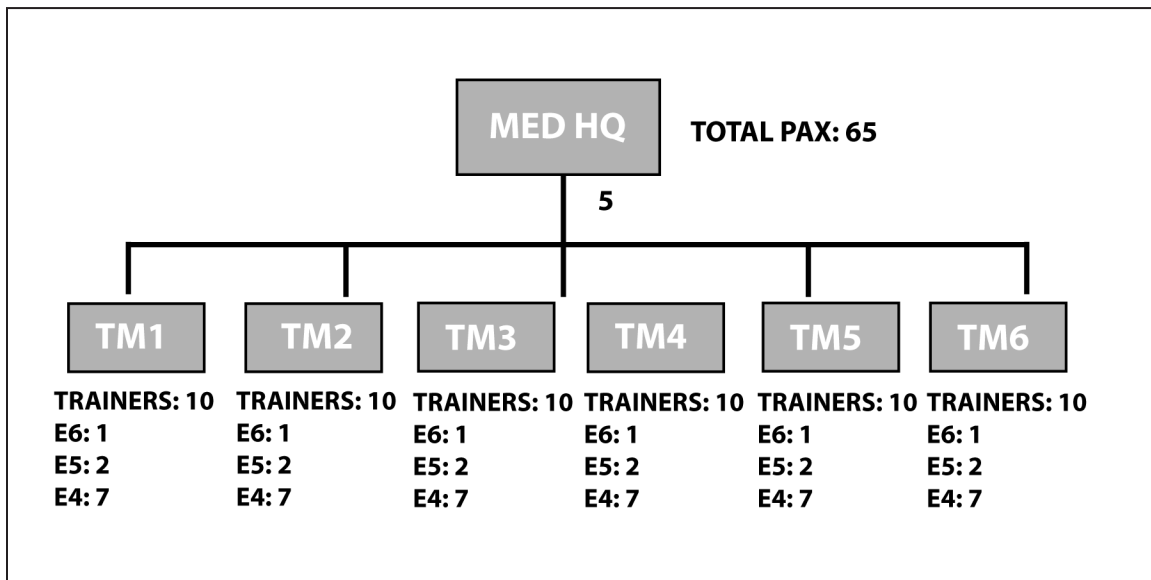

Figure 4-1. Original request for forces.

Shortly after submitting the RFF, our command surgeon began interacting with the Liberian MoH, USAID, and WHO. We discovered that they had an existing training center providing the training capability requested of DOD, only at a much smaller level. WHO was running training in Monrovia, but did not have the capability to export the training outside the capital, or to train large groups of clinicians and non-clinicians.

Our command surgeon conducted a site visit to the WHO training facility and provided the staff in Vicenza, Italy, with their operating parameters and programs of instruction (POIs), which significantly modified our plan. The first notable change was modification of the team's composition to include a doctor and two nurses supported by senior enlisted medical personnel. The instructor-to-student ratio remained the same, but with the additional medical expertise, our teams were capable of providing more complete instruction on EVD transmission, epidemiology, prevention, clinical diagnosis, and triage.
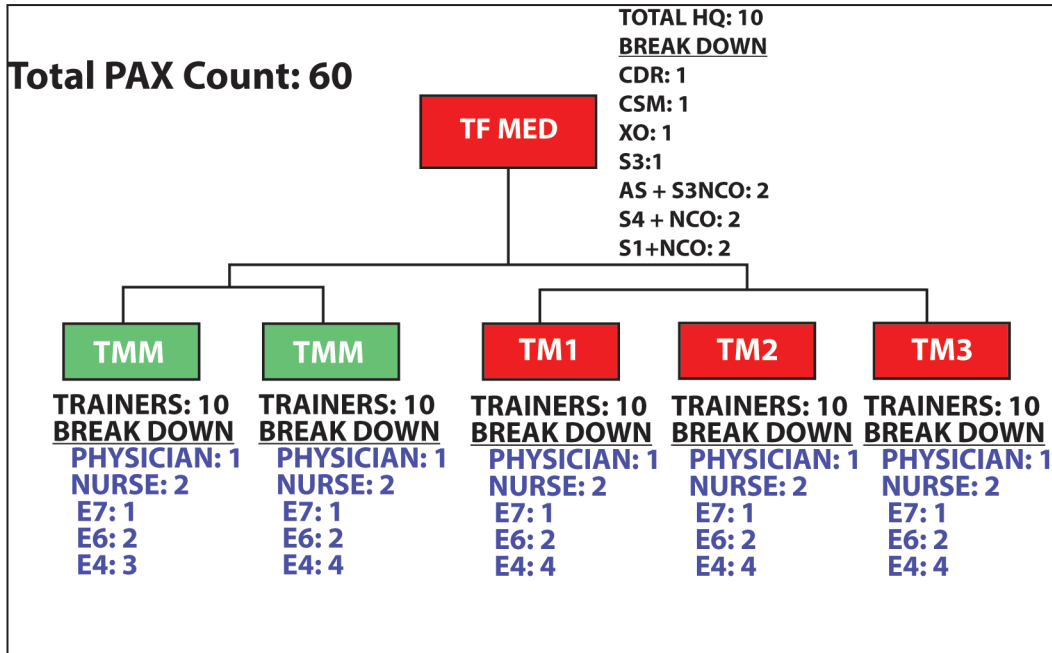
Total PAX Count: 60

TF MED

TOTAL HQ: 10
BREAK DOWN
CDR: 1
CSM: 1
XO: 1
S3:1
AS + S3NCO: 2
S4 + NCO: 2
S1+NCO: 2

TMM	TMM	TM1	TM2	TM3
TRAINERS: 10 BREAK DOWN	TRAINERS: 10 BREAK DOWN	TRAINERS: 10 BREAK DOWN	TRAINERS: 10 BREAK DOWN	TRAINERS: 10 BREAK DOWN
PHYSICIAN: 1	PHYSICIAN: 1	PHYSICIAN: 1	PHYSICIAN: 1	PHYSICIAN: 1
NURSE: 2	NURSE: 2	NURSE: 2	NURSE: 2	NURSE: 2
E7: 1	E7: 1	E7: 1	E7: 1	E7: 1
E6: 2	E6: 2	E6: 2	E6: 2	E6: 2
E4: 3	E4: 4	E4: 4	E4: 4	E4: 4

Figure 4-2. Total personnel (PAX) count.

Recommendation: In the near term, to reduce lag time and develop an immediate response working with NGOs, the staff should consider requesting an NGO representative to participate in staff humanitarian and civic assistance planning. This liaison officer (LNO) will reduce response time to requests for information and provide critical information on the field activities of U.S.-based NGOs. A more long-term program should include an NGO representative or a USAID LNO on the Army Service Component Command (ASCC) staff to aid in the planning for early stages of a force-projection operation. This is especially critical to the African theater, where NGOs have operated for decades and are more aware of local cultural beliefs and practices.

As we refined our plan, it became apparent that the geographical separation of the planning staff from the training site was a challenge. This was further complicated by the fact that the medical training team would not arrive in theater until 15 OCT 2014, which was only six days from the directed establishment date of 21 OCT 2014. On 26 SEP 2014, our commander decided to deploy the initial training team to begin the execution of the plan.

Second Lesson

The second lesson followed — the importance of an ASCC having a division headquarters habitually aligned to facilitate rapid deployment. A habitually aligned headquarters improves responsiveness and provides a force with institutional knowledge to meet the combatant commander's requirements. This type of headquarters increases responsiveness due to the headquarters' understanding of the area of responsibility and develops a relationship with the ASCC staff. USARAF does not have a habitually-aligned division headquarters, which required the commander to deploy members of the USARAF G-3 training division forward to establish the training center in Liberia. This decision enabled us to execute the plan and meet the commander's intent. If the command had waited for the deployment of a division headquarters to execute the plan, the start date would have been delayed by several weeks in order to facilitate the completion of pre-deployment training requirements to include regional cultural indoctrination. We arrived in Monrovia, Liberia, on 4 OCT 2014, and began the next phase of the operation.

Build and Prepare (5 – 20 OCT 2014)

This phase consisted of three key tasks: site assessment and selection; issuance of contracts for life support and training center infrastructure; and acquisition of training materials.

Because of the small size of our ASCC forward staff, there was no staff member specifically assigned to training site selection; concurrently our engineers were assessing potential sites for ETU construction. Once our team hit the ground, we began conducting reconnaissance of sites recommended by the forward staff. We quickly eliminated all recommended sites because they did not meet the criteria established in our planning parameters. With less than two weeks before the scheduled start of training, we needed to find suitable facilities.

Third Lesson

It was then that our third lesson emerged — when working to establish a training center in a sovereign nation, it is important to coordinate with civil authorities, indigenous populations, and local institutions. Once all recommendations failed to meet the training site criteria, the team met with the mayors of Monrovia and Paynesville to identify suitable locations within their cities. When both leaders were made aware of our intent to establish a training center, they were very receptive and provided several locations that met our requirements. We also participated in several informal forums with local Liberian business owners and individuals to solicit ideas. We discovered numerous solutions that would meet our training center specifications. We quickly narrowed these down to five locations in close proximity to Monrovia, which were presented to the commander for decision.

The site selected was the NPTC in Paynesville, Liberia. This site provided us with all the key requirements: classrooms, life support area for instructors, proximity to ETUs, space to build a mock ETU on site, and physical security for the force. We then proceeded to liaise with the national police chief to work out arrangements for occupation of the training center. Because the President of Liberia had enacted a moratorium on all public gatherings, schools, and government training facilities, we were able to quickly negotiate a lease agreement with the Government of Liberia for use of the training center. With the site assessment complete, our next step was to establish the life support and training center infrastructure to receive our cadre and begin training.

Fourth Lesson

The fourth take-away from this experience was the importance of leadership development, which allows us to adapt to a complex operational environment. The Army addresses the importance of leader development through operational experience in which leaders gain confidence and competence. The training team had significant institutional and operational experience, but consisted of only two infantry officers and one infantry sergeant major. Establishing an ETC with no medical background or logistical experience would prove to be a challenge; but leveraging our combined experiences and that of the medical staff, we were able to easily overcome this obstacle and chart a way forward. This process began by spending several days at the WHO training center to learn its processes and assess the requirements that would be levied on our DOD training center.

We worked with members of the WHO training team to identify requirements ranging from training booklets to the personal protection equipment (PPE) requirements for instructors and students. During this assessment phase, we also visited ETUs that were under construction to modify our mock ETU design schematics and setup. After several days of assessing, we had a refined plan and were prepared to transition to the procurement phase. Using field-ordering officer funds and contracts, we were able to procure building safety renovations, vehicles for the

mobile training teams, food for feeding the students, training instructional booklets, fixed and multiple mobile ETUs, training materials, and all required resources to achieve initial operating capacity.

Understanding the significant economic impact Ebola inflicted on the Liberian economy, we worked in concert with local leaders to maximize local awareness of the U.S. Government's contracting process and provided local businesses the opportunity to compete fairly for contracts. This resulted in eight contracts that led to hiring 500 Liberians.

The next logistical challenge was acquiring the proper PPE for our students and instructors. During the planning phase, we had worked with the medical logistical planner to order the required PPE. Upon arrival in Monrovia, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) informed us that due to the increased international demand for EVD PPE, the agency was unable to provide all our required allotments for the training center. Working with USAID and the command surgeon, we reduced our requirement and prioritized our demand not only for the training center, but also for the ETUs across Liberia. Through additional research with WHO, medical logistics planners, and DLA, we were able to identify a different set of PPE that could substitute for the designated PPE and still meet the training objectives.

Validate and Transition (21 – 27 OCT 2014)

By 14 OCT 2014, less than two weeks from our first training date (27 OCT 2014), we had multiple construction efforts ongoing at the training center that we anticipated would be completed in time for our first class. Most important of these was the mock ETU that would be used for the practical portion of the training. Key members of our training team also began arriving by 14 OCT 2014, and we immediately enrolled them in the WHO training program to qualify them to be instructors. The challenge faced by the military trainers was to simultaneously receive the training as students in the WHO course and prepare themselves to serve as instructors of that material in a very compressed timeline. The team conducted extra training sessions after the normal class hours to develop junior leaders who would soon become the core of the training team at the DOD ETC.

Upon graduation from the WHO course, the lead doctor immediately began working with the senior trainers to look at ways to refine the POI and make the course material more relevant and easier to deliver to the students. The final stage of validating our training center was conducted through rigorous rehearsals at the actual training center site, which was completed by 23 OCT 2014. The training center now had a core group of cadre to meet the immediate requirement of trainers and would validate future cadre as they arrived into theater.

The training team's final challenge was to build a training package that was exportable to remote sites across Liberia. In order to determine the requirements, the team conducted a site reconnaissance of one of the future remote training locations with members of the incoming medical training team. During this reconnaissance, the team assessed requirements and developed a checklist of actionable considerations for remote sites. These actions included items such as movement coordination, local leaders' engagement, and tactical considerations in site selection.

At the conclusion of the reconnaissance, the team developed a concept of operation that was transitioned to the medical trainers for execution. The team also included recommendations for Joint Force Command-United Assistance (JFC-UA) (101st Airborne Division [Air Assault]) for the additional enhancement of the training team to ensure force protection and operate autonomously in remote locations. As of 31 DEC 2014, the medical trainers had visited 11 remote training locations and trained over 400 ETU staff members consisting of clinicians and non-clinicians.

Final Take-Away

- When establishing a training center, leaders should use the framework provided in the eight-step training model found in ADRP 7-0, *Training Units and Developing Leaders*.
- In the case of establishing the ETC, the staff developed the initial training concept in Italy, which required a fair amount of refinement once we identified the training location.
- The WHO course served as the training and certification of the cadre who would begin training Liberians to man the ETUs that the engineers constructed.
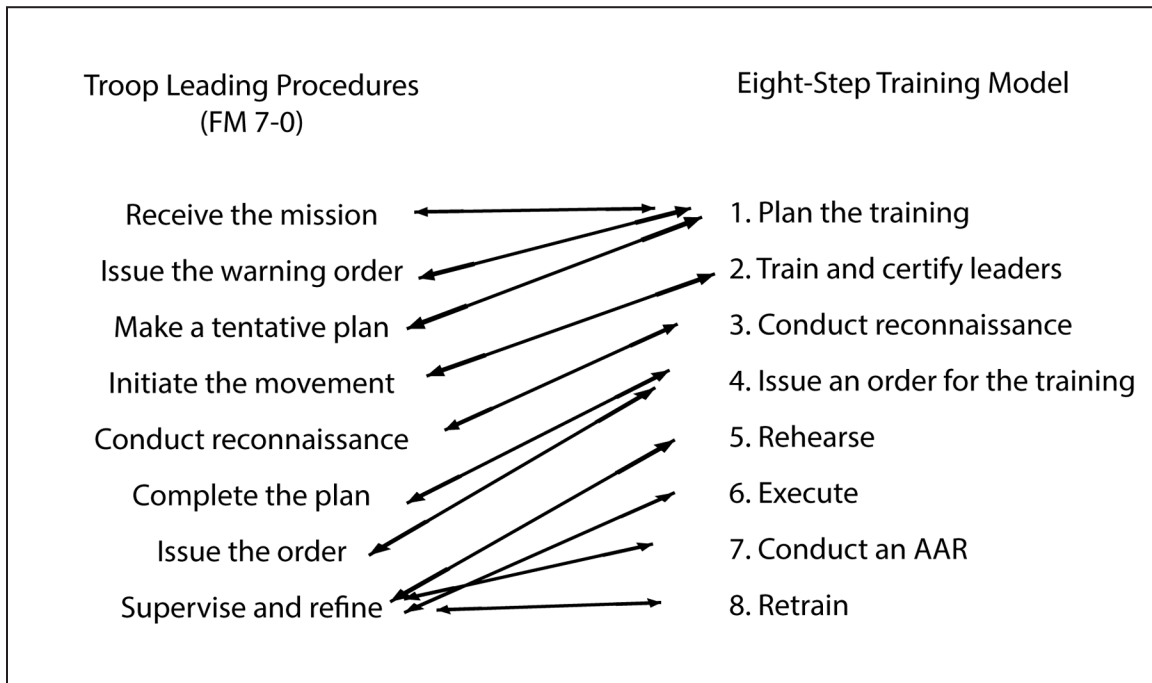
Troop Leading Procedures (FM 7-0)	Eight-Step Training Model
Receive the mission	1. Plan the training
Issue the warning order	2. Train and certify leaders
Make a tentative plan	3. Conduct reconnaissance
Initiate the movement	4. Issue an order for the training
Conduct reconnaissance	5. Rehearse
Complete the plan	6. Execute
Issue the order	7. Conduct an AAR
Supervise and refine	8. Retrain

Figure 4-3. Eight-step training model.

Concurrent with the flow of 86th CSH personnel into Liberia and leader training and certification, the training team secured the training materials and prepared the NPTC to serve as the training site and life support area to house the trainers. The information supplied by the WHO staff enabled us to accelerate the timeline for procurement by having potential vendors identified, and copies of training documents on hand.

The reconnaissance efforts took place before the start of leader certification, and as expected, caused some adjustments to the training plan developed in Italy. The collaboration with the WHO proved invaluable in securing the right materials to resource both the classroom and hands-on portions of the training.

As part of the rehearsal plan, we had instructors from the WHO course conduct a walk-through of the training site established at the NPTC for final adjustments, before the U.S. military cadre conducted their full-dress rehearsals. Again, the feedback assisted with minor adjustments to the flow of the trainees as they executed all of the steps they would perform in a working ETU.

On 25 OCT 2014, USARAF transitioned authority for JFC-UA to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). The training team left Monrovia several days later having learned several important lessons that reinforce key principles in conducting interagency coordination to support U.S. Government departments and agencies in humanitarian assistance missions.

Figure 4-4. Medical providers train in a mock Ebola treatment unit on patient care.

Chapter 5

**Employing the Regionally Aligned Forces
in Operation United Assistance**

The 2014 West Africa Ebola outbreak was unprecedented in location, size, and complexity. Recognizing the enormity of this crisis, the President of the United States designated the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as the lead U.S. Government agency for the U.S. Government (USG) response to the Ebola virus disease with the Department of Defense (DOD) in a supporting role, establishing a Joint Force Command (JFC) headquarters in Monrovia, Liberia.

On 16 SEP 2014, U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) published an executive order, directing U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) to provide support to USAID. The land centric nature of this operation made USARAF the component to establish the JFC headquarters in Monrovia, Liberia. The JFC would provide mission command of military activities and provide support to USG interagency and international relief efforts.

USARAF is USAFRICOM's only assigned Army force. USAFRICOM, via USARAF, employs Army regionally aligned forces (RAF) to source missions tasked to the Army. The RAF is part of the Army's response to the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance to source combatant commander (CCDR) requirements in a more flexible and agile way. The RAF are forces that provide the CCDR with up to Joint force capable headquarters with scalable, tailorable capabilities to enable the commander the ability to execute missions across the range of military operations. Army units assigned to combatant commands (CCMDs), allocated to a CCMD, and those capabilities aligned as service retained combatant commander aligned (SRCA) and prepared by the Army for CCMD regional missions. RAF includes Army total force organizations and capabilities which include the following:

- Forward stationed.
- Operating in a CCMD area of responsibility (AOR).
- Supporting from outside the AOR (plus providing reachback).
- Prepared to support from outside the AOR.

Operational missions in the USAFRICOM AOR require CCMD request for forces (RFFs) to employ allocated units. Thirteen out of 14 USAFRICOM allocated Army units were employed for Operation United Assistance (OUA). Only one allocated Army unit was not utilized for OUA because it wasn't the type of unit needed for this unique mission.

Access to Army SRCA forces was problematic. A key requirement for OUA was for a headquarters capable of transitioning into a JFC. This would typically be filled by a division headquarters (HQ); however, the USAFRICOM SRCA division HQ was previously transferred to another CCDR's AOR to meet emerging operational requirements. With no division HQ assigned, allocated, and no longer SRCA, USAFRICOM submitted an RFF to the Joint staff for sourcing. Fortunately, an earlier force tracking number created from a previously validated, but unsourced submission for a division HQ, significantly shortened the timeline for sourcing a division HQ (101st Airborne Division [Air Assault]) to mission command the JFC. USARAF established the JFC, primarily using personnel from the main command post, then transitioned to the 101st Airborne Division HQ as their personnel deployed into the Joint operations area (JOA).

The RFF process employing USAFRICOM allocated units to the OUA JFC was responsive enough. This was primarily due to the inability of Liberian infrastructure to support the rapid deployment of U.S. military capabilities. Forces could not rapidly flow into the JOA; basing facilities to accommodate additional forces had to be developed over time. The unique nature of OUA diminished the impact of forces available for rapid deployment. If the location of OUA would have supported a rapid expansion of forces into the theater, it is likely the RFF process for any forces not already allocated to USAFRICOM would not have been utilized.

The Way Forward

USAFRICOM has no assigned or allocated Army forces that can provide long-term operational mission command or set the theater. With impending HQ reductions, USARAF is losing the capability to deploy a contingency command post in response to emerging crises. Periodically, USAFRICOM requires forces to rapidly deploy and conduct operations into the AOR.

Mission Command. An assigned or habitually allocated division HQ would be able to respond quickly to CCDR emerging operational requirements. The HQ would be focused on the AOR, and conduct parallel crisis response planning. This would allow the HQ to be proactive and significantly better prepared to execute CCDR requirements vs. beginning from a cold start. The HQ could also execute steady state activities such as security cooperation and contingency planning, training, and execution. The division HQ would be certified to execute duties of a Joint task force HQ.

Set the Theater. USAFRICOM is an economy of force CCMD and Army organizations capable of setting the theater are in short supply. The solution may be an organization similar to a sustainment brigade HQ with "plug-ins" assigned that can rapidly expand when a crisis occurs that requires U.S. response. Theater reception, staging, on-ward movement, and integration is especially important in the USAFRICOM AOR due to extreme distances and immature infrastructure across the AOR. Similar to the division HQ, when not expanding during a crisis, this organization would be supporting the daily requirements of USAFRICOM components across an AOR three times larger than the continental U.S.

Time. Perhaps the most important benefit of assigned or habitually allocated Army units to USAFRICOM would be shortening the crisis response time. When national and international leaders want a crisis addressed, time becomes critical. If Army forces are truly going to be globally responsive to CCDR requirements, then Army forces need to be assigned or habitually allocated to those CCDRs.

Building the Global Landpower Network. It is not possible to surge relationships. It is also not possible to surge institution memory. Army forces assigned or habitually allocated to a CCMD will develop relationships and institution memory every day, as they execute steady state activities in a CCMD AOR. Rather than start from zero every fiscal year with different Army units rotating to support a CCDR, allow organizations and personnel to become familiar with an AOR and how best to conduct training and operations there. The administrative burden is reduced and streamlined as processes are put in place to make Army operations in a CCDR AOR more efficient and effective over time.

Conclusion

OUA was not the first, nor will it be the last crisis in the USAFRICOM AOR where Army forces are required to respond rapidly. The Army has two choices:

- Continue with how things are, scrambling at each crisis to gain situational awareness and deploy whichever units are available to address that crisis. Some might describe this process as repeatedly re-inventing the wheel.

- Make "globally responsive and regionally engaged" more than just a slogan — make it a reality for CCDRs by assigning or habitually allocating Army mission command and set the theater enabling units to all CCMDs.

Chapter 6

Mission Command During a Humanitarian Assistance Mission: Knowledge Management in Operation United Assistance

There are two realities that significantly affect mission command during a humanitarian assistance mission: classification and a lack of digital capability.

Classification

The first challenge, the unclassified nature of the operation, can prove to be a significant challenge during humanitarian assistance missions. The U.S. military is designed around classified systems, specifically the Army Battle Command System (ABCS), that not only automate the mission command processes, but secure them to prevent enemy forces from coercing or corrupting these vital systems. Joint systems, including Global Command and Control Systems-Joint (GCCS-J), offer the same utility and protection to the operational forces across the military. The first reality that faces operational commanders is that their staff must share information with agencies and partners with whom they do not normally share information.

For example, port opening forces are critical in military operations across the spectrum. During combat operations, the time phase force deployment (TPFD) is classified and protected from outside agencies. The reality is that an open port can easily be used by the military to deliver tanks and deliver medical supplies. In a humanitarian assistance operation, the TPFD is, paradoxically, critically important information to share with partner agencies. Nobody brings a bigger logistics footprint into a theater than military forces. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the myriad number of non-governmental organizations they represent, became aware of what the U.S. military is bringing into the operation. They used their own resources to fill in the gaps. While the .U.S. military can deliver bulk, the other agencies can utilize their comparatively smaller support networks to deliver specialized needs, or to break down the bulk deliveries for onward distribution. This unity of effort can only happen if the commander and his supporting staff rapidly adjust to the need to share information with a wider audience.

The U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) Commander, MG Darryl A. Williams, quickly grasped this reality and made decisions very early in the process that aided mission command. One of the first decisions that MG Williams made was directed at staff to share information on an unclassified network. The challenge to overcome was our dependence on secret communication. Our planning processes and normal information systems were almost entirely on the classified network, and MG Williams rapidly transitioned our battle rhythm events from secret to unclassified. This had the intended consequence of driving all the supporting products to be created and sustained in an unclassified environment, and allowed MG Williams to use the resulting products and information to rapidly coordinate with agencies and partners in Liberia.

Even as USARAF drove its processes into an unclassified environment, we faced an additional hurdle that was not unique to Liberia — there was little to no digital capability in the Joint operations area. However, any military force responding to humanitarian disaster is likely to encounter a similar paucity of bandwidth on arrival. Analog distribution of information is an imperative for effective mission command in the operational environment.

Digital Capability

For the U.S. military, a normal complement of communications equipment will greatly enhance the digital capabilities of the operational area. The establishment of command and control (C2) nodes in, or close to, critical information centers is vital to synchronize the larger operation. Distant supporting staff can thus create the required unclassified products to enable

synchronization and distribute them through the limited bandwidth for reproduction and physical dissemination through meetings and other engagements.

The ability for USARAF to create relevant information and rapidly create a cooperative picture with our partners was a key component in the success of Operation United Assistance.

Beyond the broad picture of overcoming information hurdles are the following lessons from USARAF's efforts in combating Ebola:

- **Battle Rhythm.** Planning is second nature to military forces, but the methodologies of coordination and synchronization are not always well understood or enforced by agencies with much smaller assets and fewer personnel. The military's assistance advising and enabling (rather than dictating) and coordinating meetings and activities was a critical enabler. MG Williams' ability to share information with partners and key organizations at the onset of the mission evolved into permanent synchronizing events. The Joint Force Command (JFC) staff subsequently organized the remainder of the battle rhythm to ensure the required inputs flowed into the forward synchronizing events. The outputs from these forward meetings also drove coordinating meetings with higher and supporting headquarters. The inputs of synchronization into JFC-Forward generated outputs that drove synchronization throughout the supporting Department of Defense (DOD) network.

- **Liaison Officers (LNOs).** Timely placement of LNOs at critical points and the reception of LNOs from supporting agencies are an important aspect of operational success. USARAF was able to harness its permanent LNOs with the Joint staff and U.S. Africa Command to great success. The LNOs ensured that the operational requirements in Liberia were well understood by the planners and prioritizers, who fed requirements and supplies into the distribution network toward West Africa. We received numerous LNOs to coordinate the critical logistics requirements of the operation with the U.S. Transportation Command and the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command. In Liberia, the exchange of LNOs between USAID and USARAF also proved fruitful. Embedded USARAF LNOs in the Liberian Ebola Response Coordination Center were able to see and fill the information requirements of the host nation and supporting agencies. USAID placed an LNO inside the USARAF Joint Operations Center, where the digital capabilities of the C2 node allowed USAID to download and rapidly reproduce digital files into analog products for distribution. The synergy created by the constant monitoring and sharing of information by these LNOs was essential to successful mission command in Liberia.

- **Common Operational Picture (COP).** A classified COP is not a COP during a humanitarian crisis. The normal tools of mission command, ABCS and GCCS-J, are neither accessible by the lead agency or host nation, nor is much of the information relevant to them. USARAF was uniquely postured for initial mission command in West Africa. Our mission command node routinely interacted with forces that cannot access the normal mission command systems of the U.S. military. As a result, USARAF had unclassified C2 systems in place to facilitate situational understanding.

  In today's heavily digitized environment, "Google Earth" globes are numerous and easily added to any digital collaboration environment. Google Earth is an independent application on a computer, which means only overlays that display situational awareness (i.e., locations of critical nodes, route status, etc.) need to be shared digitally using minimal bandwidth. Overlays are tied to coordinates ensuring that the overlay is properly displayed regardless of the version of Google Earth being used. When created

on an unclassified network, these digital overlays can be utilized by any agency or military headquarters to create identical situational awareness.

This methodology was successfully employed by USARAF to share situational awareness with the various higher headquarters and agencies during the operation. However, the analog requirements of much of the elements forward could not be supported using this technique. USARAF's geo-intelligence section provided the solution. USARAF G-2 created an appropriate fidelity map while minimizing bandwidth requirements for distribution, and then uploaded situational awareness information onto the map in a single slide. Inputs for situational awareness included: route status, Ebola treatment units and their construction status, port status, and other requested information. The COP slide was then distributed to the C2 nodes, where it was printed and distributed during synchronizing meetings. This COP slide became the product of choice for all agencies. The ability of military forces to generate maps and overlay them with situational awareness was unparalleled. USARAF's COP slide was instrumental in providing situational understanding across the operation.

- **Global Visualization and Information Service (GVIS).** The U.S. military has grown reliant on Blue Force Tracker (BFT) to maintain situational awareness of forces during operations. However, during the early stages of a humanitarian crisis, the military forces on the ground did not have vehicles outfitted with BFT. GVIS was the solution to the problem. The GVIS system is designed to gather location information from either satellite or cellular bands and overlay the location onto a Google Earth map. Soldiers can be tracked using either a personnel tracking device in remote areas with poor cellular coverage, or through a smart phone application. In either case, the location of the Soldier is displayed on the digital COP. The GVIS application can be downloaded by non-DOD users, allowing partnered forces to be displayed on the COP. Access to the system can only be granted through USARAF, and is encrypted to prevent unauthorized access. The USARAF operations center can decide what information to share on unclassified networks and which to retain on classified systems. Once enabled, the GVIS tracking system allows commanders to see the information across the operational footprint.

Humanitarian assistance operations challenge military culture and information sharing. However, the military processes and capabilities are essential to rapid success in these operations. The challenges of operating in an unclassified network through analog requirements is not a condition unique to humanitarian operations, but acknowledging and conquering them early in the crisis has immediate benefits in enabling the operation and, more importantly, in rapidly delivering the aid to those most in need.

Chapter 7

Communications Support for Operation United Assistance: Building Trust and Accepting Prudent Risk

Much of today's world moves at the speed of trust. Effective mission command requires building cohesive teams through mutual trust, and the development of effective communications in today's automated information systems environments requires mutual trust between networks as well as the prudence to recognize acceptable risk. The expansion of these network trusts beyond the service components into the Joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational domains will enable Joint force commands (JFCs) to more effectively command and control operations in today's complex operational settings. Operation United Assistance (OUA) demonstrated the capability to overcome the current lack of network-based trusts between the services and government agencies until the goals of the Joint information environment are realized.

Background

On 16 SEP 2014, President Barack Obama directed the establishment of a JFC headquarters in Monrovia, Liberia, as part of the humanitarian assistance/disaster relief effort to support the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in controlling the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease in conjunction with the government of Liberia. U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) was given the mission to establish the JFC headquarters and to provide the immediate support to USAID until the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) could assume command of the Joint force. The installation of an effective command, control, and communications network was a critical enabler to support USAID and the long-term success of the operation.

The Network

The fielded communications systems of the USARAF headquarters are somewhat limited, consisting of three secure Internet protocol routing and non-secure Internet protocol access points (SNAPs) along with the associated end-user devices. Two of these systems are currently deployed to other nations on the continent of Africa in support of ongoing operations. The one remaining SNAP terminal supported the initial entry element of the JFC headquarters, but was unable to provide the necessary redundancy for transport and network-based services. The use of the commercial Internet services locally available through hotels or hot spots provided access to Outlook web access which, although limited, proved useful for e-mail exchange. Thus, the utilization of Joint Communications Support Element (JCSE) capabilities for initial communications proved to be invaluable. Two rapid response kits (RRKs) augmented the interim Joint Operations Center location, providing secure and non-secure voice and data communications coupled with a secure video teleconferencing kit, while an early entry package (EEP) established communications at the future (more permanent) headquarters location pending arrival of the deployable Joint command and control (DJC2) system. Additional RRKs followed to provide support to the future sustainment base in Senegal as well as increased capability to the JFC in Liberia. These JCSE systems (RRKs, EEP, and DJC2) formed the nucleus of the communications network for the Joint force until Warfighter Information Network-Tactical assets arrived via the request for forces process to build out the operational architecture.

The deployed communications platforms performed well during the operation, providing the services and capabilities advertised by the Program Executive Office for Command, Control, and Communications-Tactical and the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command, but the terminals themselves only provided connectivity into the network. The JCSE platforms proffered scalable packages designed to provide various deployment options based on requirements and movement limitations, something current Army systems lack.

All terminals provided basic network and voice services on both the non-secure and secure networks with the end-user devices accompanying the systems. The voice-over Internet provider (IP) systems effectively routed calls throughout the Defense Switched Network (DSN) without any significant issues, and the video teleconferencing capabilities were fully operational after a few firewall modifications. Outlook Web access (OWA) provided enterprise e-mail services and, although slower and less streamlined than Outlook, performed as expected.

The basic network architecture worked and enterprise services were available; however, difficulties arose whenever the network had to support external or interagency organizations. Joining workstations from other networks (Army or interservice), establishing an effective knowledge management process, and sharing information with mission partners proved problematic.

Joining the Network

Although the network transport systems performed as expected, the ability to seamlessly access the network and the services required to perform staff functions is critically important to users. After all, the network is there to support and enable the command.

Typically, the ability to integrate user devices into a network would occur much later, but, for this mission, time was critical and personnel arrived and requested access within days of the commencement of the operation. This included not only service members from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines, but also Department of Defense (DOD) civilians and contractors. For personnel bringing their own workstation or laptop, there were a variety of issues related to getting their device on the network. There is no holistic government enterprise network or architecture; each of the services administers its own networks. In this case, there were two separate networks in use at the time, the Europe (EUR) domain for the SNAP and the JCSE domain for other terminals. The two domains provided a limited amount of flexibility to accommodate users from within the European theater. Many users did not have the required administrative privileges to join their device to a new or different domain. This resulted in the undesirable solution of requiring the device to be re-imaged; however, this capability would not be available until the larger DJC2 system was operational. To mitigate this issue, the designated approval authority for the OWA network accepted the risk to allow devices onto the network without re-imaging.

Users who arrived with virtual private network capability utilized the local Internet service providers to connect. Other personnel simply used their personal laptops or tablets with common access card (CAC) readers to access OWA, which proved sufficient for most. Organizations that chose to trust their users enabled them to utilize the full spectrum of network connectivity options available.

Knowledge Management

Once users gained access to the network, they needed to get the right information at the right time. This simplistic definition of information or knowledge management continues to challenge organizations under the best of circumstances. In the austere environment of Liberia, attempting to share information with the command, the Department of State, USAID, and all of the supporting organizations in Europe, Africa, and the United States, as well as the host nation, proved to be extremely ambitious.

The existing USARAF SharePoint portal provided the initial knowledge management solution; however, this web-based portal is only available to personnel accessing information from within the EUR domain. There was no technical solution available to integrate service members, civilians, or contractors without access to the EUR workstation — limited solely to the SNAP

network for users inside Liberia. This also precluded organizations in the United States, the supported U.S. Government agency (USAID), and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from accessing relevant unclassified operational information. The All Partner Access Network afforded an alternative solution, but this system was never effectively utilized due to the many concerns with access and foreign disclosure. Ultimately, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) adopted Intelink as the best viable knowledge management solution even though access is limited primarily to U.S. Government agencies. The DOD Enterprise Portal Service could potentially mitigate this issue for future operations, by elevating access to the enterprise level, therefore removing firewall access issues between organizations while providing centralized CAC authentication.

Collaboration

The enterprise solution for collaboration, Defense Connect Online (DCO), presented an accessible method of sharing slide products with members of the Joint force and other enablers typically hosting more than 200 users for daily update briefs. Initially, the classified version, DCO-S, hosted the Joint force commander's daily update, which later migrated to the unclassified version of DCO to enable broader participation. This system worked well for slide sharing, digital chat, and file sharing, but was unable to deliver the voice-over IP capability inherent in the system without significant packet loss or distortion. Eventually, the voice collaboration moved to a teleconference bridge with DCO providing the slide picture along with chat and file share pods within the program. The voice quality suffered due to network latency with all traffic routing back to a single server located in San Antonio, Texas. The incorporation of this capability in future consolidated data centers (CDCs) or tactical processing nodes (TPNs) could significantly improve the ability of DCO to deliver real-time voice and perhaps eventually video; however, the inability of DCO to prioritize voice packets over other network traffic will continue to inhibit this collaboration tool from realizing its full potential. This operation serves as an excellent example of the difficulties inherent in pushing services to the tactical edge.

User Authentication

The use of CACs for network access is so ubiquitous in garrison environments and so deeply engrained in the public key infrastructure used throughout DOD that the system seems almost simplistic. A locked card or similar problem is typically solved by a quick trip to the local ID card office. Regrettably, this model does not support contingency deployments for the Army service component commands (ASCCs). If a user's CAC stopped functioning, expired, or was lost, there was no remedy available until the ability to locally create CAC cards was established within the Joint operations area. Since Outlook Web access requires CAC authentication, the result was a loss of e-mail access for that user. Surprisingly, there is a system in place to provide temporary access on the secure network when a token card becomes disabled, but a similar capability on the non-secure network is not currently available. Some additional analysis would be required to determine if it is more cost effective to field identification card stations to ASCCs and other independently deployable units or to develop a temporary username and password capability.

Moving Toward Joint Interoperability

The humanitarian assistance operation in Liberia served to validate improvements in interoperability while also highlighting areas that continue to need improvement to support future operations. The voice-over IP integration into the DSN proved reliable, as did the ability to connect IP-based video-teleconferencing systems. The existence of local domains and the lack of a DOD-wide enterprise forest structure continue to limit the portability of workstations and

unnecessarily complicate the integration of personnel into a Joint force structure. Knowledge management remains a significant challenge and deserves a "whole-of-government" solution to support "whole-of-government" operations. The network remains a vital operational enabler and needs to keep evolving toward a truly interoperable environment to meet the requirements of the Joint force. Once we achieve interoperability among the services, the bigger challenge of interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational interoperability can be addressed.

Chapter 8

Intelligence Support to a Pandemic Response:
U.S. Army Africa Support for Operation United Assistance

> The theater military intelligence brigade provides regionally focused intelligence collection and analysis.
>
> **FM 3-94,** *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*

Introduction

Unique among the Army service component commands (ASCCs), U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) currently does not have a theater military intelligence brigade (TIB). The Army is in the process of resourcing a TIB for USARAF to eliminate the gap of intelligence collection and analysis in direct support to the organization. With limited analytical capacity and little in the way of organic collection capability, the USARAF commander and the G-2 manage their limited resources by focusing on current and potential hot spots in Africa. When Ebola began to expand in West Africa, no one in USARAF was tracking the virus in detail, and the small analysis and production cell within the USARAF G-2 was quickly overwhelmed by the crisis.

Upon assuming the mission, military intelligence professionals from the contingency command post (CCP) were alerted and prepared to fly to Liberia within 96 hours. U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) provided social scientists and regional experts to assist the USARAF commander in achieving situational awareness and an understanding of how events on the ground and the spread of the Ebola virus disease could impact operations. In addition, an ad-hoc team was created to directly support CCP intelligence personnel forward and to help coordinate requests for information and the production of daily intelligence summaries. Elements of the 66th Military Intelligence Group were also in direct support of USARAF for Operation United Assistance (OUA).

While the USARAF commander received strategic and operational-level information from the U.S. Embassy, Liberian officials, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and his staff, tactical-level information requirements remained difficult to answer. Personnel restrictions in Liberia reduced collection assets and limited the number of analysts on the ground to assist in the production, exploitation, and dissemination of intelligence information.

Predicting Future Pandemic Outbreaks

Prior to 2014, there was little focus on Liberia by USARAF intelligence analysts. Ebola outbreaks on the African continent had not spread as fast or to West Africa since the discovery of the virus in 1979. Liberia was viewed as a relatively stable country that projected nearly double-digit annual growth of the gross domestic product. It was the first African nation to elect a woman as president, and there were few indicators or warnings to suggest an impending crisis. In a general sense, Liberia was not on anyone's radar, and USARAF's limited resources were directed toward countering violent extremist organizations, reducing transnational terrorism, fostering security cooperation, and building partner capacity in other areas of the continent.

Early warning of pandemics or viral outbreaks is unlikely to change in the future. The question becomes, "What is the solution when a virus is the threat"? USAFRICOM, USARAF, the current regionally-aligned force element, and other interested parties must coordinate and synchronize the allocation of resources to ensure that as many gaps as possible are covered. Limited intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets must be closely husbanded and focused to tip and cue other assets. Then analysts must rapidly produce tailored products to answer

the commander's priority intelligence requirements to assist with the decisionmaking process. When the USARAF TIB is established, additional intelligence collection and analysis assets will be available, indicators and warnings will be monitored more closely, continuous analysis of political and military events will be possible, and greater fidelity will be achieved.

Figure 8-1. Intelligence personnel assist with information gathering.

Figure 8-2. Daily intelligence summaries assisted Operation United Assistance commanders in situational awareness of the Ebola virus disease's impact.

Determine Proper Response

Intelligence analysis at the ASCC level, in close coordination with the U.S. Embassy and other government agencies, was critical in determining the proper force protection posture in the initial phase of operations. Knowing in advance the strong pro-U.S. sentiment in Liberia allowed the Joint force command (JFC) commander to deploy with limited security forces. It also allowed a relaxed posture for U.S. Soldiers on the ground in regard to potential threats and enabled them to quickly establish partnerships with all elements of the Liberian government.

Intelligence personnel in the CCP were selected based on their capabilities. Having a tailorable and scalable force was essential to supporting the commander and meeting intelligence requirements. During OUA, weather, geographic intelligence, interagency coordination, and counterintelligence were vital to answering the commander's questions and concerns. In this type of environment, a solid understanding of NGOs and other governmental agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention allows intelligence personnel to prepare the JFC commander to operate effectively in a Joint, interagency, and multinational environment.

Split-based operations created challenges with synchronization and information sharing. USARAF had personnel in several locations, to include Liberia, Italy, and Germany. Daily synchronization meetings utilizing Defense Connect Online, Tandberg video teleconferences, and the telephone helped reduce physical separation. Reachback operations allowed USARAF to leverage social scientists for research as well as manage and brief the JFC commander in the Joint operations area.

In preparation for the next crisis, the lesson learned was that it is too late to gather and gain an appreciation of the existing information after mission notification. Joint intelligence preparation of the environment is a continuous process that must be part of the production schedule and periodically updated to enable planning, course of action development, and ultimately mission execution.

Critical Success Factors

Providing situational awareness with enough clarity for the commander to make timely and accurate decisions is the *raison d'être* of any military intelligence organization. In the case of pandemic outbreak response, actionable intelligence is still a desired end state, though the actions may not be kinetic or intended to have a military effect.

Logistics and engineer planners and staff need to develop a close working relationship with the topographic engineers and geospatial intelligence sections in garrison. This will allow the production of thorough and useful intelligence products that properly depict road networks, airfields, and other terrain critical to the success of the operation. In many situations, Embassy personnel can provide critical information regarding port capabilities, transnational businesses, and other possible partners to support operational success.

Building a standard set of decision-support tools during training exercises prior to deployment enables commanders to visualize the environment. By standardizing formats and briefs to the commander's preference, significant time and effort can be saved, allowing the staff to focus on collecting and analyzing the information rather than formatting data.

The USARAF G-2 used the Defense Intelligence Agency-approved writing style guide during production of all intelligence products. This allowed intelligence professionals and senior civilian counterparts to use, cite, and digest products for further federation into an overall national intelligence assessment. In the case of OUA, personnel at the Department of State, Department of the Army, and other agencies were able to use the USARAF intelligence summary to brief senior officials without caveat or editing as the information was already in a familiar format.

Conclusion

The next pandemic outbreak will likely occur without warning, and the military community should build upon the success of OUA to get in front of the problem before it spreads beyond a localized region. While the USARAF G-2 team was able to meet the intent of the JFC commander by providing him an accurate intelligence picture that produced high-quality intelligence products, and supporting force protection through active counterintelligence and coordination with external agencies, the lack of a dedicated TIB increased friction across the staff due to the following:

- Insufficient pre-deployment analysis, which limited collection capabilities.
- Inadequate tactical-level analytical support.

The only way to fix these shortfalls at the ASCC level is the proper doctrinal employment of a theater military intelligence brigade.

Chapter 9
Human Resources Operations for Operation United Assistance
U.S. Army Africa G-1 Team

On 16 SEP 2014, President Barack Obama announced that the Department of Defense (DOD) was stepping in to help the people in the West African country of Liberia contain the spread of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) — Operation United Assistance (OUA). In his remarks, he named MG Darryl Williams, commander of U.S. Army Africa and Southern European Task Force (USARAF/SETAF), as the leader on the ground. Executing steady-state responsibilities commensurate with their role as an Army service component command (ASCC), USARAF G-1 found themselves performing tactical-level human resources (HR) operations both at the contingency command post in Monrovia, Liberia, and the main command post in Vicenza, Italy.

USARAF is the ASCC subordinate to U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), the combatant command whose area of operations encompasses the majority of the African continent. An ASCC's responsibilities encompass both peacetime and wartime scenarios (ATP 3-93, *Theater Army Operations*). Key tasks assigned to USARAF as an ASCC include maintaining administrative control of Army forces, executing Army executive agent functions, performing common-user logistics functions, providing theater security cooperation, assessing and developing infrastructure, and developing a concept plan and contingency/operations plans. All of these tasks revolve around fulfilling the Army's support function to the geographic combatant command. During the initial phases for OUA, USARAF G-1 became the J-1 combatant command until relieved by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) on 25 OCT 2014.

USARAF G-1 began planning using the Military Decisionmaking Process as part of the broader USARAF operational planning team (OPT), and by deploying two members of the G-1 staff as the J-1 Forward element in Liberia, supported by the J-1 Rear element, comprising the majority of G-1 personnel who remained in Italy. The initial focus was to establish personnel accountability (PA), as well as set the conditions for executing Joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (JRSOI), postal operations, transition processing, casualty operations, and morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) assets in Monrovia, Liberia. Early in the operation, a key planning factor was the eventual transition between the USARAF J-1/G-1 staff and the 101st Airborne Division G-1.

In accordance with FM 1-0, *Human Resources Support*, an ASCC G-1 has a number of tasks associated with PA, to include the following:

- Deploy individuals as part of the early-entry element to manage and monitor PA.
- Establish personnel reporting plans, policies, and timelines reflecting detailed reporting procedures and responsibilities in coordination with the J-1 combatant command.

The USARAF J-1 Forward element executed PA with precision by obtaining accountability as the personnel flow into Liberia increased.

The process began with the establishment of the Joint Personnel Status and Casualty Report template for PA, which was submitted twice daily from J-1 Forward to J-1 Rear. Due to limited connectivity initially in the operation, the J-1 Rear compiled the personnel status and casualty reports and submitted them to USAFRICOM and OUA commanders daily. Moreover, it was important for the PA team to be present and collect identification cards at every flight landing to load the personnel accounting systems via the Total Personnel System. USARAF also populated and maintained all personnel into Deployed Theater Accountability Software (DTAS), which was a team effort among J-1 Forward, J-1 Rear, and USAFRICOM. Another notable issue was accountability of DOD contractors on the ground in Liberia.

This was accomplished through a team effort between USARAF and the Vicenza-based 414th Contracting Support Brigade by establishing clear procedures using the Synchronize Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker system, which became the database of record for contractor accountability.

Normally, the personnel accountability team (PAT) executes this as part of a larger theater-entry package that is required by doctrine. According to FM 1-0, to establish initial PA operations, personnel from each of the following organizations are required:

- ASCC G-1/Adjutant General.

- Human Resources Service Center (personnel from the PA division).

- Technical guide (TG) PAT.

- Human Resources Operations Branch (of the Expeditionary Sustainment Command and designated sustainment brigade, dedicated to theater opening).

- HR company.

- HR platoon (to support TG PAT).

Weeks later, the 101st Airborne Division sent its TG PAT to establish accountability for its brigade allowing USARAF G-1 to assume the ASCC role.

Next, the USARAF G-1 team helped set the conditions for JRSOI. This began with an ad hoc structure of the aerial port of delivery in which personnel of the Joint Task Force port opening unit consisting of Army and Air Force personnel played intricate roles. However, operating in an austere yet permissive environment led to formidable logistical struggles that negatively affected key HR functions such as postal, MWR, and Army and Air Force Exchange Service support. Despite these challenges, the J-1 Forward team continued to establish JRSOI with the available resources as the movement of personnel increased and the staging rapidly followed. Utilizing the Delta Airlines gate in Roberts International Airport, J-1 Forward accomplished its mission to receive personnel into the area of responsibility. Successful reception allowed the Joint Force Command-OUA commander to focus on the mission, which involved establishing command and control, building Ebola treatment units designed to provide critical aid to the people of Liberia, and helping stem the escalating spread of the EVD.

The length of time to establish mail operations was unforeseen, because there was no existing agreement with Liberia or Senegal to conduct postal or mail operations. However, with JRSOI and PA established, a full court press began with USAFRICOM working necessary diplomatic agreements to gain the host nation's authorization to operate postal operations in Liberia and Senegal as the J-1 Rear worked diligently to hone in on obtaining approval for Army Post Offices (APOs), which ultimately initiated postal operations.

Headquarters, Department of the Army, was the direct link with the Military Postal Support Agency to energize the process as USAFRICOM worked the request for forces (RFF) to support postal operations. Simultaneously, J-1 Forward identified possible APO locations, coordinated building materials, and coordinated with the engineers to design and build the mailrooms.

As the J-1 responsibilities transitioned from USARAF to 101st Airborne Division, it was overall successful, but not without a few challenges along the way. Deliberate and concise planning efforts spearheaded by the USARAF G-5 plans cell focused the entire command on the task at hand. Daily OPT meetings with representatives from all directorates ensured a smooth transition. In addition to the command's approach, the J-1/G-1's transition also included daily synchronization meetings via Defense Connect Online (DCO). These daily DCO meetings proved essential to ensure the numerous players involved in OUA, to include the 101st Airborne

Division, USARAF, USAFRICOM, contracting command, U.S. Army Europe, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, etc., were kept abreast of the latest developments as the theater matured. Facilitating this discussion on DCO was the USARAF G-1 Chief of Plans and Operations, LTC George Ross, who stated that "synchronizing our efforts on DCO was a key step in not only moving issues forward, but also avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort." With the interest in OUA increasing, "there were a lot of hands in the pot for this operation."

Although MWR support was planned, staged, and ready to flow into country at the onset of OUA, efforts were stalled due to a lack of available logistics capabilities to move nice-to-have items vice need-to-have items. Additionally a lack of staging space and personnel to provide support for these functions hampered timely movement of MWR items (i.e., USO-to-Go kits) from their pre-deployment locations. However, through persistent coordination, both J-1 Forward and J-1 Rear elements were able to notably execute movement of MWR items and support as OUA evolved.

The ASCC G-1 also provided a direct link to the Wiesbaden, Germany/USAFRICOM Combined Arms Center to conduct casualty operations and work/monitor policy issues (i.e., entitlements, awards, and decorations) through USAFRICOM. As a result, USARAF's efforts set the theater and conditions for a successful 101st Airborne Division takeover.

In conclusion, OUA provided a great opportunity to execute HR tasks on the African continent. As a J-1 and ASCC G-1 with other operations the Army has participated in over the past decade, HR planning and execution played a crucial role during OUA. Liberia posed a unique challenge to HR delivery, as it was an immature theater with no established bases from which to operate and lacked organic equipment as an ASCC. However, this did not limit or deter the HR professionals of USARAF G-1 from executing and completing the mission in a timely and efficient manner.

Chapter 10
Operation United Assistance Force Protection

Protecting the force is an ever-evolving program. The overall mission of force protection has to be clear: a framework possessing a risk assessment that gives the commander an absolute depiction of where mitigation measures have been implemented in order to control hazards or threats. No matter what type of environment — threats, vulnerabilities, and criticalities must be addressed as they relate to the mission. In a permissive environment while conducting a long-term humanitarian assistance mission, a common operational risk assessment may prove to be quite different in some respects. Combat units are not always the tip of the spear deploying into this type of operation. At all echelons, units must focus on the key elements of force protection.

In this case, an Army service component command (ASCC) advance echelon (ADVON) addressed security concerns that were uncommon from a typical force protection perspective. A special force unit has the ability to blend into an environment and accept risk on a large scale without having one of the major news channels as a savvy technological multiplier. This advance party, with 40 senior military personnel attempting to infuse themselves into an economically impoverished country with limited sustainment resources and a deadly virus that was having world-renowned exposure, did not have that luxury. What may be perceived as a low risk in a combat environment may be considered a high risk in a permissive environment with the strategic framework needing special attention. As the framework is being developed, understanding the operational environment is the key to success in protecting the force during this type of mission.

> Accurate assessment is essential for effective decisionmaking and the apportionment of combat power-to-protection task.
>
> **ADRP 3-37, *Protection***

Protecting the force during the initial phase of OUA in Monrovia, Liberia, presented some unique challenges. Unlike our presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, we were not in Liberia as an occupying force. We were strictly there to facilitate the U.S. Agency for International Development in providing the humanitarian assistance needed to stop the Ebola outbreak. The primary task for the protection officer in the first 24 hours on ground was to identify the clear and present threats. Our initial force did not deploy with the standard Army radio communications platforms, vehicles, or a security force. These shortfalls created three problem areas that could have severe operational impacts on the deployed force:

- The lack of a comprehensive primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency (PACE) plan from an Army standard.
- The volatile driving conditions in greater Monrovia.
- Absence of a U.S. security force, to include lack of a quick reaction response force / medical evacuation.

Figure 10-1. A Liberian army captain briefs U.S. Agency for International Development representatives and U.S. military service members.

"There are no problems we cannot solve together, and very few we can solve by ourselves."

— President Lyndon B. Johnson, 28 NOV 1964

Some of the identified critical threats were actually outside of the ADVON's scope and ability to mitigate. Facts were gathered from the Liberian Army in order to understand the operational atmosphere; there were key factors that played a significant role in how the deployed force would best mitigate the vulnerabilities identified. The permissive environment actually caused issues for the deployed force. There were established laws and conditions within the host nation (HN) that were not known prior to the initial forces arriving to the area of operations.

Some of the conditions had a major impact on mission planning considerations. For instance, a curfew was in effect from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. This condition restricted movement to daylight hours only. The curfew caused all of the Liberian merchants and daily commuters to travel during the daylight hours. This restriction caused a drastic increase in vehicle movement on the limited road network (there were fewer than 500 miles of paved roads in the entire country), making driving conditions extremely hazardous in the greater Monrovia area. Additionally, with the preferential driving privileges given to distinguished guests and high authority personnel in Liberia, our Liberian contracted drivers sped in and out of traffic in an erratic fashion.

Establishing safe driving parameters was the first mitigation measure put in place. Precautionary methods had to be established in order to prevent unnecessary accidents. Joint Force Command personnel required their locally-hired drivers to obey the city speed limits. In conjunction with this edict, OUA vehicles were given a window placard that identified the vehicle as being used in a "Very Important Person" capacity. The OUA window placard was issued by the Liberian

National Police. The placard helped the general public become more aware of OUA Department of Defense (DOD)-controlled vehicle movements in the area. There were other guidelines put into place to help with vehicle recovery. A two-vehicle convoy movement guideline was put in place if DOD personnel were traveling outside the greater Monrovia area. Also, Soldiers received a briefing that provided step-by-step actions to take should they be involved in a vehicle accident.

The next major mitigation measure emplaced was the development of a standardized PACE plan. Without a Single-Channel Ground-Air Radio System platform accessible for all of the nontactical vehicles, the leaders on ground had to accept an alternative PACE plan. This was a concern as most military personnel are accustomed to having a standardized radio configuration in each vehicle as well as in the tactical operations center. Cellphones are not normally the only military communication platform during contingency operations; however, in this case, cellphone communications were the most reliable communication platform available. The decision was made that the communications PACE plan would use Blackberry e-mail, local cellphone, and Delorme and Iridium phones. A map with the regional cellphone coverage was built in order to gain a better communication representation in the area of operations. The cellphone map supported the PACE plan and assured the command that as long as our personnel were in the cellphone coverage area, communication efforts would not be degraded. Although the Delorme's primary usage is for emergency isolation situations, it proved to be a very reliable communication source with its texting and geo-tracking capabilities.

The security posture was not established prior to U.S. forces' arrival in the area of operations. The country of Liberia has a long history of civil war and conflict. The U.S. Embassy and Liberian government were against U.S. Soldiers carrying weapons in public. U.S. Soldiers carrying weapons as an occupying force was perceived as a negative visible presence. As we know, Soldiers are accustomed to arriving to theater with their long rifles and extra ammunition ready for combat. This was not the case in this permissive environment. The threat was not other armed forces. Because all Soldiers have the inherit right to defend themselves, the decision was made that Soldiers would carry their weapons in a concealed capacity. Additionally, to minimize the number of weapons the public may be exposed to, Soldiers utilized the "guardian angel" method as a personal security mitigation measure. This measure stated that for every three Soldiers traveling in a group, one Soldier was given the task to carry a concealed weapon.

As a result of Soldiers being prohibited from carrying long rifles in public, DOD personnel were required to use HN security elements as their primary means of force protection. These elements were positioned at DOD personnel residential areas and at key locations where DOD personnel worked. As the deployed force increased its operational footprint, there were also security concerns at newly constructed logistics support areas, aerial ports of debarkation, and residential areas. It would have been impossible for the deployed force to provide a 24-hour security element in addition to conducting daily operations with its limited number of personnel. The deployed force had to rely heavily on the HN security force to provide its external security. This was an uncommon force protection method for the entire deployed force to truly accept. Reliance on a HN to provide convoy security, site security, and a quick reaction force was surely a different approach to mission assurance. This was not a strategy, it was reality. The Liberian National Police (LNP) demanded to increase their security posture in order to help keep operations free from operational setbacks or minor grievances in the area of operations. The LNP formulated response plans and implemented checkpoint operations in order to help mitigate both erratic driving conditions and maintain an aggressive security posture in the vicinity of areas where DOD personnel conducted daily operations.

The operational capacity of HN support police and security personnel in the area of operation proved to be very reliable. The LNP developed a response plan in conjunction with the OUA Joint operations center (JOC). The LNP response plan was exercised once for a vehicle accident and in response to a possible verbal altercation. The HN security force provided a sure sense of security in Monrovia as well as throughout the outer country regions.

Deployed Soldiers and leaders are accustomed to defending against violent extremist organizations. However, there was no hostile terrorist threat in this environment to defend against. The actual threat was the Ebola virus disease. If a Soldier became injured, there were no proper assets for medical treatment because many of the medical facilities were now filled with Ebola patients.

In conclusion, communication, transportation, security, and disease proved to be the key force protection issues requiring special attention. Once there was a clear understanding of the operational environment, the protection officer was able to assist the JOC in mitigating the risk of foreseeable threats. There were approximately 25 missions being conducted daily with vehicle movements. Movements in and around Monrovia, Liberia, proved to be difficult for the JOC to track. However, the command essentially felt that threat barriers were eliminated by the implementation of certain security considerations. Cellphone coverage was our biggest ally in our communication efforts, as military radios were simply not an option nor warranted by the groups conducting nontactical vehicle convoy operations. Lastly, building a strong relationship with host nation police and security elements effectively assured mission success.

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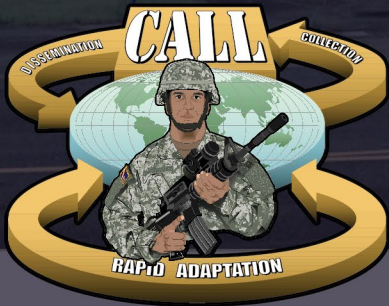**Combined Arms Center-Capability Development Integration Directorate (CAC-CDID)**

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