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RESEARCH PAPER / MÉMOIRE DE RECHERCHE

**IS THE C2 SYSTEM OF MEXICAN FORCES OPERATIONS SUITABLE FOR A
FOREIGN HUMANITARIAN OPERATION TO SUPPORT A DISASTER?**

10 October 2007 / 10 octobre 2007

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ABSTRACT

The Mexican Government considers the possibility to participate in a foreign humanitarian assistance operation, an effective and responsive C2 is vital to success in this kind of operations. Mexican Army and Air Force represent a great and well underpinned institution, with a strong organization; achieving commanders with great authority and troops with a high fulfilment of their duties.

The great challenge in these kinds of operations is the requirement of commander in all the hierarchical levels who could participate in the mission, being “thinking commanders”. The question is: Has the Mexican Army a command and control system suitable for operations within the foreign humanitarian assistance environment? The main aspects of the C2MEX will be fully analyzed to provide arguments and conclusions about the exercise of the Command and Control in Mexican Forces operations within this complex domain . . .

IS THE C2 SYSTEM OF THE MEXICAN FORCES SUITABLE FOR A FOREIGN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OPERATION?

By Lieutenant-Colonel (Mexican Army) R A González H

“Thank you for the steadfast support you have shown us over the years. This is one American who does not forget. God speed and remain safe”

Gregory J. Skinner, Police Department, New Jersey.
Canadian Forces Support to Relief Efforts in Southern United States

INTRODUCTION

México has a high respect for democratic states, their policies, and their sovereignty; nevertheless it recognizes the possibility of natural disasters in any part of the world. For those reasons, Mexican Government considers that it could be called to participate in a foreign humanitarian assistance operation.

In the case of a foreign humanitarian operation, a humanitarian operations center must be established. Moreover, to be effective it has to function as an interagency policymaking body that coordinates the overall relief strategy and unity of effort among all participants. Such an operation normally would be established under the direction of the government of the affected country or the United Nations. Then México could participate in a foreign humanitarian operation as part of this multinational humanitarian effort.

1. Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. 12 April 200, J. P. 1-02, 246

The development of the assistance operations will be involved under the authority of a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces; the commander has to exercise command and control (C2) to accomplish that mission.²

At the same time, Canadian military doctrine recognizes Canada's involvement in multinational forums such as this, as it has been proved in practice, these facts have provided a solid understanding of the nature of those complicated commitments. The command and control system in the Canadian Military Doctrine notes that it's truly suitable for the accomplishment of the assistance objectives within foreign humanitarian operations.³

This paper will argue that, despite current lack of experience, the Mexican Army has a command and control system suitable for operations within a foreign humanitarian assistance environment. For an expeditionary operation, it is necessary to make some changes, in order to respond to all factors that take place in humanitarian missions. First of all, the Command and Control system of Mexican Army (C2MEX) will be studied to understand how is structured. As a comparison, the Canadian Forces Command and Control system (CFC2) will be submitted to a similar study to contrast its framework. This paper will describe one case study about Canada's participation in a humanitarian assistance operation, in order to emphasize the strengths and weaknesses there in. The main aspects of the C2MEX as it exercises its authority and its features will be fully analyzed, ranging through the personnel, equipment, communications and procedures employed in planning, directing, coordinating and controlling the operations of the participant forces, making a comparison between the CFC2 and C2MEX.

2. *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. 12 April 200, J. P. 1-02, 246

3. Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Operations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 1-5

After the above mentioned analysis, the strengths and weaknesses of the C2MEX will be inferred from the study, in order to identify the necessary adjustments in the C2MEX to assure the success in attempting to fulfil a humanitarian mission. Finally the paper will establish pertinent recommendations to make possible the adjustments in the C2MEX in accordance with what could be necessary to succeed in that part of the operational art in the Mexican Army.

COMMAND AND CONTROL OF MEXICAN FORCES OPERATIONS

BACKGROUND

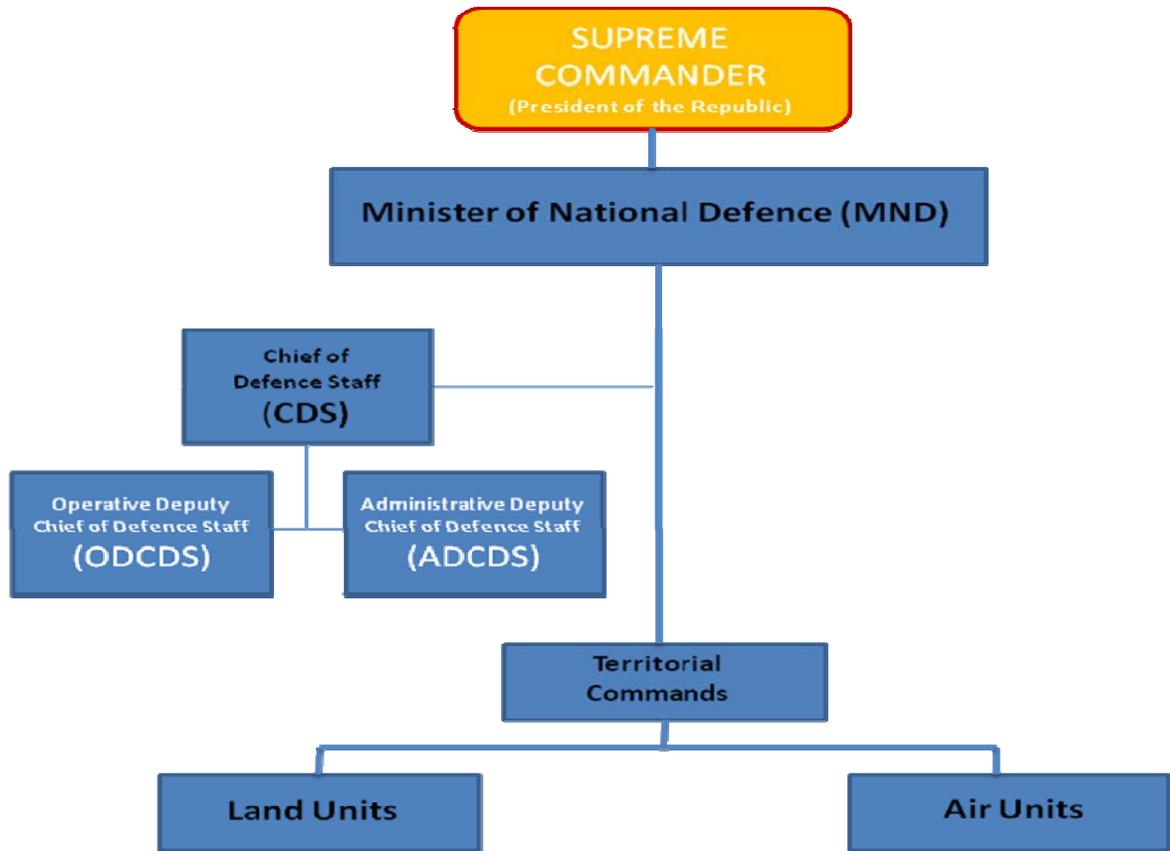
An effective and responsive C2 is vital to success an operation. The C2 of a TF may be exercised directly or through subordinate components: that means in a centralized or decentralized manner, or a combination of both. The achievement of military objectives in preparation for, or prosecution of, armed conflicts, defence of the territory, stability operation, domestic mission, civil or foreign humanitarian assistance, depends primarily on the ability to put the right forces in the right place at the right time. For the Mexican army and air force, the C2 has its basis at the National Defence Head Quarter (NDHQ) where the responsibility for establishing deployable forces is retained. It is relevant to mention that the Ministry of the Navy has its own C2 system, as another separated Institution.

Mexican doctrine recognizes three levels of command: High command, Superior commands (Territorial commands) and Unit commands; which correspond to the three levels of conflict: Strategic, Operational and Tactical respectively. In the strategic level, the control of the operations is exercised in accordance with the strategic objectives, so in this level the decision to participate in a humanitarian operation is taken.⁴

4. Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, México, "*Ley Orgánica del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos*", EMDN, edición 2006. Cap. Órganos del alto mando, 16-18.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

Minister of National Defence (MND) is the Chairman of that Ministry while at the same time is the high commander of the **Mexican Army and Air Force (MEXAAF)**. As a politician and commander, he has all those responsibilities in charge. The Chief of Defence Staff (**CDS**) is responsible to the MND for the conduct of military operations: he has two deputies in charge: the Administrative Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (**ADCDS**), who is responsible to the CDS for force planning and development of all administrative and logistic aspects of the Armed Force's operations; and the Operative Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (**ODCDS**), who is responsible to the CDS for directing the operations, assisted by the Chief of the Third Section of the National Defence Staff (**COS J3**)⁵ (*Graphic No 01 COMMAND STRUCTURE*)

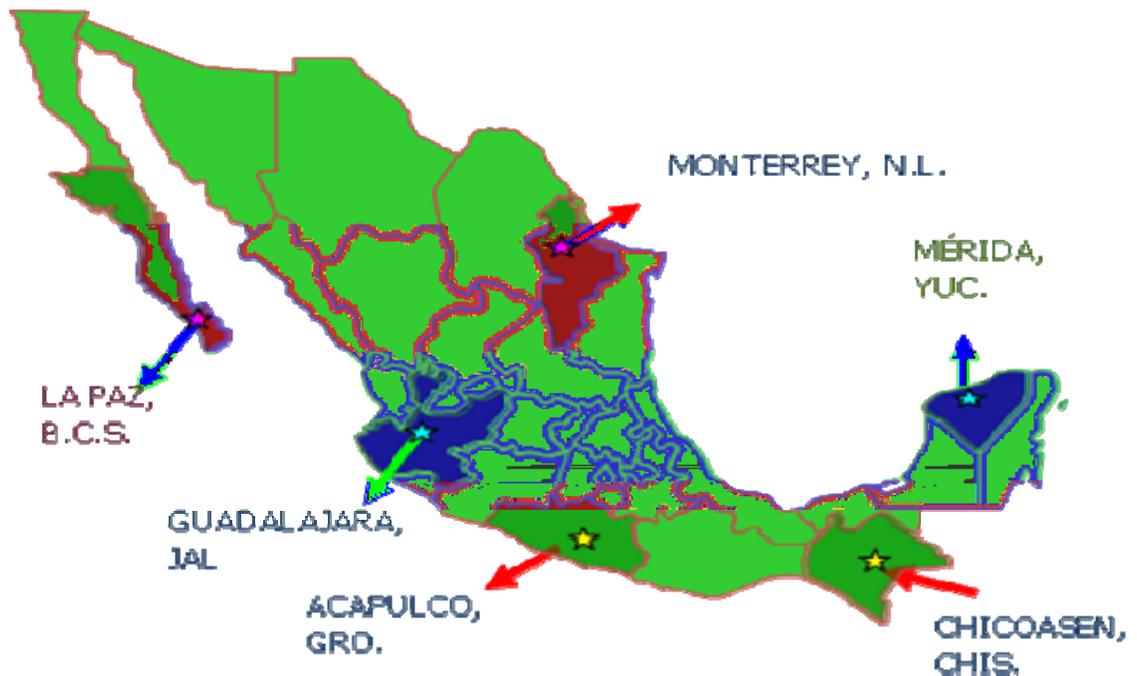


4. Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, México, “*Ley Orgánica del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos*”, EMDN, edición 2006. Cap. Órganos del alto mando, 18.

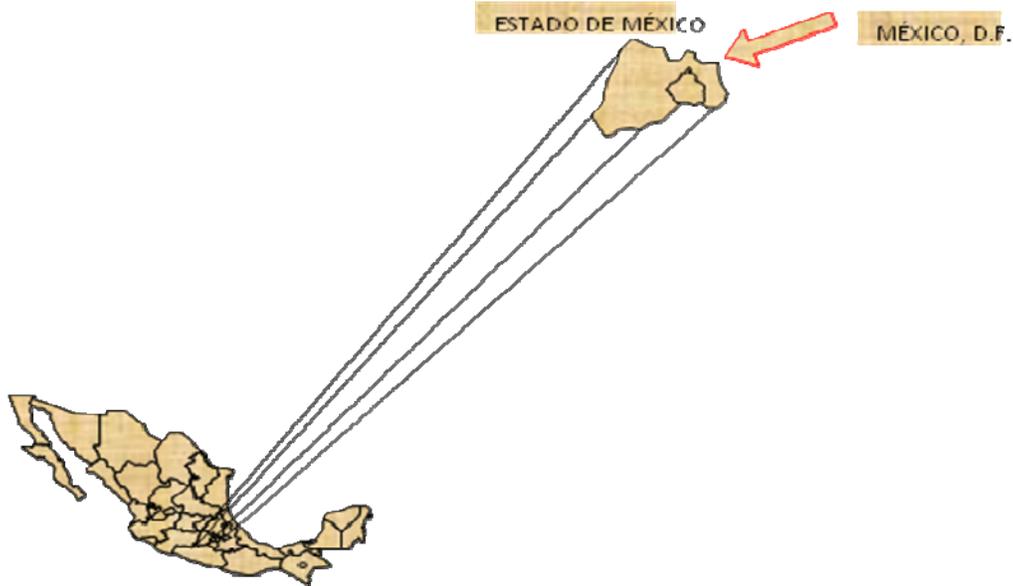
OPERATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

The Territorial Commands are responsible for accomplishing any humanitarian operation mission, through the Commanders of Great Units with minimum loss of life and expenditure of resources. They are assisted in the execution of their duties by their headquarters and staff. These HQs will plan, organize and direct the conduct of the humanitarian operations as routine operations, due to their being tasked to be prepared to face domestic contingencies or to assist in natural disasters in any part of the National Territory.

(Graphic No 02 some examples of the Territorial Commands)



(Graphic No 03 the Territorial Command of the first Military Region)



COMMAND AND CONTROL OF CANADIAN FORCES OPERATIONS

BACKGROUND

C2 in the CF has its basis at NDHQ and its operational doctrine calls for three levels of command: Strategic, Operational and Tactical. At the Strategic Level of Command, control of a conflict is exercised and coordination is provided at the national level. In the Operational Level of Command, forces are employed to attain strategic objectives in a theatre or area of operations. The Tactical Level of command directs the use of military forces to contribute to the operational level plan.⁶

NATIONAL COMMAND STRUCTURE

The CDS is responsible to the MND for the conduct of military operations; he commands the CF and generally operates at the strategic level. The CDS issues orders and instructions to the CF through the chain of command. It is relevant to emphasize, that the MND as the Minister of the DND is a politician, and he doesn't have the roles that the CDS has as the CF Commander⁷.

6. National Defence, *CANADIAN FORCES OPERATION*, Chap. 2, C2 of Canadian Forces Operations. S II, 2-3.

7. *Ibid.* 3-6.

The NDHQ J Staff is responsible for the staff effort related to the planning, conduct and coordination of operations at the strategic level; it is to focus and accelerate NDHQ matrix activities in the planning, execution and sustainment of operations. Within the confines of their respective Environments, the Environmental Chiefs of Staff (ECS) are responsible for exercising command of assigned units in accordance with the Canadian Forces Organizational Orders and as directed by the CDS.⁸

CANADA'S PARTICIPATION IN A HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OPERATION

In the wake of **Hurricane Katrina**, General Rick Hillier, the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) of Canada offered CF support to help the U.S. deal with the situation, consequently and after the correspondent political approve consent, the CDS issued a warning order to the CF for planning and deployment preparations.⁹ Then, the Canadian Forces (CF) supported US relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina with the Operation UNISON 2005.¹⁰ The CF moved quickly Ships, aircraft and CF personnel from the Navy, Army and the Air Force to the affected area to provide much needed assistance. Canada's Air Force sent two CH-146 Griffon helicopters to assist the United States Coast Guard (USCG) in covering the Boston Search and Rescue (SAR) area of responsibility; Canada's Navy sent the Canadian Forces Joint Task Group 306, comprising three CF ship and the Canadian Coast Guard Ship (CCGS) Sir William Alexander. The CF has proven experience in disaster relief operations like Operation CENTRAL in Central America in 1998, Operation TORRENT in Turkey in 1999, and Operation STRUCTURE in Sri Lanka in 2004.¹¹

8. National Defence, *CANADIAN FORCES OPERATION*, Chapter 2, C2 of Canadian Forces Operations. S II, 6-8.

9. Backgrounder, *Canadian Forces Support to Relief Efforts in Southern United States* BG-05.023a – Sep 16, 2005. Accessed http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/publications/emergency/em_pub002_e.asp

10. Transcripts, *National Defence Media Availability with General Rick Hillier, Chief of the Defence Staff, and Lieutenant-General Marc Dumais, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff*. 13h30 - September 1, 2005

11. *Canadians proud of help given to survivors of Hurricane Katrina can be proud of this crew* by Cdr Stuart R. Moors, *Canadian Forces Journal*, 5 October 2005, Vol. 8 No. 34, Download article (PDF), at http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/home_e.asp

ANALYZING THE MAIN ASPECTS OF THE C2MEX FOR A FOREIGN HUMANITARIAN OPERATION

THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY

MND as the High Command of the MEXAAF has to decide how to employ the armed forces by issuing orders and instructions to the land and air components of the armed forces. To assign the order to deploy some forces in accomplishing humanitarian operations, the MND makes the decision and issues instructions to the CDS, who orders the mission through the ODCDS to the specific forces of the Territorial Command, which will be involved in the operation. Those orders pass through a long chain of command prior to their arriving at the involved task forces, taking by this way more time than it seems necessary. For that reason, the Mexican Armed Forces have achieved the establishment of some plans to provide that kind of assistance within the domestic domain, for example the *DN-III-E plan*. When that plan is executed, the territorial command which is designated to accomplish the mission in the affected part of its responsibility area has to deploy its own units to face the emergency. If this first effort is not able enough to provide the total assistance, the MND issues the order to deploy the disaster assistance task force (DATF), which is based in the first military region. That action implies to constitute a combined assistance task force, being by this form quite often a lack of overall authority, especially when the elements of the TF come from different units, and they have their own commanders. Despite the commander of the TF being designated, in the short time that he could have to operate the units, it is almost impossible to get an overall control of the operations.¹²

12. Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, México, *Manual para la aplicación del plan DN-III-E en el Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos*, EMDN, edición 2002. Tomo I, 20-35.

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

Natural disasters could take place in any part of the world, and México could have a broadened participation in the international field deploying a Foreign Humanitarian Assistance Force. Based on the last events that have occurred in recent years, such as in Venezuela, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, India, Iran and most recently in the US; in all those cases Mexico has deployed a trial foreign humanitarian assistance team. This has been integrated with different elements from the land, sea and air components, as necessary with the Commander of that deployable force and its respective deployable joint HQ, being designated directly by the MND. However, as a result of its participation in that international forum, México recognizes the necessity to enhance its own capability of response in a natural disaster. In spite of its lack of experience in the international environment, México has gained a well-deserved reputation in assistance missions to face a disaster due to its well intentioned participation. In a same manner, México knows disasters could take place in the future, more frequently and with worse consequences than before in any part of the world. Moreover in its own territory, taking into account that it has been devastated on many occasions in its history, and then it meets the challenge in the foreign humanitarian assistance operations.¹³

THE COMMAND STRUCTURE AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

In the hypothetical case that México deploys a TF and its respective HQ to develop humanitarian assistance operations overseas, being this TF better structured than the trial team, in order to achieve more probabilities of success, the Territorial Commands HQs should be responsible to task some part of their subordinates units to form that assistance TF.

13. Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, México, “Manual para la aplicación del plan DN-III-E en el Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos”, EMDN, edición 2002. Tomo III, 14-27.

Nevertheless, those operational HQs do not possess a full deployable capability due to its regional functions, and definitely they will require for these particular operations, the close presence of a deployed commander and his own HQ in operations to support the disaster. The lack of that deployable capability of the Territorial HQs must be substituted, with the fast and effective answer of the deployed commander and his HQ, in organizing the TF. Under those circumstances, the response of the TF commander could not be in the best conditions to develop his job, with the holistic vision that is necessary, to focus on all different aspects that take place in these operations within a very complex environment. Then, the main problem for this commander could be shown leading the actions of his subordinated units, being coordinated in a multiagency and multinational organization.

The command and control of a Task Force in México could be exercised in two manners: decentralized, that means the authority granted to the TF commander to assign missions and tasks to all the subordinate commanders, to deploy subordinate units, to reassign forces and to retain or delegate operational and/or tactical control as he deems necessary. However, he could not take responsibility for the administration of the units; this operational command could not be delegated. Secondly, then is the centralized model, taking the authority delegated to the TF commander to direct forces assigned so that he may accomplish specific mission or task which are usually limited by function, time or location, to deploy units concerned and to retain or assign tactical control of those units. This command does not include authority to assign separate employment of component of the units concerned; neither does it include administrative or logistic control.¹⁴

14. Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, México, *“Manual de Operaciones en Campaña”*, EMDN, edición 2002. Tomo I, 54-65.

The best form to exercise the C2 in the hypothetical case of a foreign humanitarian assistance TF seems to be in a centralized manner, to limit the function of the TF commander in time and location, which could correspond to the specific ones of the area that could have been damaged by the disaster. However, in practice this is almost impossible, due to the constant necessity to approach particular and different missions in each part of the damaged territory, in which one the several kind of actions to develop are to solve in a particular form, which means case by case. So, the TF commander needs to be granted with the total authority. This exercise of authority will be more complicated in the multinational environment; it will require improving coordination with other governments involved in the same operation, with the host nation and with some other organization which could play an important role in the assistance such as the NGOs, the media, etc.

STAFF FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

When México must deploy a task force to accomplish the specific mission of a foreign humanitarian operation, the NDHQ has to provide that JTF with a deployable JHQ as a JTFHQ. These JTF and its correspondent JHQ are totally assigned with components, selected from the territorial commands that will be concerned in the mission. This JHQ is to plan, organize and conduct the operations, and then if necessary, it must provide the JTF with its JHQ in the same manner.¹⁵ It seems better in this case, if could be implemented in México, the establishment of a deployable joint HQ within the National Command Structure. The role that must be exercised by the NDHQ when a natural disaster could happen may be exercised by the deployable joint HQ which will be established with that specific aim prior the natural disaster taking place, improving in this way the effectiveness of the humanitarian assistance response.

15. *Ibid.*, 68.

When the JTF and its JHQ have been deployed to accomplish the foreign humanitarian assistance as in this hypothetical case, the commander of the JTF will develop its functions through the direct arrangement of personnel, equipment and communications that the NDHQ issues to him. If those elements are not well-integrated in a unified task force prior to the initiation of the operations, then that could be the cause of a delay at the beginning of operations.¹⁶ The JTF would be organized on functional lines, and then assigned forces are grouped by function into component commands, all of them subordinated to commander. The forming of functional components by the JTF aids in unity of command and effort, in centralized planning and decentralized execution. It simplifies tasking and reduces the span of control. However, the formation of its components requires the establishment of component headquarters and implies a case of more complex C2 architecture.

The NDHQ would specify directly how the JTF is to be organized. By this way, the decision making in the planning process to establish functional components could be less flexible, considering factors like: the size and complexity of the force, the tactical and technical situations, and force protection considerations, the need for coordination among the components and with other agencies, span of control, and the available infrastructure. The JTF must be capable of operating both as an independent unit or contributing to other joint force structures. Integrating its operations in this manner, the JTF will make their contribution to the assistance, but it will need to support the commander of the JTF; establishing a new type of command relationship based on defining the supported and supporting commanders for any given phase of the operation. The aim is to allow the commander of the JTF to emphasize his main effort in any given phase, without detailed tasks which detract from the component commanders' flexibility.

16. *Ibid.* 65.

COMMAND AND CONTROL PRINCIPLES

First, the joint HQ staff that is responsible for assisting the commander of the JTF to achieve the mission, supports the chain of command but is not part of it.¹⁷ Its purpose would be ensure that the commander could be well informed about of tactics, techniques, capabilities, needs and limitations of all the component parts of the JTF. That means the command is unique and indivisible, and its staff team is just part of the tools to make the job. For a JHQ which is deployed in a humanitarian assistance operation, this first principle is fully applicable. However it is so important the commander could assure, that nobody from his staff will issue an order not coming from his goals and intentions, principally because for any mistake that could be made, people in the host nation could exaggerate the consequences, and the risks for the JTF could scale up to a very dangerous situation.

Second, the joint HQ staff is headed by a Chief of staff, whose principal tasks are to organize, direct, supervise and coordinate all staff activities of the joint HQ; ensure the coordination of staff work with higher, subordinate and lateral commands; assist the commander in decision making; and assist the commander in directing and coordinating the execution of plans and orders.¹⁸ In the same example of humanitarian operations, the Chief of staff must allow the members of the staff to make the relations and coordination agreements through himself, looking for the best understanding with other forces and agencies in the humanitarian field. He has also to issue guidance to all members of the staff, to react in any special situation not making a consultation to him.

17. Escuela Superior de Guerra, *MANUAL DE ESTADO MAYOR, LIBRO PRIMERO*, Primera Parte, Cap.1, 4-5

18. *Ibid.* 6

Third, the joint staff has no authority independent of the commander; its influence is derived from the commander and is exercised in his name. The joint HQ staff has never to interfere with the relationships between a senior and subordinate commander. In the same manner, the joint HQ staff would not reject proposals or requests from a subordinate commander without the commanders' directions.¹⁹ In this principle, the main value of the staff work is being described, because to assure fulfilment of the commander orders, it is needed from part of the subordinated commanders, a full understanding of those orders. The members of the JHQ staff are the ones to transmit both the issues, orders and directions of, and returns and reports to, the commander. Then JHQ staff must take care in the form and manners they refer to those other commanders, and it also has to assure no distortions in the flow of information. That has a remarkable importance in the international domain where the humanitarian operations are being developed. This third principle must be taken into account in supporting the civil environment; governmental and nongovernmental organizations are to be treated by the staff personnel under the same criterion.

COMMANDER AND THE EXERCISE OF COMMAND

When a JTF will be deployed to accomplish a foreign humanitarian assistance operation, command and control of the JTF must be exercised in a decentralized manner.²⁰ The JTF commander has total authority over the full components of the task force. However, the results are more complicated in the multinational environment; it will demand freedom to improve coordination with other governments implicated in the same operation and with the host nation. The commander must be the link between the strategic humanitarian objectives of the tasking government and the units he leads at the tactical level, establishing a centralized control.

19. Escuela Superior de Guerra, *MANUAL DE ESTADO MAYOR, LIBRO CUARTO*, Primera Parte, Cap.1, 7-12.

20. *Ibid.* 13.

In accordance with the doctrine, the contingent of the JTF must be commanded by a sole commander who will be assigned with Operational Command (OPCOM). This commander needs to establish a strong control of his subordinated units, to assure the accomplishment of the mission within the scope of the assistance operations and following the roles of that kind of humanitarian supporting operations. Nevertheless, the situation in the host country could turn into chaos, due to the loss of capacity to regulate the basic services and the civil aid, and because of the incapacity to supply security and surveillance. Then, the risks for the operation could scale to high levels; this means that personnel involved in the mission could be transformed in a target and the enemy could be anybody from the civil population. Then, the commander must improve his control and the security support must be increased to mitigate those risks.

In a case like that, the commander of the JTF will confront problems within a *sui-generis* environment; it means the problems in the assistance operation cannot be predicted, especially the sensible situation of the damaged country, the unpredictability of the behaviour of the local population, the local political development and the possibility of many misunderstandings. Under all those conditions, the commanders of the participant troops in the operation, from the highest one to the last lieutenant and sergeant, have to be able to solve the different kinds of practical and individual problems within the course of their own jobs. The great challenge in these kinds of operations is the requirement for commanders in all the hierarchical levels who could participate in the mission, to be “thinking commanders” and not just “rule-following commanders.” Therefore, there exists the requirement of a command and control system in which responsibilities and authorities are delegated throughout the command line in order to stimulate initiative and leadership at all levels. There must be enough freedom to make decisions in the situation that it is facing, but operating within general guidelines and in accordance with the commander’s intent. This system is well-known under the name of “**mission command**”.

The essence of mission command is based on autonomy of action, clarity of objectives, adequacy of means, and trust between commanders; it always is vital to ensure that every level of command has understood enough of the intentions of the higher command to enable it to fulfil its goals, in accordance with the whole humanitarian objectives. Then senior commanders in the humanitarian task force should not order to their subordinated unit commanders, more than is absolutely necessary, but they should ensure that the goal is clear. For every unit these will be a individual area of operations; this must be clearly defined as its own area of responsibility within the freedom of unit commanders, whose responsibility will be to exploit their own situations to the benefit of the whole assistance operation.

In México this system of command and control is part of its doctrine. The Mexican Armed Forces has senior and junior officers in the study of the mission command concepts and their implications in the accomplishment of a mission. However, the command and control structure in the Mexican Armed Forces has been based in the long traditional National Army, which was born at the end of the Mexican Revolution. This is actually known as the Mexican Army and Air Force and represents a great and well underpinned institution with a strong organization. It has been possible to achieve in this institution, commanders with great authority and troops with a high fulfilment of their duties. Moreover, in Mexico has been possible to share a good understanding of doctrine, and its officers have gotten an effective system of command, which also ensured cohesion among their subordinates. So this structure is a quit far from the implementation of the mission command.

The MEXAAF has been involved in a long war against the narco-production and narco-traffic, in its own territory; in all those operations to defeat that failed organization and people who support it the Mexican Officers have proved their authority and willingness taking decisions in real time at a low level of command. They have known that it is better to take a wrong decision

immediately than to not take a decision at all. However, the conditions of these counter narcotic operations are based within the domestic environment, where the performance of the enemy is probably known by the officers, in an ambiance where behaviour could be relatively predictable, and then the decision making process could be based on concrete knowledge.

The problem about a possible confrontation within the accomplishment of a humanitarian assistance mission is a quite low, but it is not nonexistent, especially in a multiethnic and multicultural environment. In the hypothetical case that the confrontation could happen, the unit commanders would engage their actions against an enemy characterized by his unknown roles to play and his unconventional techniques. Under these conditions the threats could come from any part of the area of responsibility, at any time and from anybody who is working in the operations, either from inside or from outside of that area, within the multinational environment of these operations, Mexican officers currently do not have experience operating in this type of scenario, and thus it is difficult to them to experience the exercise of mission command, so they could find it hard to delegate authority; there is much hard work to do in this domain.

MAKING A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE CFC2 AND C2MEX

COMMAND STRUCTURE

The Minister of National Defence (MND) in México is the high command of the army and the air force, exercising the office of Principal at the DND. This duality of functions implies to the MND, the necessity to achieve his duties as commander of the armed forces and to play a political role as a politician in the Mexican government. Whereas in the Armed Forces of México there exists the Ministry of the Navy with its own framework. In Canada, the command structure of a Joint staff with a CDS being separated from the functions of the MND makes possible to that authority, to focus in the lead of the CF; this implies a faster and better integration of the JTF to provide humanitarian assistance, in a given case.

OPERATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

The territorial commanders undertake the achievement of the strategic and operational objectives, sending orders and directions to the great unit commanders. The HQs of these commanders have their principal role in planning, organizing and directing the conduct of routine and domestic operations. Then, when the necessity to deploy a JTF in foreign operations could arise for the Mexican armed forces, all the staff work must take place in separated HQs from the Mexican Navy and MEXAAF, to accomplish that mission and to assure the National objectives. In this case it will be necessary to integrate the JHQ with different personnel for each case that the JTF must be deployed.

Whereas, to support foreign assistance, México could deploy the disaster assistance task force (DATF), whose principal elements are based in the first regional territorial command. This force could provide support in the international ambiance being conformed from the units and operational HQs of the territorial commands.

Mexican doctrine has only one category of staff appointments, the General Staff. That represent for these staff personnel, the challenge to attend by itself to all the personal staff and special staff responsibilities. Finally, in the general staff of the CF operations, the commander of a JTF is assisted by six different subcomponents, from the J-1 to the J-6, all of them coordinating different aspects of the staff work. In the Mexican operations, the commander just has four subcomponents, however the J3 achieve the responsibilities of the J6, and the J1 achieve the responsibilities of the J5.²¹

21. Escuela Superior de Guerra, *MANUAL DE ESTADO MAYOR, LIBRO PRIMERO*, Primera Parte, Cap.2, 23-45.

THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE C2MEX

STRENGTHS

As we could see in the analysis above, the C2 in the Mexican Forces operations, in the hypothetical case of a foreign humanitarian assistance could be accomplished by granting the commander of the JTF with the total authority. Moreover, such an approach would provide the necessary flexibility to permit the establishment of a liaison between the commander of the JTF and the NDHQ, to build a linkage that ensures the accomplishment of the National assistance aims.

The NDHQ would provide the JTF with a deployable JHQ as a JTFHQ, constituting this JTF and its corresponding JHQ with different elements from the Territorial Command, which would function as static formation-based HQs. The JTF could be organized on functional lines; forming functional components to provide the assistance, by the JTF aids in unity of command and effort, in centralized planning and decentralized execution. This approach would make possible an increase in the capabilities of the disaster assistance response forces. Territorial Commands could be capable to accomplish any humanitarian operation mission within the National territory, by the development of the national plan for assistance disaster DN-III-E.

The General Staff of the JHQ is able to provide advice to the commander of the JTF and its subordinate commanders, by collecting and analysing information on which the commander of the assistance JTF bases decisions and plans, through different subcomponents that help him in the staffing work of the HQ. The S-1 (J1) to the S-4 (J4), all of each coordinates different aspects of the staff. Moreover, the staff work could be developed to fulfill the staff principles, which then describe the main value of the staff work.

WEAKNESSES

MND as the chairman of the Ministry of Defence operates at the strategic level; however he is at the same time the High Command of the MEXAAF. He is also implicated in the operational level and he also has to decide how to employ the armed forces by issuing orders and instructions to its land and air components. This could place a lot of responsible 0tiot theamend

The HQs include in their internal structure other elements that are to aid the commander with aides-de-camp and executive assistants, personal needs and work and visits programme arrangements; there are other expert components that assist the commander in technical, administrative, legal and operational affairs. However, these elements and experts are not part of the staff, because within the structure of the HQ is just the general staff, that means that the general staff must be able to assure the correct development of the duties for the three staff categories.²²

For the case of the humanitarian assistance operations, the S-4 section of the general staff would be responsible to supply available resources of the deploying state and local governments in alleviating the damage, hardship, or suffering caused thereby. Then Militaries who accomplish their responsibility in this section are to gain the ability to work within a multinational and multiagency environment, with either victims or no victims, in order to provide the humanitarian aid with the effectiveness that is required.

Mexican armed forces do not have much experience working in the international environment. Moreover, the exercise of the authority in the JTF would become more complicated in the multinational and multiagency environment, due to the necessity of coordination with other governments involved in the same humanitarian operation, with the host nation and with other departments. The JTF could be organized on functional lines to aid in unity of command and effort and increase the capabilities of the disaster assistance response forces. However, the formation of its components requires the establishment of component headquarters and implies a case of more complex C2 architecture.

22. Escuela Superior de Guerra, *MANUAL DE ESTADO MAYOR, LIBRO PRIMERO*, Cuarta Parte, Cap.1, 75.

At the tactical level of command in a foreign humanitarian assistance operation, it would be necessary to exercise C2 based in the development of the mission command system. Mexican officers do not have experience in the exercise of mission command in foreign humanitarian assistance, especially in a multinational and multiagency scenario. Despite this lack of experience the real exercise of mission command in humanitarian and assistance operations will likely be required of the MEXAAF in their anticipated participation in a multinational and interagency response effort.

CONCLUSION

The Mexican Army and Air Force primary concerned with the welfare of the Mexican society, Mexican soldiers, in so many times have served assisting others in need in all the National territory. Nevertheless, we have a real awareness about the risk of disasters around the world. We also know that the character of the security environment, in a country that can be devastated by a natural disaster, may turn into a higher threat, and then humanitarian assistance could be involved within an unpredictable environment. In those operational conditions, a great part of the success will be based in the correct execution of command and control of the deployed forces.

This paper has made a modest analysis of the C2 of the Mexican forces operations, as part of a former effort, to ensure the right command and control system and operational structure, for any task force that Mexico may deploy overseas with humanitarian purposes. However, further deep analysis is required, in order to get the effective military performance that Mexican forces needs with respect to disaster relief.

Nevertheless, as a result of this analysis we can observe that, the actual structure of C2 of the DND framework in Mexico presents some differences in comparison with the Canadian structure. The Mexican MND has two different roles, one as the chairman of the Ministry of Defence and other as the High Commander of the MEXAAF; that duality demands of him, to be able to maintain both an strategic vision like a politician and an operational sense to lead the Mexican forces as its commander. In other countries these two posts are occupied by two different people.

For that reason, it is shown on the challenge to perform the framework of command in the DND, and review the actual structure of command and control in the NDHQ, analyzing the possibility to establish environmental HQs and the joint NDHQ that actually do not exist in the Mexican armed forces.

The C2 system in the Mexican forces operations has a very deep-rooted structure, which is based in a *post*-revolutionary tradition, taking pride in its officers' obedience and achieving a very solid organization such like in the Napoleonic era. Nevertheless, in today's security environment, where unpredictability has become the dominant theme, the great challenge in foreign assistance operations is the requirement of commanders at all the hierarchical levels who participate in the mission, to be "thinking commanders" and not just "rule-following commanders". The improvement of the mission command as a variant of the C2 in Mexican operations is needed, via its international participation. Our officers cannot continue just accumulating the best theoretical knowledge in the operational domain; they have to engage in the job and put theory in practice, within the multinational and multiagency environment.

Success in foreign assistance operations of the Mexican army will ultimately depend on the professionalism, skill and training of its people, but these will be gotten not only at home. All members of the staff must be trained to work within a multinational and multiagency environment, in order to enhance their ability to work with local populations and to improve their capability to address threats both at home and overseas.

The final conclusion here is that the C2 system of Mexican forces operations is suitable for humanitarian assistance operations in the domestic domain, if the area of responsibility is placed inside the National territory, but this C2 system is not at all suitable for this kind of operations when they have to be developed overseas. The C2 system in Mexico has a good and solid basis, nevertheless it is needed to review its roots, strengths and weaknesses, making a deep analysis to identify what necessary changes and adjustments may be needed, in accordance with the main goals and strategic objectives of the Nation, and depending on its capability. The MEXAAF are an institution that deserves this great effort.

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