National Defence Défense nationale

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INTELLIGENCE REACHBACK FRAMEWORK FOR THE CANADIAN ARMY

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JCSP 46

Service Paper

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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 46 – PCEMI 46
2019 – 2020

SERVICE PAPER - ÉTUDE MILITAIRE

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Word Count: 2,341

Nombre de mots : 2.341

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AIM

1. The aim of this Service Paper is to institute a framework in the establishment of an optimal force structure regarding intelligence reach back support in the Canadian Army. This will lead to a concept (vs. a constant formula) to be applied owing to the varied Canadian Army (CA) Force Generation (FG) requirements for Canadian Armed Forces missions. Further research on the operationalization of this framework should be completed measuring against the Canadian Army Intelligence Regiment (CA Int Regt) structure, resources and capabilities.

INTRODUCTION

2. Intelligence reach back support has increasingly been adopted by Western military forces as a way to reduce numbers of deployed personnel while meeting the operational requirements. Reach back can be defined as "where resources, capabilities and expertise are at a physical distance from the area of interest, supporting the people in the area to perform their tasks[1]". However, reach back, as a concept, can be interpreted and established in two distinctive and complementary ways: a) Reach back is employed when the expertize for a specialized topic is resident outside the operational area. This could be to a higher headquarter (HQ) for more complex analysis or specific to a unique capability of the Intelligence Community (IC); or, b) Reach back to a section of the organization, who has not deployed, as a mean of limiting the amount of deployed personnel while maintaining the same level of support to the Commander.

3. While the Canadian Armed Forces have established the former reach back capability in the Joint Targeting Intelligence Centre (JTIC) at the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC), this Service Paper will cover the latter concept. This will be done from a CA perspective and will not account the "Joint Enablers" that are Force Generated (FG) by Canadian Forces Intelligence Command (CFINTCOM) and Assistant Deputy Minister Information Management (ADM IM). In analyzing the concept, the focus will be through the guiding intelligence principles, analysis of professional literature regarding specific cases, the implications of threats and commander's risk with the final view of proposing a framework in building a CA reach back capability. I will conclude with some leadership considerations to ensure the effectiveness of the capability.

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[1] Rypkema, J. A., I. E. van Bemmel, K. van Dongen, R. van der Kleij, S. Kurstjens, Lee, M. D. E. van der, A. van Ringelesteijn, I. Weima, and M. C. Wiebes. 2006. "A Reachback Concept for the Future Command Post." . https://www.narcis.nl/publication/RecordID/oai:tudelft.nl:uuid:c5fb94b2-a3a0-4b8b-a287-974cbf3c9472.

DISCUSSION
Role of Intelligence and Principles

4. The role of the Intelligence is "to provide decision makers, commanders […]with intelligence that is timely and relevant […] for the conduct of [military] operations"[2]. A key task of the Intelligence function is ensuring the commander and his staff have the appropriate knowledge of enemy activities, in time and space, over the battlefield. Furthermore, it is required to provide predictive analysis, of the events, and how these will affect the fulfillment of both friendly forces and the adversary.

5. Intelligence principles are foundational to the success of any operations; they act as time tested guide which any professional should soundly base themselves. Of the eight Intelligence principles, three are of directly related to success of any reach back capability, namely: Timeliness, Responsiveness and centralized coordination[3]. An understanding and application of these principles, in the construct of a reach back capability, will be of critical importance. The development of any model will required to be weighed against those principles.

Lessons Lived from Intelligence Reachback

6. Allied experience regarding Intelligence reach back support is not well documented. However, there is some information available regarding the United States (US) military regarding distributed support which indicates that operational size formations were directed to develop reach back capabilities to meet deployed forces restrictions in the amount of forces forward deployed. Three different US Forces examples are noted below which look at the ratio of deployed forces vs. reach back support. All of the examples identified are for Brigade size formation and above.

7. During the deployment of a United States (US) Marine Expeditionary Brigade in Afghanistan (MEB-A), there were 160 deployed Intelligence Personnel and another 130 non-deployed Marines providing support in a support manner[4]. Regarding the tasks, it has been identified that the main Intelligence focus of the non-deployed is towards operational and strategic reach back; bluntly addressed, the analysis focused on the "30,000 feet view of the problem"[5].

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[2] Canada. Department Of National Defence. B-GJ-005-200/FP-001. Canadian Forces Joint Publication 2-0 – Intelligence. Ottawa : DND Canada, 2011. p.2-3, 2-4

[3] ibid

[4] Reiley, Matthew A. and William T. Wilburn. 2015. "Operationalizing the MAGTF Intelligence Center." *Marine Corps Gazette* 99 (12): 55.

[5] Ibid

8. Separately, the US Army I Corps G2 (staff function) would deploy between 32 to 45 Intelligence professionals while leaving another 35 to 45 soldiers in a reach back capacity[6]. While the forward deployed staff is to answer the immediate demands of the Commander and the staff, reach back personnel supports collation tasks, produces and updates the Enemy Situation, supports targeting and produces long term all-source analysis answering the Commander's Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIRs)[7].

9. At a lower level, during the deployment of a Brigade Combat team from the 101st Airborne Division in Afghanistan, the reach back element was comprised of 23 Intelligence personnel[8] out of an estimated total of 96 individuals[9]. This team also included "single source" enabler (SIGINT, HUMINT, GEOINT) which were directly supporting their deployed counter parts. It can be inferred that only a small portion was dedicated to multi-sources analysis. From an intelligence analysis perspective, the team's all-sources support was limited to two products, one weekly and one bi-weekly[10].

10. From a Canadian perspective, a Scientific Report regarding Command and Control in the Canadian Forces was completed by the Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) on results regarding Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) reach back. The study indicates the successful passage of information however, shortcomings regarding timeliness were of significance[11]. Similarly, a Rand study revealed the general inability of reach back analysts to support decisions within a 72-hour window[12].

11. The key recurring theme from the above identified examples is the lack of a "formula" regarding the optimum split between the amount of deployed forces and the all-sources reach back support. However, it can be assessed that Brigade and above formation Intelligence Staff and units can have a greater capacity to create larger ratio reach back capability compared to smaller size formations. In the Canadian context, where the CA

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[6] Harlan, Jennifer and Bryan Myhre. 2019. "Synergize: Leveraging DCGS-A In Corps Intelligence Reachback Operations" *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin 42* (4): 10

[7] Ibid

[8] Wolfgang, Aaron and Keegan Guyer. "Intelligence Reachback Genesis." *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* 43, no. 2 (Apr, 2017): 31-32. https://search.proquest.com/docview/1889699652?accountid=9867.

[9] Lu, Grace. "Systemic Challenges within a Brigade Combat Team Military Intelligence Company." *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* 43, no. 2 (Apr, 2017): 20. https://search.proquest.com/docview/1889700012?accountid=9867.

[10] Wolfgang, Aaron and Keegan Guyer, *Intelligence Reachback Genesis*…, 31

[11] Bélanger, Michèle. "Scoping study synthesis. Command and Control Canadian Armed Forces of Tomorrow (C2CAF- T)." *Defence Research and Development Canada*, August 2016. 23

[12] Connable, Ben, Walter L. Perry, Abby Doll, Natasha Lander, and Dan Madden. 2014. *The Utility of Modeling and Analysis in the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars*: RAND Corporation. https://search.proquest.com/docview/1820763366.

force generates small Intelligence staff or units of soldiers for deployment, this formula could not be applied at the same ratio to meeting the intelligence requirements.

12. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that intelligence Reach back support is not well suited for the Intelligence principle of timeliness. The Intelligence reach back capability were identified to be best employed in a limited scope and where the analysis is oriented towards the production of reports that are routine in nature and not time sensitive. They mainly focused on "deep-dive", answering Requests for Information (RFIs) and weekly and bi-weekly products, likely the weekly INTSUMs. Owing to their routine nature, these outputs can be achieved under normal time restrains associated with a garrison work environment.

Minimum deployed personnel requirements, Threat and Commander's requirements

13. As in any operations, the size of the deployed intelligence personnel is scalable and dependent on the size of the Task Force supported, the type of mission, the threat and the Commander's Intelligence requirements. However, the deployed intelligence team should be able to support the following: a) the commander and staff of the HQ; b) planning; c) Collection Coordination Intelligence Requirements Management (CCIRM); d) an Intelligence production capability; and, e) Intelligence Liaison[13]. This will be referred as the baseline requirements for Intelligence support to operations. The number of individuals supporting these functions will vary and will be representative of the size of the maneuver element, the threat level and the complexity of the operating environment.

14. Prior to a decision regarding the establishment of a reach back capability, the deployed Commander should be informed on the risks vs. rewards associated with relying on the capability. The risk to be assumed by the Commander is having limited deployed Intelligence resources to meet the ever-changing nature of the battlespace[14]. It can be assumed that every commander and their staff will want to maintain a strong and capable staff forward to meet their demands[15]. The risk associated with a reach back capability is represented in the Intelligence principles of timeliness and responsiveness. Practically, the questions that need to be answered are: a) will having limited Intelligence analysis team forward increase the risk to Force? and, b) Will having a limited Intelligence analysis team increase the risk to Mission? Key to the success for the Intelligence staff and the Commander is to ensure there will be no reduction in timeliness and responsiveness by

[13] Canada. Department Of National Defence. *B-GJ-005-200/FP-001*..., p.4-8
[14] Rozic, Andrew. *Geospatial Intelligence at the Infantry Regiment*. Marine Corps Gazette, Marine Corps Gazette, May 2016, WE4
[15] Reiley, Matthew A. and William T. Wilburn. *Operationalizing the MAGTF Intelligence Center*…, 56.

shifting to a reach back capability thus not increasing the commander's risk through a lack of timely understanding of the threat.

16. The threat level should be considered when looking at a reach back model. The threat is based on the enemy intentions and capabilities towards our forces. In an environment where threat levels are low, the intelligence requirements for the commander are more likely to be routine and can be well supported from a reach back capability. However, high threat levels are indicative of volatile and changing environment which require rapid and more time sensitive assessment in support of the commander's and staff demands and requirements. In this case, the necessity to have a robust Intelligence organization forward deployed to meet the principles of timeliness and responsiveness is required. Regardless of threat level, the tasks of the reach back capability should remain focused on routine production (Intelligence Summaries or INTSUMs) or on supporting PIRs with "deep-dive" analysis.

Proposed framework

17. There are many variables that should be analyzed and accounted in the establishment of an Intelligence reach back capability. Owing that CAF deployments are all different, there is no single formula that can be established in defining the optimal division between deployed forces and reach back capability. However, tasks and threats should be considered and balanced against the intelligence principles of responsiveness and timeliness.

18. Practically, deployed forces should always have a minimum of Intelligence personnel to provide immediate advice to the commander and the staff. These capabilities should be constant regardless of the deployment but could vary in size. In developing the intelligence architecture, the reach back capability should be a ratio of forced with the forward deployed Intelligence element. This ratio should be related to the threat; in a low threat environment, the ratio of deployed to reach back could be low. However, in an operation where the threat to CAF personnel is high, the ratio of deployed to reach back personnel will increase to meet to increase responsiveness and timeliness (see graph in Annex 1).

Considerations in establishing a reachback concept

19. In the establishment of a reach back capability, there are some considerations that should be contemplated to ensure the success. While technical requirements (such as ensuring same systems access, VTC requirement, etc.) are essential, considerations should be placed on understanding and exploring Leadership issues in having a distributed operational support.

20. Reach back support is nascent within the CA and the CAF Intelligence Enterprise. In an environment where Intelligence personnel is a "low density/high commodity" resource, establishing a strong command relationship between the deployed and reach back elements is essential. Leading the institution, through ensuring the necessary force structure are in place, is essential to ensure mission success. Questions regarding work structures and flow should be considered as essential as having the required technical infrastructure. Such questions should be: a) who is in charge (deployed chain of command or local)? b) who do I report to? c) what is the tempo; do I need to work under the deployed time zone? and d) Am I considered "deployed" when it comes to garrison tasks? These will prove to be of significance and should be weighed against the Intelligence principles of timeliness, responsiveness and central coordination.

21. There have been little direct support instances of reach back and experience in the CA is sparse. Internal integration has been identified as a challenge by organizations that operate in a distributed fashion. Leading individuals by insuring routines, passage of information and building team work is difficult when individuals are working in close proximity and can prove to be increasingly more difficult when separated in time and space. Taking into account these considerations should be viewed as important as ensuring the timely delivery of analysis and products; they will provide a strong foundation for the reach back capability.

CONCLUSION

22. The concept of reach back Intelligence support has been debated by the CA and the CAF for a significant period of time. The concept allows the commander, who is authorized to deploy only a limited amount of forces, to maximize his troop composition with reduced impact to his Intelligence capability.

23. A strong reach back capability should not be predicated on a fix ratio formula of deployed forces to reach back personnel. However, it should account for tasks, threats and commander's risk; this will be different for each CAF mission and CA FG requirements.

24. Yet, this concept of support has limitations regarding the Intelligence principles of timeliness and responsiveness. Therefore, building a reach back capability should account for the type of tasks where these principles are not considered as primary factors. While there will always be a need for deploying a strong Intelligence team in order to meet the current and short term requirements of the commander and its staff, the reach back capability will greatly increase the value of the overall Intelligence team by actively complementing with longer term and routine analysis.

RECOMMENDATION

25. It is recommended that the CA G2 initiates a study, applying the framework developed within this Service Paper, to analyze the viability of having a reachback capability. This study should be done in concert with the Canadian Army Intelligence Regiment (CA Int Regt) owing they own the most amount of troops and have access to Intelligence infrastructure. As a test to the viability of analysis, the reachback concept should be wargame against the mission where the CA Int Regt FG the most amount of troops.

26. Should the findings result in the identification of a suitable and sustainable for the CA Int Regt, discussion on the subject of reachback should be held with CJOC. These discussions should focus on risk to the deployed commander. These discussions should clearly outline the Intelligence reachback architecture and outline the risks to Forces and risk to Mission incurred.

ANNEX A – Graphical Display of Conceptual Deployed Forces to Reachback Ratio

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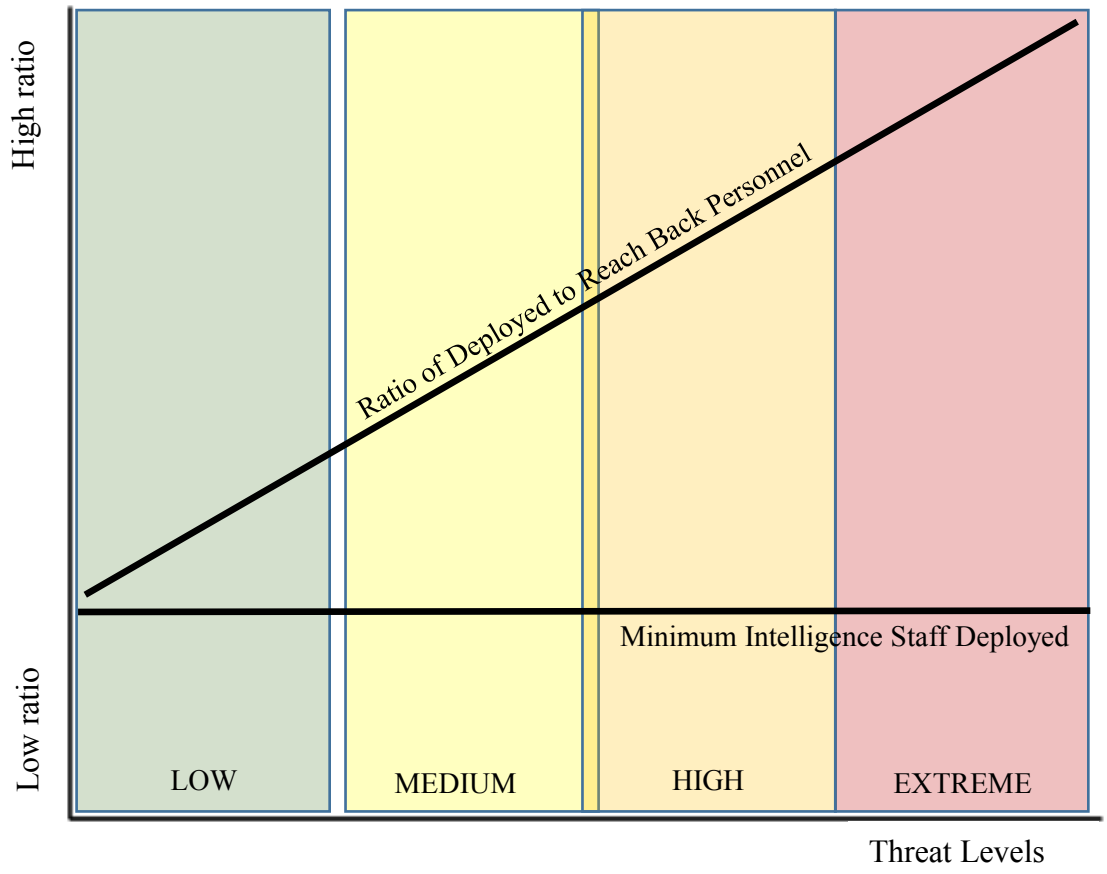

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