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## CAPABILITY BASED PLANNING, IS IT STILL VIABLE?

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**JCSP 43**

***Exercise Solo Flight***

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EXERCISE *SOLO FLIGHT* – EXERCICE *SOLO FLIGHT*

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## INTRODUCTION

During the cold war and even much of the decade after that, the Canadian Forces (CF), as well as many of their allies, used a threat based approach to identify and plan future capability requirements for their military. At that time, the threat environment was well defined and focused mostly on the deterrence of the Soviet threat in Europe. Therefore, a threat based approach to capability building was an excellent tool that delivered the required analytical outputs in support to decision making process. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990 came the end of the Cold War. NATO countries were no longer threatened by its long-time foe the “Russian Bear”. The threat environment was now defined by the lack of a central adversary and an increasing ambiguous threat composed of multiple conventional and non-conventional threats. States were no longer considered the adversary. Instead, the potential adversaries would now present themselves in the form of insurgencies, terrorists and extremist religious groups. Because of the changes to the threat environment and the reduction of Canada’s military budget, the CF was forced to consider changing their force development strategy. This new proposed Defence planning approach had to consider a multitude of potential threats and also take in consideration the political and fiscal realities of Canada in a new post-cold war environment. In June 2000, the Department of National Defence (DND) and the CF adopted the Capability Based planning process (CBP).<sup>1</sup> Today, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) still uses the CBP as an analytical tool to assist senior leadership in making Force Development (FD) decisions for CAF capability requirements within the

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<sup>1</sup> Canada. Department of National Defence. *Capability Based Planning for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces* Ottawa: Vice Chief of Defence Staff, 2002, 2.

next 5 to 30-year timeframe.<sup>2</sup> However, since its introduction within the CAF, the CBP process has been very controversial. Many have criticized its inability to deliver the capabilities to defeat the adversary and use the outcome of operations in Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria to support their position. They also disagree with the fundamental premise that threat base planning (TBP) is no longer a valid force development tool for the CAF.

This paper will examine the current DND policy of using the CBP a core analytical tool within the CAF Force Development process.<sup>3</sup> Using as analytical framework, the Walt and Gilson policy analysis model (Context, Content, and Process),<sup>4</sup> it will demonstrate that the CBP sometimes struggle to provide the CAF leadership with adequate detailed analysis capable of reflecting the FD requirements to deal with the complexity of the future threat environment. It will identify three arguments that explain the limitations of the CBP process. First, contextually. Almost 30 year later, one could argue that the threat of state on state warfare is still very present and, arguably, the threat actors are the same as some 30 years ago. Consequently, the argument to use CBP rather than TBP because a central adversary is no longer identifiable is no longer valid. Second aspect: the content. As the CBP process is focused on capability requirements addressing a multitude of missions and tasks, it sometimes lacks the detailed analysis required to deal with the increasing nature and complexity of the future threat environment defined by a multitude of increasingly specialised capabilities and strategies. Third, the process.

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<sup>2</sup> Canada. Department of National Defence, *Capability Based Planning handbook, for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces Ottawa*: Chief of Force Development, 2014, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Rempel, Defence R&D Canada, *An Overview of the Canadian Forces Second Generation Capability Based Planning Analytical Process*. Center for Operational and Analysis, 2010, i.

<sup>4</sup> Walt, Gill, and L. Gilson. "Reforming the health sector in developing countries: the central role of policy analysis." *Health Policy Planning* 9, no. 4 (1994): 354  
<https://academic.oup.com/heapol/article/9/4/353/649125/Reforming-the-health-sector-in-developing>

Again, because of its general approach to problem solving, the CBP creates increasing difficulty to determine the roles and responsibilities of the delivery of joint capabilities for a required mission type. This said, because of CBPs ability to better integrate other considerations such as government priorities and fiscal constraints, it does remain a very viable option. This is why this paper will not attempt discredit the CBP process as a whole, it will however suggest that the complexity of the threat environment has become such that the CAF needs to consider enhancing the CBP process in support of the FD process. Therefore, this will culminate by proposing an alternative option where both approaches could be considered, therefore better addressing the requirements for a broad and flexible type force analytical approach as well as more focused approach enabling the definition of specialized “niche” types of capabilities.

### **Policy analysis: The Walt and Gilson, policy analysis model**

Before discussing the CBP and its implementation, it will be useful for the reader to understand the *Walt and Gilson* analytical framework. Policy analysis is the analysis by government officials and non-government organizations directed at “assisting policymakers in choosing preferred courses of actions by clarifying the problem, outlining the alternative solutions and displaying trade-offs among their consequences.”<sup>5</sup> The authors, Gill Walt and Lucy Gilson, offer a simple and useful analytical model that introduces the concepts of Context, Content and Process (to include actors). For this paper, context will refer to the social and geopolitical factors that created the requirement to move from the TBP process to CBP process. Content will focus on the objectives of

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<sup>5</sup> Warren E. Walker. “Policy Analysis: A Systematic Approach to Supporting Policymaking in the Public Sector”, *Journal of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis*, 2000,11  
[http://www.hau.gr/resources/toolip/doc/2012/05/10/walker\\_2000\\_policyanalysisapproach.pdf](http://www.hau.gr/resources/toolip/doc/2012/05/10/walker_2000_policyanalysisapproach.pdf)

the policy (what it aimed to do), while process will discuss the strategy in the implementation of the CBP more specifically, the interaction with the stakeholders.

### **Capability Based Planning vs threat based planning**

#### *Capability Based Planning*

The CBP process was introduced as an alternative to TBP. It was to give the Chief Force Development (CFD) a “strategy that focused less on who might threaten us or where we might be threatened, and more on how we might be threatened and what we need to do to deter and defend against such threats.”<sup>6</sup> The intent here was to plan and acquire the capabilities to defeat and deter any type of threat within any operational environment while considering the priorities and limitations of the Canadian Government.<sup>7</sup> The fundamental premise here is that there was no longer one single threat we can focused on and, therefore, one must prepare a generic force capable of adapting to many theater of operations and conducting multiple types of tasks. The three year CBP cycle is designed to deliver an assessment that “highlights assessed capability strengths and deficiencies related to a particular or combination of future scenarios.”<sup>8</sup> Using ten generic scenarios, it identifies the required capabilities to complete a generic task reflecting the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS) mission statements. As these capabilities are only described in a broad and general manner, environmental planners and Defense decision makers are able to select the most cost effective and efficient options to meet identified capability requirements. From a managerial perspective this

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<sup>6</sup>Donald Rumsfeld Secretary of Defense. “Report of the Quadrennial Review”, Department of Defence, Washington, DC, September 2001, iv.

<sup>7</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, Capability Based Planning handbook, ... 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

functional policy, if done correctly, delivers a range of options where Defence decision makers can produce a flexible and adaptable force that will enable the CAF to meet the six-core mission mandate as described in the CFDS.<sup>9</sup> The fundamental weakness with CBP is that it considers a general approach to warfare. As described by some “In embracing CBP, we have become focused on a fog bank—the nameless, faceless adversary who may be technologically advanced and may even be a “near peer” in a similarly undefined way”.<sup>10</sup> CBP seems to disconnect the threat environment and the actors from our thought process which arguably goes against our fundamental understanding of how to conceive military strategy. In order to ensure efficiency and implementing cost saving frameworks, the process focusses on how to complete task rather than how to defeat the enemy.

#### *Threat-Based Planning*

On the other hand, the threat-Based Planning used during the 1980s, focused on an identifiable enemy and a realistic adversarial scenario. This approach allowed the analysts to determine weaknesses, and then to come up with a concept of operations and specific types of “niche” capabilities to deal with the adversary as well as the operational environment. There are a multitude of examples of nations having used this approach to support their force development requirements. For example, the U.S. Army’s development of its Air Land Battle doctrine in the 1980s against the Soviet Union.<sup>11</sup> Or,

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<sup>9</sup> Canada. Department of National Defence. *Canada First Defence Strategy*. Ottawa, On: 2005, 10.

<sup>10</sup> Col. Michael W. Pietrucha, USAF, Essay: “Capability-Based Planning and the Death of Military Strategy”, news.usni (August 2015): 2. <https://news.usni.org/2015/08/05/essay-capability-based-planning-and-the-death-of-military-strategy>

<sup>11</sup> Tony Balasevicius, “Is It Time To Bring Back Threat-Based Planning?” The Mackenzie Institute, (04 July 2016): 2, <http://mackenzieinstitute.com/is-it-time-to-bring-back-threat-based-planning/>.

the Chinese whole of government approach to deterring U.S. influence in the South China Sea<sup>12</sup> and, more recently, the “Gerasimov doctrine”,<sup>13</sup> a new Russian approach to a non-linear type of warfare where nations would increasingly adopt irregular and conventional tactics and capabilities to fight a hybrid war. Therefore, the true added value of TBP is the ability to “link strategy, operating concepts and the acquisition of equipment to exploit specific weakness.”<sup>14</sup> Conversely, the main critique of TBP is that, because it focuses on a specific adversary, there is a danger of developing specific types of niche capabilities that would be ill suited against other potential adversaries or operational environments. Therefore, this approach is, by many, considered a very inflexible and a risky policy to adopt.

As you can see, these two approaches are very different in nature and each present certain advantages and disadvantages. In the next three sections, this paper will further investigate the context, content and process of CBP and identify why it may struggle to provide the CAF leadership with adequate detailed analysis capable of reflecting the FD requirements to deal with the complexity of the future threat environment.

### **CONTEXT: Capability Based Planning, is it still viable?**

Arguably, the change in the context of the geopolitical and threat environment of the 1990 was the most significant aspect associated with the change in FD policy of using CBP rather than TBP. As mentioned previously, the end of the Cold War meant that the state on state threat had all but disappeared and that warfare would be defined by internal

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<sup>12</sup> Department of National Defence, United States of America, *The Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy*: Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2015, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Monaghan, “The war in Russia’s Hybrid Warfare”. *Character of war program*, (2016): 1, [www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/issues/9\\_Monagan/pdf](http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/issues/9_Monagan/pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Tony Balasevicius, “*Is It Time To Bring Back Threat-Based Planning?*” ...,1.

conflict often characterized as non-conventional or “insurgency” type.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the CAF had to prepare to meet these post-Cold War challenges while under new fiscal constraints.<sup>16</sup> However, almost 30 year later, this paper argues that the threat of state on state warfare is still relevant and that threat is not that much different from some 30 years ago. Therefore, the argument to use CBP versus TBP because a central adversary was no longer identifiable is no longer valid. In addition, it will also propose that, contrary to popular beliefs, a developmental approach to “niche” type capabilities can potentially be less expensive than a multi-purpose force thus, giving added consideration to the requirement of a threat based approach versus a generic approach such a CBP.

As discussed, this paper puts forward that the threat of a state on state conflicts is still a key defense consideration. Additionally, producing a list of state actors that would hypothetically present a threat to Canada and its NATO allies would be relatively easy to do. Col. Michael W. Pietrucha of the USAF, had proposed in his essay titled, *Capability-Based Planning and the Death of Military Strategy* that “Realistically, there are only four adversary countries worth considering, mostly because they pose a credible and significant threat to the United States or to the world order”.<sup>17</sup> According to him, these countries were: China, Iran, North Korea and Russia. Of course, for Canada, as our national interest and foreign policies are not as ambitious as other countries, this list would most likely be even smaller. This is why the argument of using CBP rather than TBP because of our inability to identify a specific threat is, at the very least, questionable. Of course, there is no longer just one threat, but the reality is, there are no more than two

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<sup>15</sup> H.H. Gaffney, *Capability-Based planning, in the Coming Global Security Environment*. Center for Strategic Studies, Virginia, 2004, 5.

<sup>16</sup> National Defence, *Strategic Capability Planning for the Canadian...*, 6.

<sup>17</sup> Col. Michael W. Pietrucha, USAF, *Essay: Capability-Based Planning and the Death of Military Strategy*, ...,6.

or three major hypothetical adversaries. Of course, it is important to note that defense analysis has assessed that a Canadian involvement in a hypothetical state-on-state conflicts should be considered as “exceptionally unlikely”.<sup>18</sup> This paper does not dispute this assessment; however, the fact remains that 30 years later, NATO is still maneuvering against the mighty “Russian Bear” in Europe. Russia is still using cold war tactics with very recognizable “Warsaw pact equipment”.<sup>19</sup> Canadian fighters are still intercepting Russian strategic bomber flights off Canada’s Northern Coasts,<sup>20</sup> and Canada is still deploying troops in support of NATO’s effort to deter Moscow’s ambitions in Eastern Europe. Additionally, in other parts of the world such as Asia, the threat of North Korea has not changed and in fact has become increasingly perplexing.<sup>21</sup> In the Middle East, the Iranian threat to allied interest and arguably world economy is still omnipresent.

This said, one does have to acknowledge the fact that, our changing technological environment has, in the last 30 years, created new challenging implications for defense and security organizations. The information environment has had a huge impact on the way and the speed with which we manage information. Social networking has increased global connectivity, Intelligence collection, and Cyber warfare has stretched the boundaries of the battlefield. In light of his, one must conclude that while the advancement in technologies has indeed shaped the threat environment rendering it more

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<sup>18</sup> Canada Departement of National Defence, *Analysis Of Options To Sustain A Canadian Forces Fighter Capability: Task 2: Chief Of Force Development Mission Needs Analysis Final Report* Ottawa; CFD, 2012, 13.

<sup>19</sup> Andrew Monaghan, “The war in Russia’s Hybrid Warfare”. *Character of war program*, (2016): 1, [www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/issues/9\\_Monagan/pdf](http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/issues/9_Monagan/pdf)

<sup>20</sup> The star.com, “Canadian jets intercept Russian bombers for first time in 2 years” accessed 8 May 2017, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/04/21/canadian-jets-intercept-russian-bombers-for-first-time-in-2-years.html>

<sup>21</sup> Aljazeera, “North Korea warns of 'catastrophic consequences’” accessed 8May 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/north-korea-warns-catastrophic-consequences-170430171123329.html>

complex, the fact remains, the threat actors have remained the same. Therefore, if Canada and its allies are to create new capabilities to adequately deter or deny these specific threats, they are now even more pressed to create an in-depth understanding of the adversaries' intent, capabilities, strategies and operational environment. This is where CBP, in its current form, may fall short of delivering to the senior leadership, the analytical rigor to support the force development of a future force capable of ensuring mission success in the contemporary threat environment.

Furthering our reflection, one must underline the fact that a conventional state on state type of conflict is by far the most easily identifiable threat. In order to have a holistic view associated to the analytical requirements for FD, one must also consider the other spectrum of future conflicts, the unconventional threat from non-state actors. Therefore, one cannot disregard the current and future role for Canada, as a NATO contributing member to multiple types of missions such as in Rwanda, Croatia, our involvement in the fight against terror in Afghanistan or more recently, our contribution to the operations in Syria and Eastern Europe. Our continued involvement in these types of mission is a clear expression of the role that the Canadian government has given to the CAF. As stated in the 2008 CFDS document: "The CFDS puts forward clear roles and missions for the armed forces, outlining a level of ambition that will enable them to protect Canadians from the variety of threats and challenges they may face in the years to come."<sup>22</sup> Again, this policy decision reinvigorated the requirement for Defense managers to establish a FD process that enables a multi-purposes force capable of delivering robust expeditionary

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<sup>22</sup> Canada. Department of National Defence. *Canada First Defence Strategy...*,10.

capabilities across the environments (Land, Air, and Maritime),<sup>23</sup> in a multi-role mandate. However, some defense analysts have argued that maintaining a multi-purpose force has become increasingly expensive.<sup>24</sup> With the current reduction of investment in Defence (less than 1% of GDP 2017),<sup>25</sup> they submit that if Canada wishes to maintain a relevant multipurpose force, it will be faced with two choices. “To make a sustained increase to its defence budget or consider the option of re-evaluating the capability requirements of its armed forces and fielding a more specialized military”. They conclude that, within the current context, the second option would be the only way to ensure that the CAF could continue to make a relevant contribution to future allied operations. In support to this argument, one only has to consider our recent set of contributions to recent operations in Afghanistan and Syria. These contributions were all very much focused on specific “niche” capabilities such as host nation military training, air to air refueling and Joint Targeting. Of interest, in 2010, NATO submitted to its nation members an initiative to reduce redundant capabilities within the alliance by suggestion that contributing nations should consider developing “niche” capabilities in support of future NATO missions, this was called the “Smart Defense” initiative.<sup>26</sup> The intent here was again, to avoid “unnecessary duplication” and focus on cost effectiveness. In this context, one must ask the following question: in view of our policy statement and current capability requirements, is CBP the best approach? One must consider that our current FD processes may not deliver the current analysis required to support the delivery of a relevant force

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<sup>23</sup> Peter Jones, Philippe Lagasse, *Rhetoric versus reality: Canadian defence planning in time of austerity*, Defense Security Analysis, University of Ottawa, 2012, 141.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 141.

<sup>25</sup> The star.com, “Canada’s defence spending increases but still half of NATO’s 2 per cent target”, accessed 3 May 2017, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/03/13/canadas-defence-spending-increases-but-still-half-of-natos-2-per-cent-target.html>

<sup>26</sup> Peter Jones, Philippe Lagasse, *Rhetoric versus reality:...*, 140.

structure to meet CAF future requirements. Looking again at our current mandate to support NATO and allied nations in diverse mission sets, and the fact that there seems to be an increased desire for a “smart defence” based on special “niche” type capabilities, should we not revert to a more focused type of analytical approach to FD planning, in this case a TBP approach?

In this section we have conducted a context analysis in which the CBP was adopted and have put forward two observations. First, as far as conventional warfare is concerned, the argument to use CBP versus TBP because a central adversary is no longer identifiable, is no longer a reality. The threat actors have not really changed, they have simply evolved. Second observations, considering the ongoing trend for reducing defence spending, and our force employment realities of projecting “niche” type force, would we not be better served by utilizing a more specific type of analysis such as a threat based approach? In this next section, we will further explore this proposition and provide an argument for a threat based approach in support of force developing a “niche” type of force capable of defeating unconventional threats.

### **CONTENT: Capability Based Planning, is it still viable?**

In this section, we will conduct the analysis of the second aspect of the CBP policy, its content. More specifically, we will look at its objectives and how well it has achieved its goals. It will suggest that CBP does not create the needed linkages between national policy, military strategy and tactics and equipment required to deal with the future threat environment.

The goal of CBP is ultimately to “provide a broad overview of the entire strategic CAF capability portfolio, to define future requirements based on future trends and assess what capability areas require to investment, divest and sustain”.<sup>27</sup> As such, it does not identify specific weapons systems or strategies to use; nor does it define an end state. It does however provide continuous strategic “aim-points” that evolves in time and in accordance to the proposed Future Security Environment (FSE).<sup>28</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, the goal here is not to discredit the CBP process in itself, after all, it has definite added value and conceptually, it proposes a smart and broad approach to self-examination. “It assumes that no one theory (be it service or Joint-centric) is sacrosanct but instead attempts to provide an objective systems-based view to a larger problem set.”<sup>29</sup> To that effect, one could argue that CBP does deliver exactly that, a very generic assessment of CAF future capability requirements. Therefore, the criticism of CBP is often just that, the fact that it lacks the detailed analysis required to deal with the current realities of real future threats. Maj Tony Balasevicius from the Canadian Army Warfare Center suggested in his article *Is It Time To Bring Back Threat-Based Planning* that “it ignores the necessity for analyzing such things as cultural, geographic and the strategic aspects of fighting a specific opponent in favor of developing technology to defeat a generic enemy.”<sup>30</sup> At the root of this problem, one could submit that use of a generic publication such as the Future Security Environment, used by the Department of National Defence (DND) and the CAF force development community is simply too generic:

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<sup>27</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, *Strategic Capability Planning for the Canadian Forces* (Ottawa: Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, 2000), 7.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Tony Balasevicius, *Is It Time To Bring Back Threat-Based Planning?*...,1.

“The FSE does not predict the future, nor does it prescribe capability requirements. This document is not a DND/CAF policy document. It neither replaces near-term intelligence or regional analysis nor does it provide threat or risk analysis. The FSE does not speculate on who future adversaries may be or their potential objectives.”<sup>31</sup>

There are two reasons one can submit to explain why this lack of definition of a threat actor can be problematic. A first reason is that many other countries are moving forward with the development of specific capacities to do exactly that, defeat adversaries’ forces by exploiting their specific vulnerabilities. Therefore, CBP would not deliver the detailed analysis to produce a force capable of defeating such a threat. For example, in the South China Sea. China has embraced a specific defence force development policy focused on negating the US ability to have influence in the region. In the last ten years, China has spent more on defence than South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam combined, making it the most powerful regional player. It has developed specific new technologies intended to counter US equipment such as ballistic missile submarines, new fighters and the acquisition of a new mid-size aircraft carrier, the *Liaoning*’s.<sup>32</sup> In the same way, Russia has developed a new doctrine known as the “Gerasimov doctrine”.<sup>33</sup> This doctrine represents a new Russian approach to a non-linear type of warfare where nations would increasingly adopt irregular and conventional tactics and capabilities to fight a hybrid war. This new doctrine, based on a mix of economic manipulation, powerful disinformation and civil disobedience to the use of massive aerial bombardments and electronic warfare was employed very effectively during the Russo-

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<sup>31</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, *The Future Security Environment 2013-2040* Chief of Force Development.” 9.

<sup>32</sup> Michael Gree, Kathlenn Hicks, and Mark Cancian, “ASIA-Pacific Rebalance 2025 Capabilities, Presence, and Partnership” *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, (January 2016): 25. <https://www.csis.org/events/asia-pacific-rebalance-2025-capabilities-presence-and-partnerships>

<sup>33</sup> Andrew Monaghan, “The war in Russia’s Hybrid Warfare”. *Character of war program*, (2016): 1, [www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/issues/9\\_Monagan/pdf](http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/parameters/issues/9_Monagan/pdf)

Ukrainian conflict.<sup>34</sup> Its strength lies in its ability to exploit potential adversaries' weaknesses within every aspect of the spectrum of warfare. During this conflict, there were specific lessons learned about platforms and inherent vulnerabilities to new types of munitions. This was a clear expression of a military program designed to defeat very specific NATO capabilities. The use of indirect fire with thermobaric warheads and the effects of 30mm canons on light infantry vehicles are two examples of specific defeating capabilities.<sup>35</sup> The second reason is that, because of the growing complexity of the nature of the future threat environments, a military force must have the ability to master certain aspects of the operating environment. The underlying premise here is that a multi-purpose generated force will struggle to meet certain specific security challenges. To examine this, let's use historical conflicts where a known threat based approach was used to deliver national warfighting capabilities and another where capability based approach was used. In the first instance, we can recall the first Iraq war. This conflict was viewed by some experts as an excellent example of the application of power in support of national policy".<sup>36</sup> The US had developed an Air and land doctrine during the 1980s specifically to defeat the Soviet Union. Although the US did not use its doctrine and specific capabilities (Force generated from a threat perspective) against the Soviets, it did however use it against Saddam Hussein's army who was equipped and trained in the same Russian military doctrine. Therefore, the US applied their specifically tailored strategy to defeat that enemy.<sup>37</sup> This U.S. doctrine drove the acquisition, training and

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<sup>34</sup> Dr. Phillip A. Karber, "Lessons Learned from the Russo--Ukrainian War", *The Potomac Foundation*, (8 July 2015): 2, <https://prodev2go.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/rus-ukr-lessons-draft.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

<sup>36</sup> Marianne P. Cowling, "An Operation Analysis of the Persian Gulf War", U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 1992, iii.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, iii.

force posture for the Americans and led to the crushing victory (the US lost approximately 300 soldiers to 20000 - 35000 Iraqi soldiers)<sup>38</sup> of the U.S. lead coalition over the Iraqi Army in Operation Desert Storm. Because they studied a specific enemy, they were able to force develop and train a military that had the ability to exploit its adversaries weakness and provide war winning capabilities to its forces. On the other hand, if we look at an example where a generic force based on a CPB approach was used, such as the deployment of the CAF in Afghanistan, one could argue that the coalition was ill equipped to operate against an elusive adversary using unsophisticated but yet, very efficient tactics. The CAF was using a conventional military structure built on a battlegroups with anti-amour and infantry fighting vehicles and tactics to fight a low tech insurgency. One can suggest in this instance that a broad approach to FD such as CBP did not produce the intended results. Col. Michael W. Pietrucha, USAF had this to say on this specific topic:

“While it is impossible to determine who might have been deterred by the presumably awesome potential of CBP over the past 15 years, we can certainly determine who was not. Al Qaeda and its affiliates were not deterred. The Taliban and their associates were not deterred. Broadly, Islamist groups were not deterred in sub-Saharan Africa, Libya, the Levant, Yemen, Syria or Iraq”.<sup>39</sup>

Because CBP lacks to integrate such things a Human dimension, terrain, and particular tactics and strategy, it does not support the strategic and operational understanding of the operating environment. The CAF lacked the expertise and equipment to fight a very specific type of adversary who was using tools and tactics that the military was ill prepared to defeat. Arguably, this leads us to believe that a CBP approach has struggled

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, iii.

<sup>39</sup> Col. Michael W. Pietrucha, USAF, Essay: Capability-Based Planning and the Death of Military Strategy...8,.

to deliver the capabilities required to meet our operational needs in our recent conflicts against terrorism.

In this section, we have assessed that the goal of CBP is ultimately to provide a broad overview of the entire strategic CAF capability portfolio defines future requirements based on future trends and assesses what capability areas require investment, divestment and sustainment. However, we have underlined two major flaws of using CBP. The first being that other nations are moving forward with what seems to be a very specific approach to building new capabilities based on defeating potential adversaries strength, while exploiting there weakness. This can represent serious challenges for us if these nations potentially become a threat to our National interest or our allies. The other is the idea of ignoring the particular characteristics and aspects of an operating environment thus keeping for developing greatly needed expertise to fight a specific adversary.

### **PROCESS: Capability Based Planning, is it still viable?**

In this section, we propose a short assessment of the CBP process. One major critic often associated to the CBP process is that because joint commands as well as environmental commanders struggle to adopt an agreed strategy to deliver and employ joint capabilities, it becomes increasing difficulty to deconflict roles and responsibilities of the delivery of the capabilities as well as identifying dependencies between stakeholders.

The struggle to deconflict roles and responsibilities of the delivery of joint capabilities within the CBP process has been observed by other nations.<sup>40</sup> This is because CBP is focused on generic tasks to be accomplished, thus having multiple stakeholders responsible to deliver the same capability within different environments. For example, the generic task of *SENSING in the Maritime domain*. This is a generic task that is often identified within the CBP and is associated to many generic scenarios. This task can be accomplished by a multitude of capabilities residing in many environments as well as Joint Commands. To do so, many of them will identify that, Joint Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (JISR) will be a critical capability requirement to accomplish this task. However, the reality is that, a multiple of stakeholders will have their own part to play in the delivery and the employment of this capability. The challenge here is that all have different views on how to strategies the delivery of this capability. This is due to differences in doctrine and how they see their role as functional subject matters in their domain. Fundamentally, the issues are how does one account for resources that enable a task that feeds multiple capabilities, or a capability that enables multiple missions to be achieved? This creates ambiguity in where the responsibilities for FD lies and what should be developed. The main impact to the FD process is the risk of duplication of effort in research and development of technologies or duplication of resources associated to the same capability within the environments. The other risk is the lack of a common strategy in Joint warfare.<sup>41</sup> Although there is no guarantee that a TBP approach would resolve this problem, the fact remains that the lack of detailed analysis

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<sup>40</sup> Colonel Stephen K. Walker, "Capabilities-Based Planning – How It Is Intended To Work And Challenges To Its Successful Implementation", United States Army U.S. Army War College, (2005), 16.

<sup>41</sup> Col. Michael W. Pietrucha, USAF, Essay: Capability-Based Planning and the Death of Military Strategy...10,.

stemming from a generic problem solving solution to a generic scenario does not identify clear role and responsibilities for stakeholders within a given mission set. Greater stakeholder interaction in a specific threat based scenario may help create a level of detailed analysis capable of identifying the relative worth of one capability versus another and, identify specific role and responsibilities for all stakeholders.

### **A THIRD OPTION: Capability Based Planning, is it still viable?**

As this paper has investigated the issues associated with the policy of using CBP as a strategic planning methodology in support of FD requirements, one must not ignore the main risks associated with the alternative approach of TBP. As highlighted in this paper, the fundamental flaw of TBP is the danger of developing specific types of niche capabilities that would be ill suited against other potential adversaries or operational environments. This is a very real and potentially disastrous reality. In light of the above, this paper proposes to further study a hybrid approach where both processes could be used. Hypothetically, a CBP approach could be used to determine the capability required to meet core mandate mission sets (domestic or NORAD) and use TBP to identify capability requirements for specific expeditionary missions in support to NATO and allied partners. The logic behind this is based on what was presented here, CBP is most useful when the threat environment is uncertain and TBP is useful when a specific threat is identified. This approach would be consistent with what the authors, Peter Jones and Philippe Lagassé proposes in their article, *Rhetoric versus reality: Canadian defence planning in a time of austerity*. These authors proposed to have a generic, all-purpose force generated to meet Canadian national security requirements, such the protection of

Canadian sovereignty, support to civil authorities and our commitments to NORAD. For our expeditionary contribution, they suggest to develop special “niche” type capabilities enhancing allied contributions to NATO missions. A TBP process can also be useful in enhancing the conceptualization of a Joint Strategy to use in a specific and complex scenario. Because TBP can considers the specific aspects of the operational environment (geography, culture, adversaries intent, strategies and equipment) this can help create target deployable force elements completely suited for a specific threat. This could also support cost saving FD options as well and enhance Canada’s contribution to NATO operations within a “smart” approach to defence management within the alliance.

However, regardless of what the CAF chooses to become, either an all-purpose generic or a specialized type force, the proposition of a mix use of CPB and TBP remains valid. Because of the growing complexity of the threat environment, the fact that “potential” adversaries are continuing to develop highly specialized “tailored” capabilities and arguably, the poor performance of CBP in delivering the right tools to efficiently fight this new “insurgency” type threat; one must start to consider different or enhanced FD processes.

## **CONCLUSION**

Using as framework the Walt, G., and L. Gilson policy analysis model, this paper has analyzed the policy of using CBP as a key decision aid to assist the CAF senior leadership in in making FD choices. To achieve this, it looked at three aspects of the CBP process: context, content and process. Contextually, it demonstrated that a centralized identifiable threat still exists, it is more sophisticated and complex than ever, and

therefore represents a greater threat to NATO and Canadian interest around the world. It found that because the CBP approach is very generic and suited for a multi-purpose force, it may struggle to meet the complexity of the future threat environment defined by an increasing tendency for state actors to use a mix of very sophisticated strategies and capabilities to target the specific weaknesses of their potential adversaries. Furthermore, a CBP approach seems to be limited in creating the needed linkages between national policy, military strategy and tactics and equipment required to deal with the future threat environment. And last, it analyzed the CBP process and underlined the challenges associated with the deconflicting of roles and responsibilities of the delivery of joint capabilities within the CBP process. This paper also proposed a third option for FD analysis based on a mix of a CBP approach for National defense related security requirements and TBP approach for expeditionary requirements. This enhanced option would have the added value of being consistent with our current approach to the delivery of specialized type of “niche” capabilities to NATO missions while meeting the requirement for a multipurpose role force to execute our current National and NORAD mandates. Consequently, this paper concludes that careful consideration should be given to reintroducing a threat based approach to strategic defence planning methodology.

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