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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES  
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EXERCISE NEW HORIZONS

**“Leading from the rear”: A look at the OGD-CF interaction and the need for OGDs to transform themselves in order to improve national emergency management.**

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper argues that the current inter-relationship between OGDs in Canada is not effective and that because of it, the recent CF transformation only marginally improves the overall effectiveness of the emergency management activities in Canada. Drawing from the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina and from Canadian lessons learned during domestic operations, modern requirements of an effective military-OGD relationship are outlined, as well as basic relationship required within the OGD community itself. Specifically, the need for a strong central authority is highlighted. The role of the military and its relationship with this strong central authority is examined, including the argument that the military itself should take the lead in civilian emergency management. The paper concludes that the CF and Canada Command are correct in adopting a “lead from the rear” approach, but that this should not serve as an excuse for OGDs not to take ownership of civilian emergency management. It observes that PSEPC already has the mandate to coordinate the activities of OGDs in Canada, and as such should be given additional power and the mandate to direct activities such as training, doctrine and standards.

## INTRODUCTION

Transformation for the sake of change is a waste of time and resources. No one in the Canadian Forces (CF) or the Canadian Government wants to see the current CF transformation turn into an exercise of changing the proverbial four quarters for a dollar. In 2004, the National Security Policy reiterated and somewhat reinforced the role of the department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness (PSEPC) as the centerpiece of emergency management in Canada. It also went on to designate the CF as a major actor in emergency preparedness (EP) and consequence management (CM). This was done with a view to reinforce existing successes and also achieve significant improvement in the civil defense of Canada.<sup>1</sup> The CF responded by standing up Canada Command (Canada COM). Designed as a command centric joint organization, it was intended to be better able to focus the full breath of Canada's military resources on a domestic contingency, including emergency management. In addition, the CF were to "...enhance their relationship with civil authorities. [Including] sharing information [and] developing and exercising plans, so that, in the event of a crisis, the Forces can make a timely, effective contribution to the ...overriding objective to protect Canadians."<sup>2</sup>

Implicit in the success of this task is a reciprocal commitment on the part of the civil authorities, known as Other Governmental Departments (OGDs). Failing to do so would put the entire effort at risk of falling short of expectations. The CF capability to respond to domestic emergencies is well known, as it has been successfully put to test

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<sup>1</sup> Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2004), 23-24.

<sup>2</sup> Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement – A Role of Pride and Influence in the World: Defence*, (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2004), 18.

several times in recent years.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding the benefits of the CF transformation, it has been made clear that it is through an improved synergy with the OGDs that the greatest gains in emergency preparedness are expected to materialize.<sup>4</sup> The CF are not first responders, nor are they tasked as lead agency for emergency preparedness. Indeed, in the words of the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, “The traditional role of the CF as the force of last resort in domestic operations remains extant....”<sup>5</sup> While the transformation of the CF command structure is a significant improvement, it remains an internal organizational matter. To date, even as the standing up of Canada Command and the regional JTFs appear to have a positive effect within the CF, we will see later that the participation of OGDs is not up to expectations. Consequently, this paper will argue that unless OGDs undertake a transformation of their own, the standing up of Canada Command has not and will not significantly improve the protection and defence of Canada, specifically as it applies to emergency preparedness, consequence management and emergency management.

To demonstrate this argument, this paper will first provide a background on emergency management in Canada, and outline how emergency preparedness and consequence management nest within the context of national security. It will also delineate what limits and regulates military intervention in Canada, and why it is an OGD problem to look after EP. Next, this paper will compare Canada’s approach to that of the of the U.S. , with a view to take advantage of the available lessons learned with regards to

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<sup>3</sup> Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada’s National Security Policy...*, 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem.*, 24-27.

<sup>5</sup> Department of National Defence, *DCDS Directions for Domestic Operations v7*, (Ottawa: DND Canada, 01 April 2005), 1-1/8.

the Federal response to Hurricane Katrina. Where applicable, these lessons learned will be transposed to the Canadian context, and reinforced with similar lessons learned from recent Canadian domestic operations (Dom Ops) and EP exercises. This will provide a modern model, which will be applied against the existing Canadian context and constructively criticized to demonstrate the existing shortfalls and propose effective ways to improve Canada's EP posture.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **The CF Terms of Reference**

Emergency preparedness and consequence management aren't new concepts, nor is the CF participation to domestic operations.<sup>6</sup> However, their most recent forms are tied to the security of Canada through the National Security Policy of 2004 and the subsequent Defense Policy Statement (DPS). As alluded to earlier, the establishment of Canada Command was directed by the DPS as a command centric organization designed to meet the goals of inter-service integration. With respect to support to OGDs, the CF were explicitly tasked to "work closely with civil authorities...to prevent serious threats to Canada from materializing, countering these threats if prevention fails, and helping mitigate the consequences of an attack should one occur".<sup>7</sup> The threat of terrorism is implicit in that last statement, but the DPS also makes ample references to any sort of domestic crisis, including national emergencies born out of a natural disaster.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, to further situate the context of this paper, some caveats must be made. First, this essay is

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-28.

<sup>7</sup> Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement ...*, 17.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 11, 16-18.

specifically concerned with contingency domestic operations, in which an unforeseen incident requires a combined CF-OGD response. While EP and CM may be undertaken as a response to a terrorist attack, they are not in themselves anti-terrorist in nature or function. More importantly, it is not the role of certain OGDs in protecting Canada against terrorism that is being questioned here, nor is it their effectiveness at doing it. Finally, it should be clear that EP and CM are quite distinct from counter-terrorism measures undertaken by OGDs within which the CF may play a part and for which very specific and detailed arrangements are made. This connection will be clarified shortly.

For a number of operational, legal and administrative reasons, the participation of the CF in any domestic operations is strictly regulated.<sup>9</sup> The CF remains an armed military organization, and as such should only be allowed to operate within our national borders in very specific circumstances. The mechanism under which this would occur is found within the Canadian Emergency Management Framework. In essence, it calls for an escalated response where the various levels of government starting at the municipal level are required to offer whatever assistance is within their means, before it reaches the federal level. At this point, PSEPC may be designated as the lead federal agency or a department more specifically concerned with a given emergency may be designated.<sup>10</sup> But in keeping with its mandate, PSEPC would remain responsible to coordinate the delivery of assistance between the various agencies involved.<sup>11</sup> It is essential to note that “...federal involvement...will always be in support of provincial/territorial authorities

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<sup>9</sup> Department of National Defence, *DCDS Directions for Domestic Operations v7*, (Ottawa: DND Canada, 01 April 2005), 1-1/8 to 1-8/8 and 10-1/12 to 10-12/12.

<sup>10</sup> Such as Health Canada in the case of an epidemic.

<sup>11</sup> Public Safety Emergency Preparedness Canada, “Keeping Canadians Safe – What We Do,” <http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/abt/wwd/index-en.asp>, Internet; accessed 28 March 2006.

unless the scale of the emergency results in a declaration of a “national emergency” under the *Emergencies Act*, or if the emergency...impacts an area of federal jurisdiction...”<sup>12</sup>

It is within this framework that the assistance from the CF would be articulated. As such, it could take one of several forms, ranging from the provision of specific and unique military capabilities in support of a law enforcement agency<sup>13</sup>, to the actual commitment of troops to augment an overwhelmed police force. Somewhere in between falls tasks that are more germane to this paper, such as the provision of a “specialist capability” such as the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Company, and more generically, the support to a lead civil agency under the terms described earlier.

In conclusion, it should be clear that the responsibility for the protection of Canadians in peacetime and within Canada’s borders is primarily assigned to OGDs, and that while the CF may be routinely involved in domestic operational activities, these are the responsibility of the various levels of civilian governments and that the CF, as a military organization, is thus not intended, nor legally authorized to be in a position of direct leadership.

## **DRAWING LESSONS FROM KATRINA**

### **The US Organizational Background**

The US response to hurricane Katrina provides a first class case study where established emergency preparedness measures were put to the test and consequence

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<sup>12</sup> Department of National Defence, *DCDS Directions for Domestic Operations v7...*, 10-3/12.

<sup>13</sup> The provision of armoured vehicles to protect a police SWAT team would fall within this category.



management on a major scale was required. Its intrinsic value is not lost because it happened south of the border. On the contrary it is especially valuable not only because it is so recent, but also because it comes on the heels of a reorganization in the U.S. emergency OGDs that is not unlike the one we have seen in Canada. Indeed, as we will see below, the U.S. emergency response organizations are, as a group, similar to ours in a number of ways, and this section of the paper will demonstrate that valuable lessons can be drawn from our neighbour's experiences.

To better draw lessons, a comparison of our respective organizations is required. The combination of PSEPC and Canada Command finds its counterpart in the US under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). A detailed comparison of these organizations would be both lengthy and cumbersome, and beyond the scope of this paper. It is however useful to point out that as a group their missions and objectives roughly include as a minimum those assigned PSEPC and Canada COM. What differs is how these missions are assigned and the command arrangements between the organizations. DHS, through its Directorate for Preparedness and its subordinate FEMA agency, includes roughly the tasks assigned PSEPC with regards to emergency preparedness and disaster mitigation.<sup>14</sup> For its part, USNORTHCOM mission as it relates to support to civil authorities is similar to that assigned Canada COM and even shares important elements of its concept of operations (CONOPS).<sup>15</sup> Yet another noteworthy

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<sup>14</sup> See U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "DHS Organization," [http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/theme\\_home1.jsp](http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/theme_home1.jsp); Internet; accessed 28 March 2006, and United States, Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Strategic Plan Fiscal years 2003-2008*; available from <http://www.fema.gov/library/strategicplanfy03.shtm>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2006. Compare with Public Safety Emergency Preparedness Canada, "Keeping Canadians Safe – What We Do," <http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/abt/wwd/index-en.asp>, Internet; accessed 28 March 2006.

similarity is that all of these organizations have either been stood-up or were reorganized in a significant way within the past five years.

## Observations

Having established the organizational similarities between Canada and the US, we can now turn our attention to the U.S. Federal response to Hurricane Katrina. The following short extracts taken from the foreword of the Katrina Lessons Learned Report summarizes rather well the event itself and the impression it left on observers:

On August 23, 2005, Hurricane Katrina formed as a tropical storm off the coast of the Bahamas. Over the next seven days, the tropical storm grew into a catastrophic hurricane that made landfall first in Florida and then along the Gulf Coast in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama, leaving a trail of heartbreaking devastation and human suffering. Katrina wreaked staggering physical destruction along its path, flooded the historic city of New Orleans, ultimately killed over 1,300 people, and became the most destructive natural disaster in American history.

The awe that viewers held for the sheer ferocity of nature was soon matched with disappointment and frustration at the seeming inability of the government...to respond effectively to the crisis. Hurricane Katrina...exposed significant flaws in...preparedness for catastrophic events... Emergency plans...were put to the ultimate test, and came up short.<sup>16</sup>

The US Federal response to Katrina, including EP and CM measures, were based on concepts and principles very similar to those practiced in Canada. The empowerment of the local and regional governments and the selective involvement of US Federal

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<sup>15</sup> See U.S. Northern Command, "About Us," [http://www.northcom.mil/about\\_us/about\\_us.htm](http://www.northcom.mil/about_us/about_us.htm); Internet; accessed 28 March 2006, and compare with Department of National Defence, *Canada COM CONOPS (draft)* (Ottawa; DND Canada, 01 Mar 06), 1-1/5 to 1-5/5.

<sup>16</sup> United States, Office of the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, *The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina* (Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 23, 2006), 1.

agencies parallels the Canadian Emergency Management Framework presented earlier. The role of FEMA as the central coordinating Federal agency, is also a point of similarity. Preparations have been described as "...unprecedented in comparison to those made for previous...hurricanes."<sup>17</sup> Yet these trusted concepts and organizations failed to meet their intended purpose. A review of the events during the worst of the crisis is summarized below for the purpose of shedding some light on the possible reasons of that failure.<sup>18</sup>

First of all, as the hurricane hit the extent of the emergency became such that the local governments and their associated emergency organizations which had, up to that point, overseen the management of the emergency, found themselves rapidly either overwhelmed or rendered inoperative and unable to function, and this over a very large area. Existing well established mutual assistance arrangements were rendered irrelevant by the sheer scale over which Katrina prevailed. Thus emergency assistance could only be secured from neighboring states or from federal government, but both required effective federal coordination.

This federal coordination was provided by FEMA. However, the demands for food, medical supplies, fuel, shelter and water, coupled with the effects of the devastated infrastructure rapidly exceeded the capacity of FEMA to deliver. There was simply not enough of everything, and what was on hand could not be delivered. Within the region impacted by Katrina, communications were degraded beyond expectations, while at the federal level, a different kind of communication problem between FEMA and other

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 31. In addition, pages 21-31 of the report provides ample details on the actual extent of the preparations.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-45.

Federal departments was preventing the effective use of available resources. None of the respondents had accurate situational awareness, and in the chaos they were unable to respond effectively. As the nation mobilized, substantial offers of assistance, in the form of transportation, communication equipment and heavy engineering equipment were left untaken, because these offers of assistance could not be coordinated.

In light of these facts, an impressive series of 125 recommendations nested within 17 lessons learned were identified for action.<sup>19</sup> A review of all of them here, even a cursory one, would be far too extensive. In keeping with the scope of this paper, three elements were found to be relevant and are presented for further reference.<sup>20</sup>

### National Preparedness

This is the first issue identified and it speaks to the fact that the existing decentralized model had worked well for the 243 previous major “typical” disasters that occurred within the CONUS since September 2001, but failed when it had to deal with a catastrophic event. As a solution it calls for a unified management structure, with the authority to align all stakeholders along a single model, streamline the Command and Control structure within the federal Government, achieve a uniform knowledge and practice of existing plans within the stakeholders community and extend its

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<sup>19</sup> It is interesting to compare these numbers with those generated by the CF following our own DOMOPS. For Op Recuperation the Army Lessons Learned generated 49 issues and 49 recommendations, while for the same operation J3 lessons learned produced 15 issues and 37 recommendations. For Op Grizzly, J7 produced 12 issues and 34 recommendations. The trends appears to be that the number of issues and recommendations decreases as we move higher in the chain of command. From that point of view, the numbers from the Katrina Report, especially the recommendations, are overwhelming.

<sup>20</sup> These particular recommendations and lessons learned have been selected because they supported the thesis of this paper in a particular way. It should be noted that there were no recommendations that were running contrary to the thesis of this paper.

representation at the regional level.<sup>21</sup> Despite the apparent myriad of OGDs and agencies involved in emergency management in the US, there appears that none had the required authority at that time to accomplish this purpose. As the way ahead, the report stresses the concept of Unified Command as the way to achieve this, with a single organization (namely DHS) responsible for directing the Federal response in the field and assisting State, local and regional level of governments in developing a common strategy. It stresses the need for the federal government to develop and impose a common doctrine and align such things as budgets, equipment and exercises.<sup>22</sup> On that last point, the report sets an ambitious goal:

[DHS] should establish specific requirements for training, exercises, and lessons learned programs linked through a comprehensive system and common supporting methodology throughout the federal, States and local governments. Furthermore, assessments of training and exercises should be based on clear and consistent performance measures. ...DHS should ensure all entities are accountable for the timely implementation of remedial actions in response to lessons learned.<sup>23</sup>

The issue of training is an interesting one because it illustrates almost on its own the difficulties with arranging effective cross-agency training. In the next section of this paper, we will see how issues of budget, participation and effective lessons learned capturing impacts on the overall effectiveness of the whole.

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<sup>21</sup> United States, Office of the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, *The Federal Response...*, 50, 52-54 and 88-94.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 66-82.

<sup>23</sup> United States, Office of the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, *The Federal Response...*, 74.

### Integrated Use of Military Capabilities

This lesson learned observed that DoD had brought to Katrina the benefit of trained and equipped organizations, along with an extensive planning capability. It quite reasonably and not-unexpectedly underlined the need to better integrate the resources of the military in the emergency response plans. However, it also formulated the observation that there might be a catastrophic event of such magnitude that DoD would be required to assume the lead of the federal response, and therefore it suggests that DoD and DHS should develop plans accordingly.<sup>24</sup> While this may seem to be a sensible suggestion, particularly in the wake of Katrina, others go even further and suggest that the US Homeland Security task should be performed by the military all the time. James Carafano, a senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation suggests that "...NorthCom needs to become a full service homeland security headquarters..."<sup>25</sup>. This implies that in essence USNORTHCOM would take over from DHS.

It remains to be seen if such a suggestion will take a hold in the U.S. In the section that follows, the extend to which the CF should take the lead in Canadian EP will be discussed.

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-55 and 94-96.

<sup>25</sup> James Carafano, "NorthCom Should Take Lead on Homeland Security," *Federal Times* 39, no. 20 (16 June 2003): 21. Later in his article, Carafano runs down the tasks that NorthCom could undertake, including "Support civilian authorities". In description it is not significantly different from what USNORTHCOM is already tasked to do on order. The difference sits where Carafano suggests that USNORTHCOM takes over the DHS responsibilities.

## Transforming National Preparedness

In the Katrina report, this is essentially a theme that transcends the issues, lessons learned and recommendations.<sup>26</sup> It speaks to the fact that despite the considerable efforts to improve the protection of the homeland since the attacks of September 11, these “new plans...failed to adequately account for widespread or simultaneous catastrophes.”<sup>27</sup> and thus suggests that further and deeper changes are needed to achieve the goal. The following quote should sound familiar and resonate with several CF members: “Without a shared vision that is acted upon by all levels...and encompasses the full range of our preparedness and response capabilities, we will not achieve a truly transformational *national* state of readiness.”<sup>28</sup>

## **Concluding With the Lessons of Katrina**

Perhaps the most striking conclusion to be made at this point is that an emergency preparedness organizational structure designed to tackle “reasonable” disaster, no matter how successful it has been so far, can be expected to fail when confronted to a disaster of catastrophic proportions. A number of areas where the US intends to address the perceived shortfalls and prevent this from happening again have been highlighted, including suggestions that the U.S. military should be assigned a greater leadership role. We saw that there is a recognition that profound changes will be required to effectively

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<sup>26</sup> United States, Office of the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, *The Federal Response...*, 65-82.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

address these shortfalls and that a transformation, not unlike the one we are undergoing in the CF, may be required for them to effect these changes.

## **AN APPLICATION TO THE CANADIAN CONTEXT**

This section will take up the three elements of the previous section and apply them to the Canadian context. Where applicable, this will be reinforced by lessons learned points extracted from our own domestic operations. The intention here is to use the selected lessons learned themes from the most recent, most devastating civilian emergency to occur in North America as an opportunity to evaluate our own emergency management organization and offer constructive criticism. As can be expected, we will highlight shortfalls and consequently suggest ways to rectify them. We will also identify issues which will confirm the validity of Canada's current approach. Finally, the applicability of giving the CF more responsibilities in EP will be discussed.

### **National Preparedness**

Within the Canadian context and as previously mentioned, our central federal agency is PSEPC. It emerged in 2003 from the former Emergency Preparedness Canada (EPC) which had become obsolete. In 1999 following Op Recuperation, the CF J-staff reported that "EPC's ability to influence the emergency preparedness programs of [OGDs] seems to have diminished. EPC's role, function and relationship vis à vis the [CF] and [OGDs] [was] not clear."<sup>29</sup> At the time, EPC was a subordinate element of the Department of National Defence working for the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, and

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<sup>29</sup> LGen R.R. Henault, *Operation Recuperation lessons Learned Staff Action Directive* (National Defence Headquarters: file 3301-2-4-3 (J3 Lessons Learned), 15 March 1999, A-3/27.



thus held little clout over OGDs. Today, as a department of its own working directly for the Minister of Public Safety, it has the profile and the representation that it needs to fulfill its responsibilities. PSEPC also extends its representation in the provinces and territories in the form of Regional Coordination Centers (RCC), charged with maintaining close contact with the provincial emergency organizations (EMO) and ensure complimentary readiness.<sup>30</sup> Therefore in some ways we are ahead by a few years on the US recommendation.

Where it does fall short though is on the actual authority that PSEPC exercises with the other OGDs. For instance, PSEPC still has no weight to impose a national exercise plan on OGDs, nor does it control a national training budget, and so it must rely on the good will and resources of the OGDs to participate. With limited budgets, Transport Canada, Canada Customs, the RCMP, and various volunteer organizations have to pick and choose which exercise is of most interest to them in order to maximize *their* return.

For example, exercise ARDENT SENTRY is an annual combined consequence management exercise organized by the CF and to which all provinces EMO and federal OGDs are invited, as well as participation from the U.S. the focus of the exercise is described as "...command and control and interoperability bi-nationally, nationally and interdepartmentally during domestic crisis."<sup>31</sup> For the 2006 serial two provinces, several OGDs and the U.S. will participate. Yet British Columbia has indicated that it will be absent until 2008, because they have to save their budgets in preparation for the

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<sup>30</sup> Department of National Defence, *DCDS Directions for Domestic Operations v7...*, N-1-1/2.

<sup>31</sup> Gen R. Hillier, *Exercise Ardent Sentry 06 (AS 06) Canadian Forces Exercise Specification (EXSPEC)* Canada COM: file 3350-165/AS (J7 Trg 4), February 2006, 2/17.

Olympics of 2010.<sup>32</sup> And while it is welcome, the participation of the OGDs will be severely restricted in time, and will cover only three days out of a total of 11.<sup>33</sup> The need to give PSEPC some authority and resources in this matter had already been recognized in 1999, yet it seems little has been corrected.<sup>34</sup>

At the provincial level, the same problems prevail although the situation is reportedly better than at the federal level. Ex ATLANTIC GUARD was held in November 2005, and an increased participation from the Atlantic provinces EMO and PSEPC RCC was reported. It has been suggested that the recent history of disasters in that region of Canada would be one of the reasons of this success.<sup>35</sup> This assessment would be consistent with a trend, but may not last on its own momentum. As stated by Mr. Dan Henstra who researched the impact of September 11 on emergency management in North America, “Interest in disaster mitigation tends to be highest during the period immediately following a major disaster...”<sup>36</sup>

Notwithstanding the progress made by raising the profile of PSEPC, one must conclude that the overall situation of PSEPC in 2006 has not improved significantly from 1999. It is interesting to note that Canada COM was formed to move away from an administrative organisation and progress towards command centric structure, with a view to better control its own resources but also to better integrate with OGDs. Yet it appears that it is precisely administrative reasons that are preventing the OGDs for taking their

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<sup>32</sup> LCol Jocelyn Boucher, Canada COM J7 Plans, telephone conversation with author, 29 March 2006.

<sup>33</sup> Gen R. Hillier, *Exercise Ardent Sentry 06...3/17*.

<sup>34</sup> LGen R.R. Henault, *Operation Recuperation...*, A-6/27.

<sup>35</sup> Maj Marc Cayouette, J7 JTF A, telephone conversation with author, 04 April 2006.

<sup>36</sup> Dan Henstra, “Federal emergency management in Canada and the United States after 11 September 2001 – Abstract,” *Canadian Public Administration* 46, Issue 1 (Spring 2003): 103.

rightful place in this inter-agency joint and combined approach that is being referred to as “Team-Canada”.

Notwithstanding the limited success encountered at the provincial and regional level, should the CF ever be called upon to intervene outside of a regional context, it would imply the advent of a national emergency of major proportions. Because Canada operates with roughly the same structure and the same principles as the U.S., it can be deduced that, as happened during Katrina, local civilian emergency organizations would be unable, insufficient or overwhelmed to deal with the problem. In light of all this and as it has been suggested for the U.S. military in their own country, should the CF take a larger leadership role in this matter? This will be discussed in the next section.

### **Integrated Use of Military Capabilities**

The concept of “turning things over to the military” is hardly original, and in the immediate aftermath of a civil emergency, it appears to be a natural reaction. As witnessed during Op Recuperation in 1998, “As [repositioning of troops] was taking place, it became obvious that the local population/municipalities did not want to “lose their soldiers”. They had unfortunately created a false dependence on the military.”<sup>37</sup> In some circles though, and certainly in Canada, there is a certain degree of uneasiness with handing over emergency preparedness to a military organization. This uneasiness is felt within the civilian and the military community alike, and has led to the development of

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<sup>37</sup> Department of National Defence. Army Lessons Learned Center *Analysis Report – Op Recuperation*, art 9.1, 2 September 1998, 13.

effective mechanism designed to ensure that in peacetime emergency management remains squarely the responsibility of civilian authorities.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, in response to the DPS and with the understanding that committing military forces to consequence management should be a last recourse, the CDS has developed a concept of “leading from the rear”. Canada COM concept of operation is clear and unequivocally throws all its support behind PSEPC. Indeed, it specifically says that “...PSEPC will serve as the Command’s interface to federal OGDs and national level NGOs”<sup>39</sup> Through its subordinate Joint Task Forces, Canada Com is designed to parallel PSEPC’s own organization and provide assistance to OGDs and provincial EMO while it retains a presence at the federal level. By “leading from the rear”, the CF recognizes the responsibility-capability gap that exists within some of the OGDs and PSEPC, and it fills that gap “free of charge” mostly in the operational planning field, and by holding combined activities such as training sessions and exercises that promote the “Team Canada” approach. The ARDENT SENTRY and ATLANTIC GUARD series of exercises, as well as other training activities put forth by JTF A are prime examples of this.<sup>40</sup>

However, this may exacerbate the problem more than it solves it. It certainly could be argued that by leading from the rear, the CF is lulling PSEPC and other OGDs

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<sup>38</sup> Department of National Defence, *DCDS Directions for Domestic Operations v7...*, art 104, 1-2/8.

<sup>39</sup> Department of National Defence, *Canada COM CONOPS (draft)* (Ottawa; DND Canada, 01 Mar 06), 6-2/5.

<sup>40</sup> Col R. Lacroix, *Atlantic Guard III JTF A Lessons learned* (JTFA: file 3500-1 (JTFA COS), 20 March 2006.

into a sense of security, preventing them from developing the sense of urgency and ownership that will make them take the proactive role that is theirs to take.

Nonetheless, as an answer to the question above, military officers who frequently work with OGDs and NGOs suggest that “DND cannot be seen as making a play for more power.”<sup>41</sup> Leading from the rear therefore seems to be an effective way, at least so far, for the CF to get the effect that they want without upsetting the fragile wave of progress and good will that has been achieved.

### **Transforming National Preparedness**

It appears that the benefit for the CF of approaching emergency preparedness as a joint organization have been readily and almost immediately apparent.<sup>42</sup> Still, as OGDs are not developing the links that are needed to better integrate themselves with Canada COM and make the latter more effective than its predecessors within the emergency preparedness community, the creating of Canada Command may at best improve the CF ability to respond, but this will only improve the security of Canada as a second order effect. It seems therefore logical that as a group, PSEPC, OGDs, provincial EMOs and national NGOs undertake a transformation of their own. In essence, as a collectivity they have to accept PSEPC’s lead, conform to its direction, and PSEPC must be given the authority and the budget to organize national combined training and exercises.

Internal and departmental politics must be transcended for the common good. It is a well known fact for example, that post exercise reports will seldom identify issues

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<sup>41</sup> Maj Marc Cayouette, J7 JTF A, telephone conversation with author, 04 April 2006.

<sup>42</sup> LCol Jocelyn Boucher, Canada COM J7 Plans, telephone conversation with author, 29 March 2006, and Maj Marc Cayouette, J7 JTF A, telephone conversation with author, 04 April 2006.

that may show a participating organisation in an unfavorable light.<sup>43</sup> This is probably not unique to Canada, and when the Katrina report speaks of the need to implement assessments of training and exercises based on clear and consistent performance measures, it is likely that it tries to correct a similar problem.

### **Concluding the Discussion of the Canadian Context**

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, numerous models have been suggested to tackle the problem of managing intergovernmental emergency response. One of them advocates that a loose organization of several OGDs, EMOs and NGOs, not operating under unified command but still unified in intent and purpose, and linked together through an effective information exchange network, would develop a capacity of “auto-adaptation.” Essentially, over time these organisation would develop the ability to anticipate the actions of the others and would naturally integrate themselves in the overall “whole”.<sup>44</sup> Although fairly recent, this model looks suspiciously like an information-centric enhancement of the arrangement that exists right now within the Canadian emergency management community, and so the shortfalls of this approach have already been discussed. Nonetheless it was useful to bring it up as a conclusion to this section, if only to use it as a contrasting view to what we suggested earlier as the way ahead. Indeed, we have argued for a strong and mandated organisation to establish standards and common training within the community, and we have demonstrated that this organisation should be PSEPC. We have also showed that the CF was meeting success by “leading

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<sup>43</sup> Maj Marc Cayouette, J7 JTF A, telephone conversation with author, 04 April 2006.

<sup>44</sup> Louise K. Comfort, “managing Intergovernmental response to Terrorism and Other Extreme Events,” in *Homeland Security and Terrorism: Readings and Interpretations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006), 217-234.

from the rear” but that this should not give an excuse for OGDs to surrender their ownership of the problems.

## CONCLUSION

“The effective mobilization of response to extreme events on a large scale is one of the least understood problems in public management.”<sup>45</sup> Undeniably Canada and the US have undertaken a vast re-organization of their domestic emergency response architecture in the past five years. Progresses have been made, but the U.S. experience with Katrina has demonstrated to them the need to go further, suggesting both a need for greater central leadership at the federal level, and a more preeminent role for the military. Transposed to the Canadian context, we concluded that there was a need for a similar organization at the federal level, to exercise central directing leadership among the OGDs in terms of training, standards, doctrine and budget. We then questioned if the military option was equally valid, and if the CF, in the form of Canada COM, should take the lead in emergency preparedness, consequence management and emergency management.

After looking at the emergency management organization in Canada, its internal dynamics and perceptions of the military, we concluded that the CF approach of “leading from the rear” was meeting success and was the best way to influence progress in a civilian dominated framework. In effect, leadership of OGDs should be done by an OGD. PSEPC already holds the mandate to coordinate the activities of OGDs, so its mandate should simply but effectively be bolstered with the authority to direct training, doctrine and standards.

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<sup>45</sup> Louise K. Comfort, “managing Intergovernmental response to Terrorism and Other Extreme Events,” in *Homeland Security and Terrorism: Readings and Interpretations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006), 219.

The applications of the Katrina lessons learned in the Canadian context further highlighted the fact that other than the transformation that has occurred in the CF, the changes made with regards to PSEPC and the OGDs may have, in effect, produced little net improvements. Over the years, the leadership vacuum of sorts within the emergency management community has trust the CF in the role of informal leader. This may have created a comfort zone for PSEPC and the OGDs and provided them with little incentive to make progress of their own. PSEPC and OGDs must take ownership of the problem. Until they do, the only net improvement in consequence management will be because of the CF transformation and the standing up of Canada Command.



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