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EXERCISE NEW HORIZONS

Emergency Preparedness for Domestic Operations: Are We There Yet?

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ABSTRACT

A national government's first responsibility is to protect its citizens. 9/11 revealed some capability gaps in Canada's approach to national security and its Emergency Preparedness. In response, the federal government developed its first ever National Security Policy, released an integrated International Policy Statement and created the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada to be the lead agency for Canada's Emergency Preparedness and Response capability. The Canadian Forces (CF) has a responsibility to assist Other Government Departments and other agencies with crisis management and contingency planning. The CF has proven itself handy in domestic operations in the past, but also needed to put additional emphasis on its Emergency Preparedness and Response. The creation of Canada Command provides more focus on the CF's domestic operations responsibilities. With its proven Operational Planning Process, general preparedness, and considerable experience, the CF can assist OGDs and agencies with the development, resourcing, exercising/validating and revision of their contingency plans, as well as providing assistance with crisis management. Civilian agencies are adapting to a post-9/11 environment and will develop much better Emergency Preparedness and Response capabilities with the active assistance of the CF.

*Power struggles, jealousies, and differences of opinion inevitably arise when three different jurisdictions of government have important roles to play in solving a problem. As a result, developing a truly national approach to disaster response and assuring that resources and training are sufficiently and properly distributed is a formidable task.*¹

INTRODUCTION

The people and government of Canada have determined that they want the Canadian Forces (CF) to focus on three roles: the defence of Canada; the security of North America; and promoting Canadian values abroad.² Given our generous geography, strong Allies and lack of direct threats to Canada, Canadians have supported a CF that is primarily expeditionary in nature, but have a residual domestic operations capability. The CF has come to the aid of Canadians in the recent past in support of civilian authorities and has performed well.³

The CF does not have the personnel or equipment to be everything to all. Over the last half-century, the CF has been expected to achieve more with less and this has created a Commitment Capability Gap (CCG) due, in part, to the competition for resources at the federal level.⁴ With a small population, and a large country and infrastructure, the demands for resources are many. At the provincial level, the demands are no less and also create a similar CCG. Unfortunately:

¹*National Emergencies: Canada's Fragile Front Lines, An Upgrade Strategy, Report of the Standing Committee on National Security and Defence*, The Honourable Colin Kenny, Chair (Ottawa: The Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, March 2004), 38.

²Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), Message from the Minister.

³*Ibid.*, 10.

⁴Bland, Douglas L, *Chiefs of Defence, Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1995), 241 – 243 and 253 – 261.

... we Canadians don't seem to be aware enough of our vulnerabilities to man-made and natural disasters, both at home and abroad, to invest a reasonable amount of our public purse in the preservation of what we've got here. The abdication of this responsibility cannot serve Canadians well.⁵

The situation at both the federal and provincial/territorial levels has necessitated some considerable risk analysis and management. The focus of Emergency Preparedness has been on responding to low-end natural disasters and manmade incidents. Given the CCG, the focus has understandably been on these more likely situations. The 11 September 2001 (9/11) terrorist attacks on the United States of America (US) exposed Canada's need to more fully consider all hazards, including human induced intentional acts such as terrorism.

The 9/11 attacks changed Canada's approach to national security and Emergency Preparedness. 9/11 exposed not only the CF's capabilities, but also vulnerabilities; domestic operations had been less of a priority given the CF's expeditionary focus and, subsequently, needed to be conducted more proactively. Security for the G8 Summit held in the Kananaskis Valley months after 9/11 had to be approached differently from past security operations given the threat and its remote location. Other future domestic operations would also have to be different in a post-9/11 Canada.

At the federal government level, the new Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (DPSEPC) was created as the lead agency for domestic operations. The Department of National Defence (DND) and CF play a supporting role to DPSEPC as do Other Government Departments (OGDs) and their agencies. Canada also

⁵*Wounded, Canada's Military and the Legacy of Neglect, Our Disappearing Options for Defending the Nation Abroad and at Home, An Interim Report of the Standing Committee on National Security and Defence*, The Honourable Colin Kenny, Chair (Ottawa: The Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, September 2005), 3.

now has its first ever National Security Policy (NSP). At the provincial/territorial level, Emergency Measures/Management Organizations (EMOs) are the lead agencies. Regionally, the CF can deploy elements in supporting roles to these EMOs through Canada Command's new regional Headquarters (HQs). DPSEPC and EMOs have the responsibility to synchronize the efforts of first responders and to coordinate the assistance of civilians and other jurisdictions, such as the DND or Department of the Solicitor General of Canada (DSolGen).⁶ The Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence has published a number of reports outlining related problems and proposing solutions; it seems that many of the recommendations have been and are being acted upon. These divisions of responsibility and the progress achieved are significant as "...there can be no greater role, no more important obligation for a government, than the protection and safety of its citizens."⁷

The 9/11 attacks on the US exposed the vulnerabilities in DND and OGDs' plans for crisis management. An assessment of our current level of domestic operations preparedness reveals that plan development, resourcing, validation and revision have been improved, but that additional work is still required. The manner in which security for the G8 Summit in Kananaskis Valley was planned and executed could be used as a point of departure to improve planning and cooperation for future domestic operations and contingency plans. Although some significant progress has been made recently, it will be

⁶Department of National Defence, *Canada Command Letter of Promulgation (Working DRAFT – 1 November 2005)* (Ottawa: DND Canada, n.d. 2005/2006), 4-4/9, 4-5/9 and 5-18/33 – 5-20/33.

⁷Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, April 2004), vii to Executive Summary.

argued that, with the CF's support, OGDs can improve their Emergency Preparedness and Response capability through effective forward planning.

Our domestic operations experiences over the last decade will be used to highlight from where we have come, where we are after 9/11 and to where we should be going. First, as Contingency Operations prior to 9/11, Operations ASSISTANCE and RECUPERATION will be reviewed as confidence-building domestic operations. Second, although undergoing a structural transformation, the CF will be shown to have made some significant progress in its readiness to support OGDs for domestic operations. Third, the preparedness of some key OGDs will be examined. Last, recommendations will be suggested to improve the Emergency Preparedness and Response capability of OGDs.

SIGNIFICANCE OF 1997 AND 1998 DOMESTIC OPERATIONS

In 1997 and 1998, there were two natural disasters that overwhelmed the civilian authorities' capabilities. The 1997 Red River Flood had caused significant damage South of the Canada/US border and was expected to have a similar impact on Southern Manitoba; two Canadian Mechanized Brigade Groups (CMBGs), Air Command Headquarters (AIRCOM HQ), local Air Force elements and some Navy experts were called in to assist Winnipeg and the smaller towns. The 1998 Central Canada Ice Storms hit quickly and all three CMBGs and some Air Force elements were called in to help around Ottawa and Montreal. These domestic operations revealed some gaps in capabilities, but perhaps more importantly, they showed how we could cooperate and get things done.

While the deployment to Manitoba revealed a number of areas for improvement, the following three points will be highlighted: communications; preparatory movement; and general preparedness. Land Forces Western Area (LFWA) spans from Manitoba to British Columbia and communications must be maintained with all provincial governments, but lacked those interpersonal ties with the CF due to personnel reassignments. The civilian authorities in Manitoba were generally reluctant in asking for assistance. Even once assistance was formally requested, there was still some confusion as to what was required.⁸ Being forward-thinking, some CF elements were prepared for a quick deployment to the area to cut down the lead-time required once help was formally requested by Manitoba.⁹ To save time, 2 CMBG commenced its move towards Winnipeg three days prior to receiving formal direction to deploy from Petawawa. The preparedness of CF elements to deploy to the region was certainly affected by the early warning given to some elements, but also because all 1 CMBG and 2 CMBG units were already deployed or preparing to deploy on long Field Training Exercises after months of preparation.¹⁰

The CF's and OGD's response to the Ice Storms, the second major natural disaster within a year, also yielded some good lessons, of which, the following three will be emphasized: preparatory movement; problem-solving capability; and utility of military chain of command. In Ontario, although a sub-unit sized Immediate Reaction Unit Vanguard was initially sent to Ottawa to assist local authorities, the 2 CMBG

⁸Department of National Defence, *LFWA 3350-105-26 (Op Assistance) Op Assistance Post Operation Report* (Edmonton: DND Canada, n.d. July 1997, Covering Letter.

⁹Ibid., Annex D, 1 and 2.

¹⁰Author served in HQ 2 CMBG/Joint Task Force North during Op ASSISTANCE in Winnipeg in 1997.

Reconnaissance Group (Recce Gp) deployed to NCR anticipating a much larger problem. The remainder of 2 CMBG deployed to the NCR a short time later based upon the findings of the Recce Gp rather than as a result of formal requests and orders passed through the various jurisdictions as these organizations were engaged in the close fight.¹¹ Units were assigned defined Areas of Operations outside of the NCR where the needs were greater. Using their ‘can-do’ approach, soldiers on the ground helped many small communities with consequence management and prioritizing requirements. These requests were passed up the military chain of command and resources were quickly allocated where required. 2 CMBG soldiers on the ground used the CF structure and resources to get support where it was needed most.¹² Soldiers in the Montreal area were providing similar essential assistance.

The CF responded to 1997 Red River Floods and the 1998 Central Canada Ice Storms with little warning, no additional training or equipment, and was certainly ‘value-added’. The CF’s hierarchical structure, general preparedness, decision-making processes and self-sufficiency certainly helped in these domestic operations. The CF received a lot of public exposure due to these domestic operations, but perhaps more importantly, both the DND/CF and OGDs became familiar with one another’s capabilities and their compatibility.

¹¹Department of National Defence, *LFCA 3350-1-8-D (G3 Ops AOC) Op Recuperation – Post Operation Points* (Toronto: DND Canada, n.d. February 1998), 3, 4 and 9

¹²Author served in HQ 2 CMBG during Operation RECUPERATION in Ottawa in 1998.

CF'S READINESS FOR DOMESTIC OPERATIONS

The CF's focus prior to 9/11 was on expeditionary operations. Canada also lacked a firm National Security Policy (NSP). The preparedness of the jurisdictions was indeed inadequate to respond to a direct threat like that of 9/11.¹³ As the country's force of last resort, the CF with its culture of 'getting things done', had to improve its capability to assist OGDs with domestic emergencies. Contingency plans only become effective once developed, resourced, exercised/validated and revised as required; this leads to true capability.

The CF's hierarchical structure and representation across Canada had provided a flexible response capability for governments in the recent past, but 9/11 created a new environment. The Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (DCDS) was responsible to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) for the conduct of all foreign and domestic operations. The DCDS filled both a operational command and a strategic staff function. The respective Commanders of the four Land Force Areas (LFAs) were responsible to the DCDS for coordinating CF support to civilian agencies in their respective AOs.

Commander LFWA was directly responsible for the CF's supporting role for security to the G8 Summit as Commander Joint Task Force (JTF) GRIZZLY. Given the hierarchical structure of LFAs, LFWA already had a firm foundation on which to plan and execute its role in the G8 Summit. Also, given the clear lines of command and staff responsibilities, LFWA had an established set of delegated authorities in place. The areas

¹³Department of the Solicitor General of Canada, *Summary of the Federal/ Provincial/Territorial Consultations on Developing Options To Strengthen National Consequence Management Capability for Terrorist Incidents, October – December 2001* (Ottawa: Department of the Solicitor General of Canada, March 2002), 2.

of responsibility for an Air Component (AC), a Land Component (LC) and a Support Component (SC) within the JTF were relatively easily sorted.

The G8 Summit in Kananaskis Valley was the first major meeting of government leaders after 9/11. Security was of great concern and the DSolGen, through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), was the lead agency for security. DND, through the CF, provided military-specific support to Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's (DFAIT's) G8 Summit Management Office (SMO). In the Valley, the LC provided support directly to the RCMP. At the tactical level, there was some integrated planning, but planning and operations depended considerably on inter-agency cooperation. The JTF was organized not only along functional lines, but also based upon the terrain. The RCMP was organized a bit differently and had a more flat hierarchy and response-oriented structure.¹⁴ Although some elements of the RCMP did not initially comprehend the value of the military assistance, they relatively quickly gained an appreciation of the LC's complementary nature. The LC's focus was on terrorists and "woods", whereas the RCMP was primarily focused on delegates, protestors, roads and buildings.¹⁵ From an LC perspective, there was good cooperation with the RCMP and the RCMP was increasingly integrated in the latter stages of the Operational Planning Process (OPP, which includes the steps of Initiation, Orientation, Concept of Operations Development, Plan Development and Plan Review).¹⁶

¹⁴Colonel D, Barr, "The Kananaskis G8 Summit: A Case Study for Interagency Cooperation," (Toronto: Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Course Paper, 2003), 9 – 11.

¹⁵Author served in HQ 1 CMBG/LC during Operation GRIZZLY (G8 Summit) in Kananaskis Valley in 2002.

¹⁶Department of National Defence, B-GG-005/004/AF-000 *Canadian Forces Operations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 18 December 2000), Chapter 4.

The JTF developed a plan to support the SMO, resourced the plan, exercised/ validated the plan at the operational and tactical levels, and revised the plan in the months leading up to the G8 Summit. This process not only developed a plan that was proven workable, but, perhaps more importantly, developed good cooperative working relationships. At the tactical level, the RCMP and LC HQs were even integrated in a single HQ in the Valley during the G8 Summit. The times encouraged all jurisdictions to work together.

The CF utilized its hierarchical structure and general preparedness at the strategic, operational and tactical levels to respond to a planned security operation. The CF's relative self-sufficiency for operations, stemming from their expeditionary focus, also allows it to be an independently employed organization. Its elements are relatively easy organizations to use to assist OGDs as they do not require prohibitive external support. The question is really though to what degree can the CF assist with contingency domestic operations.

Canada's NSP states that:

The National Security Policy focuses on addressing three core national security interests:

1. protecting Canada and Canadians at home and abroad;
2. ensuring Canada is not a base for threats to our allies; and
3. contributing to international security.¹⁷

Given the high operational tempo in the CF and competing priorities at the federal level, the CF has made some hard choices on the general preparedness of its components and the equipment available with which to train and fight. In the Army, the Managed

¹⁷Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, April 2004), vii to Executive Summary.

Readiness Plan (MRP) ensures that the units and formations receive the training required to accomplish their missions and Whole Fleet Management (WFM) balances equipment requirements. These same trained CF personnel and equipment garrisoned across Canada will help address Canada's three core national security interests.

New operational-level HQs were created recently as part of CF Transformation and should provide better focus for Emergency Preparedness and Response. Canada Command was created specifically to provide better CF command and control for domestic operations or emergencies. The CF now "...view[s] Canada as a single operational area."¹⁸ Six existing lower operational HQs across Canada have been designated as Joint Task Force HQs (JTFHQs), assigned tasks and allocated some additional resources. Although this better construct should provide an improved focus for domestic operations, it should be noted that the Commander and some HQ staff will have both Canada Command force employment responsibilities, and parent command force generation responsibilities. The creation of Canada Command has not alleviated the high operational tempo in the CF, but is nevertheless an essential enabler.

Canada Command will review all related CF direction and plans as well as any related interdepartmental plans. It should be reinforced that:

Written disaster plans are important, but they are not enough by themselves to assure preparedness. In fact, they can be an illusion of preparedness if they are not tied to training programs, not acceptable to the intended users, not tied to the necessary resources, or not based on valid assumptions. This illusion is called the "paper" plan syndrome.¹⁹

¹⁸Department of National Defence. *Canada Command Letter...*, iii.

¹⁹Erik Auf der Heide, *Disaster Response: Principles of Preparation and Coordination* [book on-line]; available from <http://orgmail2.coe-dmha.org/dr/static.htm>; Internet; accessed 22 April 2006, Introduction to Chapter 3.

As long as Canada Command follows the construct of developing, resourcing, exercising/validating and revising these contingency plans, the CF should have a true picture of its Emergency Preparedness.

Two cautionary points will be emphasized as examples of incomplete planning. First, although for many years LFCA had a general contingency plan for domestic operations, specific essential camp stores were not quantified nor sourced. Once these items were identified in 2003, it took another 18 months to secure these stores. Although the cost of these items was not overly prohibitive nor was getting approval in principle by Army staff difficult, convincing those responsible for procurement and stocking took some time. Even at some lower tactical levels, there was some skepticism as to the value of having 'just in case' camp stores available. Without proper resourcing, the plan was merely a good idea.²⁰

Second, once LFCA's longstanding domestic operations contingency plan was exercised during Exercise DOMESTIC GUARDIAN in February 2005, LFCA HQ had to revise its plan. The exercise revealed limitations on employment of Reserves, availability of equipment and some inadequate familiarity with the plan. Although the exercise was planned months in advance and conducted in Toronto, there was very little participation by Ontario's EMO. Without this exercise, these shortfalls would not have been revealed, the plan would not have been revised and additional effort may not have been made to breach the gaps in communications between LFCA HQ and Ontario's EMO.²¹

²⁰Author served in LFCA HQ in Toronto from 2003 to 2005.

²¹Author served in LFCA HQ during Exercise DOMESTIC GUARDIAN in Toronto in 2005.

The CF's hierarchical structure, general preparedness, problem-solving culture and self-sufficiency have proved to be enablers in domestic operations in the past. In preparation for and the conduct of the G8 Summit, the CF worked well with OGDs and, specifically, the RCMP. Good cooperation, some integrated planning and the CF's 'can-do' approach were imperative for success; the essential construct of developing, resourcing, exercising/validating and revising the plan prior to the G8 Summit was reinforced. The creation of Canada Command to oversee all CF operations in Canada should provide better focus on our 'no-fail' task of protecting Canadians and preparing for the next unknown. The success of the CF and Canada Command in assisting OGDs in domestic operations will be measured in the strength of its plans, the execution of its tasks and its working relationships with those OGDs at all levels.

DPSEPC AND EMO READINESS FOR DOMESTIC OPERATIONS

A nation must respond to threats to its citizens, whether man-made or natural. Prior to 9/11, Canada had experienced some major natural disasters and had learned many good lessons from these experiences. While the merit of the statement, "Preventative measures are a tenet of good government and an indicator of an enlightened society," seems obvious, 9/11 caught Canada flat-footed.²² It was noted soon after 9/11 that:

...executive direction and coordination of activities [was and] is required when dealing with natural incidents, whether natural (e.g. Ice storms, floods, earthquakes), accidental (e.g. Toxic derailments, major oil spills) or premeditated acts of terror (e.g. Air India, Sept 11/01).

There [was] no national security policy that agencies at all levels of government [could] use as standard operating procedures or "concept of

²²*National Emergencies: Canada's Fragile Front Lines...*, 2.

operations.” Organizational charts reveal[ed] that the responsibility for major incidents [was] fragmented and relegated to different Ministries.²³

All jurisdictions within Canada had been engaged in emergency planning prior to 9/11, but refocused their efforts to improve their respective response capabilities. Many identified a Minister or ad hoc committees to examine their preparedness in the wake of 9/11.²⁴ These efforts should have been, at least, coordinated and, preferably, synchronized with one another in order to achieve both greater efficiency and effectiveness.

In response to these calls for direction, the federal government released Canada’s NSP in 2004 and created the DPSEPC. Canada’s NSP outlines responsibilities, a coordination mechanism for all government departments, assigned resources, a need for bilateral and national planning, and an means to bring together officials from Canada and the US.²⁵ A true coordinated approach was required to ensure that “Inter-agency and inter-departmental cooperation, at various levels, is a daily activity that takes place between officials...to advance on-the-ground collaboration and coordination.”²⁶ “It is imperative that federal, provincial and territorial governments act in common cause...,” as the federal government has the responsibility to plan and fund, the provincial/territorial

²³*Canadian Security and Military Preparedness, Report of the Standing Committee on National Security and Defence*, The Honourable Colin Kenny, Chair (Ottawa: The Committee, February 2002), 125.

²⁴Department of the Solicitor General of Canada. *Summary of the Federal/ Provincial/Territorial Consultations...*, 1 – 3.

²⁵*Canadian Security and Military Preparedness, Report...*, 51 and 52.

²⁶*Canadian Security and Military Preparedness, The Government’s Response to the Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence* (Ottawa: The Government of Canada, October 2002), 12.

government to plan and administer and the municipality to actually respond.²⁷ DPSEPC was given the sizeable task of bringing together all jurisdictions to address all national security needs.

Great effort has been expended to determine Canada's Emergency Preparedness and Response requirements and capabilities. To get the 'ground truth', Community Preparedness Questionnaires were sent out to all communities with populations of more than 20 000 to determine their preparedness. Larger communities seemed to be better prepared in general, but also acknowledged greater vulnerability; smaller communities, by their nature, had less expertise and felt that they were less prepared.²⁸ The disparities between communities of different sizes were significant, and indicate that a common understanding of capabilities and the manner in which to request external support are needed.

Emergency Preparedness continues and needs to continue to improve in some areas. Ensuring continuity in operations of federal departments is a work in progress and all departments require evaluation. Crisis Command Centres are being established. Critical infrastructure must be identified and information shared. Planning for pandemic emergencies, arising accidentally or as an act of terrorism, needs to be integrated and improved. Ontario and Quebec need to be able to access an RCMP surge capability more easily. Necessary emergency stores must be in place and more easily accessed by first responders. Jurisdictions need to be able to quickly communicate with the public during emergencies. First Responders need to have and be experts with the equipment necessary

²⁷*National Emergencies: Canada's Fragile Front Lines...*, 37 and 41.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 79, 84 and 85.

to accomplish their time-sensitive tasks. Hard-won lessons learned and best practices should be captured and available to all, lest the same mistakes are unnecessarily made again.²⁹

The common thread running through the aforementioned Emergency Preparedness shortfalls is the absolute need for better collaboration and communications within and between levels of government. There is a sharing of responsibility for Emergency Preparedness and Response among jurisdictions and, therefore, there must at least be a sharing of information and should preferably be a synchronization of effects.³⁰

There was (and probably still is at some levels) a perception that provinces “...sometimes get in the way...” when it comes to channeling funds to municipalities to improve their domestic operation preparedness; provinces have used some of these earmarked funds to “...hire personnel for their provincial [EMOs].”³¹ Comments such as these denote a lack of understanding of requirements among jurisdictions. It could easily be argued that provinces have a vested interest and the real capability of quickly redeploying first responders across their respective provinces as required and that, unless they have a capability to coordinate potentially competing requirements for resources, municipalities will not receive the support necessary. Although the federal government may indeed have the bigger picture in mind, the provincial governments are closer to the ‘ground truth’ and have been making progress.

²⁹*Canadian Security Guide Book, 2005 Edition, An Update of Security Problems in Search of Solutions, A Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, The Honourable Colin Kenny, Chair (Ottawa: The Standing Committee on National Security and Defence, December 2004), 95, 96 and 199 – 234.*

³⁰*Ibid.*, 199, 200, 211, 212, 219, 220, 227 and 228.

³¹*National Emergencies: Canada’s Fragile Front Lines...*, 42.

In Alberta for example, its EMO, commonly known as Emergency Management Alberta (EMA), is enabled by provincial legislation. EMA not only provides the link between the federal and municipal levels, but also between provincial departments, and between industry and the Province. A philosophical model for domestic operations has been developed that includes Hazards, Functions and Organizational Groupings. This ‘Emergency Management Rubik’s Cube’ is used as a model to depict the integration of all dimensions of the problem and to develop comprehensive solutions and response plans. Admittedly, the ‘Cube’ does not give EMA a plan, but as the philosophical underpinnings to developing real capability, it seems solid. The ‘Cube’ is built upon a foundation formed by National Strategies on Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Emergency Response and Recovery. EMA’s mission is to continuously lead and develop Alberta emergency management, with all partners, in the face of natural and human-induced hazards.³²

Much like CF plans, EMA’s plans have been developed to address Command, Sense, Act, Shield and Support-like requirements. EMA conducts provincial level threat-based risk assessments and oversees a provincial level Critical Infrastructure Protection Program developed with industry, which prioritizes over 2000 critical pieces of infrastructure. An integrated web-enabled EMA operations centre has been established for command and control in times of crisis and to conduct major municipal-level exercises every three years. District Officers deployed throughout the province support the conduct of major municipal exercises every three years. Statistically, first responders

³²Mr. C. Blair, Manager Operations and Training, Emergency Management Alberta, telephone conversation with author, 18 February 2006.

address 93 percent of all incidents; EMA's focus is on addressing the training and preparedness for the remaining 7 percent of the situations and it has developed a series of hazard-specific plans. EMA utilizes a CF OPP-like problem-solving/plan development process and uses a supported/supporting approach similar to the CF; this influence likely comes from the composition of the organization that includes some very recently retired CF field grade officers.³³

While DPSEPC is currently developing emergency management doctrine with the provinces/territories, there is an absence of a comprehensive top-down approach to emergency management. Most OGDs legislated to deal with specific hazards have established plans at each order of government, but there are varying degrees of success in the collaboration and integration of plans, which is only exacerbated by their lack of capacity to resource, exercise/validate, and revise contingency plans.³⁴

Canada now has a comprehensive NSP and DPSEPC as the lead agency to coordinate the Emergency Preparedness of Canada's different jurisdictions. Emergency Preparedness has clearly improved since 9/11 at all levels, but two cautionary points will be emphasized as examples of the importance of developing a common operating picture. First, although having a written plan is a solid start, unless it is communicated, understood, practiced, and likely revised based upon feedback, it is merely a "paper plan" and of little value.³⁵ At an Atlantic Mayors' Congress in fall 2005, the mayors noted that

³³Mr. C. Blair, Manager Operations and Training, Emergency Management Alberta, telephone conversation with author, 3 March 2006.

³⁴Mr. C. Blair, Manager Operations and Training, Emergency Management Alberta, telephone conversation with author, 22 April 2006.

³⁵Auf der Heide, *Disaster Response...*, Introduction to Chapter 3.

“...Ottawa is excluding them from key discussions about national emergency preparedness,” and that unless the “...master plan for emergencies gets down to [the working level],...the plan means nothing.”³⁶

Second, there will likely continue to be elements in all organizations that believe that everything is under control while others believe nothing is under control. As noted prior to an exercise of Toronto’s Emergency Preparedness for a terrorist strike on the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), “...there’s nothing like having a physical (simulated) test... You learn what you could have done differently...[and] what you could have prevented if you could have prevented anything.”³⁷ The truth usually lies somewhere in the middle of being fully prepared and not prepared whatsoever. Only by exercising the plan can one ascertain which additional measures need to be taken.

“[D]eveloping a truly national approach to disaster response and assuring that resources and training are sufficient and properly distributed is a formidable task.”³⁸ The new NSP provides the broad framework for domestic operations and contingency plans. DPSEPC and the EMOs have made considerable progress in their preparedness for domestic operations since 9/11. Within Canada, civilian agencies have the lead in domestic operations and need to be able to develop, resource, exercise/validate and revise those plans as required. The more integrated, tested and the familiar the plan to all, the more quickly and effectively it can be implemented.

³⁶Canadian Press, “Mayors Looking for Trouble Plan,” *Daily News* (Halifax), 16 October 2005; <http://proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 9 March 2006.

³⁷Richard Brennan, Rob Ferguson, and Kevin McGran, “Toronto ‘Properly Prepared,’ Official Says,” *Toronto Star*, 8 July 2005; <http://proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 9 March 2006.

³⁸*National Emergencies: Canada’s Fragile Front Lines...*, 38.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Significant progress in Canada's real domestic Emergency Preparedness has been made since 9/11. Building upon lessons learned during Operations ASSISTANCE and RECUPERATION, OGDs now understand that the CF is available and has the capability to assist. DPSEPC and EMOs need to be able to provide leadership for domestic operations. The CF's deployment in support of the RCMP for the G8 Summit was a good point of departure for future operations. Initially, there needs to be a better exchange of basic information on capabilities, plans and scenarios. Secondly, OGDs should be better positioned to lead the way with the support of the CF and by utilizing an integrated OPP. There are some enabling activities that should be equally effective in times of crisis management, and during the development, resourcing, exercising/validating and revision of contingency plans.

During the planning for G8 Summit security, the RCMP and CF LC not only cooperated with one another, but the LC also integrated the RCMP in its OPP where possible. The RCMP recognized the CF's strong OPP and its benefits as noted:

...although the RCMP post operation report does not make a formal recommendation for a Joint Planning Team, it does quote C/Supt Hickman (the senior RCMP responsible for G8 Summit security) as stating, "they're (CF) very good planners and I think that we can learn a lot from them". Supt Boyd went on to say, "they're (CF) outstanding, they're extremely cooperative and professional and the planning methods are something to behold. We could learn a lot from the way they do business."...C/Supt Hickman...was "adamant that joint planning was absolutely essential" for future operations that involve the CF....³⁹

It is recommended that DND and OGDs use a single integrated OPP at the component level and above for domestic operations, and that the CF and RCMP specifically use an integrated OPP for domestic security operations.

³⁹ Barr, "The Kananaskis G8 Summit...", 16 and 17.

It is Canada Command's intent to exchange Liaison Officers with key OGDs and agencies at the operational level.⁴⁰ DPSEPC and EMOs have established crisis centres for command and control of domestic operations. Five of six Canada Command's JTFHQs are located in provincial and territorial capitals, and there are CF Regular and/or Reserve Force units in the remainder. During a recent domestic operation in Toronto, LFCA HQ noted that the CF should play a facilitating role by:

...increasing situational awareness of both our field partners and ourselves; determining what their and our capabilities are and coordinating how gaps can be covered. There are some niche capabilities that the CF can offer that make us a valuable partner. We must understand the special skills that make us relevant that we can bring to both the Defend and Assist tasks....Our provision of a liaison officer (LO)...was an essential element of this HQ remaining informed [and] contributed to our ability to influence planning.⁴¹

To maximize our potential and impact, it is recommended that the CF imbed small planning teams at the tactical level in EMOs full-time to allow the CF to directly assist those organizations, rather than assigning part-time Liaison Officers during exercises and operations.

The CF's hierarchical structure allows for discrete tasks to be readily assigned to self-sufficient units and sub-units. The Senate Committee on National Security and Defence believes:

...that provinces and the federal government must find a way to bring the expectations of small and medium communities up to the same levels as large communities. Basically everyone needs to understand that, if needs be, they can reach out to someone else for help.⁴²

⁴⁰Department of National Defence. *Canada Command Letter...*, 5-29/33.

⁴¹Department of National Defence, *LFCA 3350-1 (G5 Ops) Lessons from Greater Toronto Area Operation (Working DRAFT – November 2005)* (Toronto: DND Canada, n.d. 2005/2006), 2 and 3.

⁴²*National Emergencies: Canada's Fragile Front Lines...*, 105.

EMOs support the conduct of domestic exercises with municipalities to test their Emergency Preparedness on a scheduled basis. The Medical Officer of Health of the City of Toronto noted that:

There is a clear need for better coordination among local first responders, health service providers at all levels and various provincial and federal departments in the areas of:

- a. Sharing Plans, resources, and intelligence;
- b. Scenario-based contingency planning;
- c. Tabletop exercises, training and drills;
- d. Inventory management, distribution and deployment; and
- e. Criteria and procedures for threat/risk assessment and associated protective measures for workers and the general public.⁴³

Low-level feedback will test and help improve the construct validity of contingency plans. It is recommended that JTFHQs imbed personnel from affiliated units/sub-units in these municipalities as facilitators with EMO representatives for the duration of any exercises, and domestic operations.

An initial plan is merely a good idea until it is resourced, exercised/validated and revised as required. Those involved should also be very familiar with the plan before the operation commences. This construct applies equally to DPSEPC and EMOs as it does to the CF; true capability must be demonstrated. EMA, for example, although being relatively progressive, has yet to resource and exercise all of their contingency plans. It is recommended that the JTFHQs exercise their own properly resourced plans using a combination of simulation and troops. It is also recommended that JTFHQs assist EMOs in exercising and revising their resourced plans to ensure that they also have a true capability.

⁴³Canadian Security and Military Preparedness, Report..., 125 and 126.

CONCLUSION

“Despite the profound implications for performance failure in the event of a natural or man-made disaster, when it comes to national security and defence most of us tend to trust in luck. And luck is notoriously untrustworthy.”⁴⁴ Protecting Canadians at home is clearly a ‘no-fail’ task for all levels of government. Being the force of last resort and because of the CF’s culture of ‘getting things done’, the CF has a responsibility to assist OGDs and other agencies with crisis management and contingency planning. The CF OPP is adaptable to different scenarios and leadership styles, but, at its core, relies upon leadership. The old military saying that ‘hope is not a course of action’ remains valid.

Contingency plans must be developed taking into account all available agencies, properly resourced, exercised/validated and revised as required, before true capability can be achieved. A continual review of the situation during crisis management situations and of contingency plans is necessary to ensure these plans remain relevant. As threats change, so must the plans. The CF has considerable experience at planning and can assist OGDs and agencies.

The CF is uniquely placed to assist the various jurisdictions. Building upon its successes in the 1990s and, more recently during the G8 Summit, the CF can assist with on-the-ground collaboration and coordination at the operational and tactical levels. DPSEPC, EMOs and other jurisdictions are adapting to a post-9/11 environment and will

⁴⁴*Canadian Security Guide Book, 2005 Edition...*, 7.

develop more effective Emergency Preparedness and Response capabilities with the active assistance of the CF.

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