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JSCP 34 / PCEMI 34

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C/PR-500/IRP/RP-01

## **Territorial Defence Battalion Groups – a bridge too far?**

By Lieutenant-Colonel B.D. Herve

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## ABSTRACT

The Reserves have collectively performed admirably while providing a professional manpower pool during recent national disasters such as the ice storms in Quebec and Ontario, Hurricane Juan in the Atlantic region, floods in Manitoba and forest fires in British Columbia. However, the provision of an eager manpower pool differs significantly from the skills required to respond to a terrorist attack, aid to civil power etcetera. The military, for the most part, is neither specifically trained nor equipped to deal with most man-made or natural disasters which may arise and the Reserves are typically less prepared than the Regular Force for a myriad of reasons, mostly related to inadequate manning and resource levels. On the other hand, the Regular Force is rarely as well situated as the Reserves in relation to interoperability with local government, first-responders and community-based relief organizations as the Regular Force is often housed in a somewhat isolated fashion.

This paper will outline points, both in favour and in opposition, to the assignment of the Territorial Defence Battalion Group to the Reserves, demonstrating that this endeavour is a bridge too far for the Reserves at this time in their illustrious history.

## **Territorial Defence Battalion Groups – a bridge too far?**

### INTRODUCTION

This paper will examine the recent Canadian Forces' (CF) initiative to form Territorial Defence Battalion Groups (TDBG) in response to the Conservative government's "Canada First" policy. Current planning has the TDBGs based upon the existing Army Reserve (to be referred to as Reserves from this point forward) footprint throughout Canada, exploiting the Reserves' geographical dispersion and their bond to the local communities in which they are housed. The issue to be examined in detail is whether or not this endeavour is a bridge too far for the current Reserve community. Are there adequate resources, personnel, inherent skills, flexibility and organizational appropriateness to successfully assume and fulfill this task?

The TDBG initiative, as originally directed by the Chief of Land Staff (CLS), is a bridge too far for the current Reserve community. The Reserves will have to morph into something other than their current capability or others will have to contribute to or assume the task of domestic security. If the Reserves are to competently conduct the TDBG domestic security task, they will require additional resources, more frequent and more intense training of a nature different than that conducted today, and significantly higher manning levels. It must be emphasized that the lack of governmental direction has hindered the development of this initiative -- if the government is not clear as to what they want to see as a capability on behalf of the Canadian public, how can the military actually deliver the capability with a significant level of confidence?

This discourse will outline a historical perspective regarding the role of the Reserves, followed by a summary of the direction that has been promulgated, concluding with an examination of the capability of the Reserves to actually conduct the task.

## RESERVES – HISTORICAL REFLECTION

Canada's Reserves officially came into being with the passage of the Militia Act of 1855. The primary role of the Reserves is to augment (both depth and breadth), sustain and mobilize in support of the Regular Force, facilitating the attainment of both domestic and international obligations.<sup>1</sup> The significance of Canada's Reserves is firmly entrenched in the consciousness of Canadians due to their overwhelming contribution to the Boer War, the two World Wars and the Korean War.<sup>2</sup> Although many present Canadians no longer have a direct link to those who served in the aforementioned conflicts, the current physical footprint that the Reserves hold within many communities is a constant reminder of their glorious past. There is no more readily available and more appropriate military tool to meet the Army's objective of connecting with Canadians<sup>3</sup> than those military personnel who reside permanently within a given community, often holding key civilian positions in their day-to-day occupation. In some cases, Reserves may be the only link the community will have with the CF.<sup>4</sup>

The World Wars focused on expeditionary operations, with the Reserves contributing significantly, deploying hundreds of thousands of soldiers. In 1956, the focus of the Reserves became the protection of the motherland within her own territory, to assist the civil powers in dealing with the aftermath of a nuclear attack.<sup>5</sup> There was the need to justify the existence of the

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<sup>1</sup> Department of National Defence. *Backgrounder – Canada's Reserve Force* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 20 February 2008).

<sup>2</sup> C.G. Peschke, Lieutenant-Commander, "Making the Most of Canada's Reserve Forces in the Post 9-11 Environment" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College, 2005), 2.

<sup>3</sup> Department of National Defence. *The Army Strategy – Advancing with Purpose* (Ottawa: DND Canada, May 2002), <http://www.army.forces.ca/strategy/English/resources.asp>; Internet; accessed 24 March 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Land Force Reserve Restructure Speaking Notes – unit Growth for FY 03-04, 28 October 2003.

<sup>5</sup> T.C. Willett, *Canada's Militia – A Heritage at Risk* (Ottawa: Conference of Defence Associations Institute, United Service Institute of Ottawa, 1990), 76.

Reserves, in the eyes of the public and politicians, as many saw them as a redundant entity given the strength of the Regular Force.<sup>6</sup> This role was a significant reduction in prestige from being the nucleus of an expeditionary force, resulting in a disastrous drop in image and morale.<sup>7</sup> A consequence of the change in focus was a significant reduction in the quantity of equipment held within the Reserve unit lines, relegating the Reserves to non-combatant status.<sup>8</sup> It would not be unreasonable, upon examining the current state of the Reserves, to state that not much has changed since 1956. The Reserves are still suffering from a lack of equipment, they are still searching for a specific niche by which to return to their glorious roots and, for the most part, they remain a non-combatant entity. One could justifiably wonder if the TDBG concept is not but another attempt to secure the existence of the Reserves.

#### FORMAL DIRECTION

“our security -- in its broadest possible political, economic and military sense -- is inextricably linked to the United States ... Our commitment is total, and we will give our undivided support to the United States now.”<sup>9</sup>

September 11, 2001 witnessed startling attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon; it was evident that the western world was susceptible to asymmetric threats. The end results were much more than just the over \$700 billion in direct and indirect damage to the economy and

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<sup>6</sup> The date of assigning the role to the Reserves has been recorded as 1959 as well as 1956.

T.C. Willett, *Canada's Militia...*, 77, and Minister's Monitoring Committee, *Army Reserve (Militia) Historical Highlights* (Ottawa: Minister's Monitoring Committee on Change in the Department of National Defence and Canadian Forces, 2001), 7.

<sup>7</sup> T.C. Willett, *Canada's Militia...*, 76.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>9</sup> Deputy Prime Minister John Manley, “Speech to Special Sessions of Parliament,” 17 September 2001, <http://www.patriotresource.com/wtc/intl/0917/canada2.html>; Internet; accessed 24 March 2008.

infrastructure;<sup>10</sup> it launched the United States (US) on an unsurpassed road to protect her vital national interests. Canada must be a player in the protection of her portion of North America, or she can sit idly by and watch the US impose measures that may not be in the best interest of Canada.<sup>11</sup> There is the counter argument to this where some will state that the US will always ensure Canada's security out of necessity: an ill-equipped, poorly funded Reserve is more than adequate for Canada's needs.<sup>12</sup> This paper will take the stance that, as noted by historian Jack Granatstein, Canada will maintain sufficient strength to deter any threat to the US from coming through Canada; we are not willing to become a liability.<sup>13</sup> Stated another way, Canada is not willing to jeopardize her economic relationship with the US.

Threats to Canada's security come not only from those who seek to harm our interests, but also from natural disasters.<sup>14</sup> In order to properly serve society, a nation must possess an adequate response capability to deal with security concerns, whether it is crisis management, consequence management or deterrence of the threat.<sup>15</sup> This is where the Reserves enter the equation, from a military perspective, as they can be the military presence for domestic crisis

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<sup>10</sup> James D. Hessman, "The Maritime Dimension," *Sea Power* Vol 45, Iss 4 (Apr 2002): 26-30.

<sup>11</sup> Douglas Bland, "Canada and Military Coalitions: Where, How and with Whom?" *Policy Matters* 3, no. 3 (February 2002): 26-27.

<sup>12</sup> J.M. Barr, Major, "The Future of Canadian Army Brigade Groups: Are They on Track to be Strategically Relevant and Tactically Decisive?" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College, n.d.), 15.

<sup>13</sup> Jack Granatstein, "A Friendly Agreement in Advance - Canada-U.S. Relations Past, Present and Future," [http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary\\_166.pdf](http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/commentary_166.pdf); Internet; accessed 24 March 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Margaret Purdy, "Critical Infrastructure Protection: a Canadian Perspective." *Fortress North America?: What 'Continental Security' Means for Canada*, Edited by David Rudd and Nicholas Furneaux, (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 2002), 21.

<sup>15</sup> Aaron Weiss, "When Terror Strikes, Who Should Respond?" *Parameters* Vol XXXI, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 117-133.

responses, sheltering the Regular Force from domestic obligations in order to maintain the government's ability to influence foreign policy with a rapidly deployable military capability.<sup>16</sup>

In the Conservative Party of Canada's Policy Declaration of March 2005, the "Canada First" Defence policy was first promulgated. In the document, it is mentioned that:

"the roles and missions supported by the Conservative Party are first, sovereignty protection, domestic defence, and North American shared defence."<sup>17</sup>

During the 2006 election campaign, the Conservative Party mentioned that their government, if elected, would:

"provide new territorial defence battalions with 100 regular and at least 400 reserve force personnel for emergency response to be stationed [in various locations throughout Canada]."<sup>18</sup>

Subsequently, the 100 regular criterion was changed to 100 full-time personnel and the exact locations (12 in total) were outlined.<sup>19</sup> Also, in 2006, the Conservative Party issued the promise to "recruit 13,000 additional regular force and 10,000 additional reserve forces personnel" to address Canada's independent capacity to defend her national sovereignty and security.<sup>20</sup> The Army's intent is that the growth in the Army Reserves will enable them to assume the TDBG task. Canada's international initiatives are to play a secondary role to her domestic obligations, which is not reflected in the military reality of the day.

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<sup>16</sup> Peter Haydon, "Our Maritime Future," [http://www.noac-national.ca/article/haydon/ourmaritimefuture\\_bypeterhaydon.html](http://www.noac-national.ca/article/haydon/ourmaritimefuture_bypeterhaydon.html); Internet; accessed 24 March 2008.

<sup>17</sup> *Policy Declaration*. Conservative Party of Canada, (March 2005), 40.

<sup>18</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.A. Trollope, *Planning Guidance Territorial Defence Battalion Group – National Capital Region*. (Joint Task Force Central Headquarters: file 1901-1 (ALFR), 19 December 2006), 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Stand Up for Canada*. Conservative Party of Canada – Federal Election Platform, (2006), 45.



The CF will most likely be part of the response to a significant domestic crisis, not necessarily the lead, but in support of other government departments. The National Security Policy (NSP) includes the following tasks that are related to the TDBG concept:

- a. coordinated Canada-US military planning to support civil authorities in responding to potential terrorist attacks and national disasters within North America;
- b. infrastructure protection; and
- c. an increase in Reserves available for civil preparedness.<sup>21</sup>

The Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008 mentions that the CF has the following three roles, the first two of which implicate the TDBG concept:

- a. protect Canadians at home;
- b. defend North America in co-operation with the United States; and
- c. defend Canadian interests abroad.<sup>22</sup>

More specifically, the official intent for the TDBGs is to:

“offer a standing capacity to support first and second responders with domestically focused land forces with critical skill sets and capabilities maintained on an elevated level of readiness. These regionally based Bn Gps will develop close ties with their provincial and municipal emergency measures organizations in order to complement and enhance domestic response to a range of threats.”<sup>23</sup>

This domestic focused role for the Reserves has been widely supported by a key political committee; it is not out of the realm of possible according to some.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Privy Council Office, *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy* (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, April 2004), 24.

<sup>22</sup> Department of National Defence, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008* (Ottawa: DND Canada, n.d.), 1.

<sup>23</sup> Lieutenant-General A.B. Leslie, *CLS Planning Directive – Affiliated Battle Groups and Territorial Defence Battalion Groups* (National Defence Headquarters: file 3000-1 (DLFD), 20 October 2006), 2.

As outlined in the Strategic Operations and Resource Direction (SORD), the Land Force (LF) center of gravity is “institutional credibility ... where the LF is recognized as a trusted and reliable institution.”<sup>25</sup> For the Reserves, “this means that assigned missions and tasks must be relevant, credible and adequately resourced.”<sup>26</sup> The SORD also outlines that the primary focus of the Reserves is domestic operations, with expeditionary operations being the secondary focus;<sup>27</sup> therefore, by extension, the TDBG task is to go to the Reserves.

“Pending formal announcement and in support of the government’s Canada First commitment, the Reserve Force will stand-up the initial six pilot TDBGs located in Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax. The TDBG concept is an operationally focused force employment structure that leverages existing Force Generation capacity of the Army Reserve for Domestic Operations and formed sub-units for Expeditionary Operations. Initial stand-up of the capability occurred on 1 April 2007 with Initial Operating Capability for Domestic Operations not anticipated before 2008. Partial funding from the VCDS for FY 07-08, could ultimately delay Full Operational Capability.”<sup>28</sup>

This direction is wrought with problems. The TDBG locations were decided by staff at National Defence Headquarters or the military’s political masters, somewhat in isolation. In certain cases, those who are responsible to implement the capability differ as to the best choice of location, the resources required, the meaning of Initial Operating Capability (IOC), etcetera. Furthermore, the formal government announcement to officially launch this endeavour is still pending (the

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<sup>24</sup> Senate, Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence *National Emergencies: Canada’s Fragile Front Lines – An Upgrade Strategy*, Volume 1, March 2004; <http://www.parl.gc.ca/37/3/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/defe-e/rep-e/rep03mar04vol1-e.pdf>; Internet; accessed 24 March 2008.

<sup>25</sup> Army, *Strategic Operations and Resource Direction 2008 Draft 1*, 2008, 1-2.

<sup>26</sup> Department of National Defence, *Land Force Reserve Restructure Master Implementation Plan Phase 2, Project Management Office Land Force Reserve Restructure* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 18 November 2003, revised May 2006), 5.

<sup>27</sup> Army, *Strategic Operations and Resource Direction 2008 Draft 1*, 2008, 1-2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-3.

announcement was initially expected to take place 1 December 2006),<sup>29</sup> leaving those charged to design and implement the capability to guess as to what the desired end-state is to be. This is obviously not a desirable way in which to proceed; perhaps resulting in the waste of considerable effort should the government's direction differ from the anticipated direction. Finally, the CLS originally directed that the six initial TDBGs would be established in FY 07/08, with an IOC (-) not later than 1 April 2007.<sup>30</sup> The exact expectations of "established" and "IOC" has been the source of much dissention but one thing is clear, as of the end of FY 07/08, there has been little concrete progress in terms of additional capability.

Land Force Central Area (LFCA), operating in a vacuum, issued internal direction to commence the process of standing-up their assigned Ottawa TDBG. The LFCA TDBG was tasked to be capable of assuming the Immediate Response Unit (IRU) vanguard responsibilities for the National Capital Region (NCR). As such, the TDBG was to have a reconnaissance component on eight hours notice to move (NTM) and a Vanguard Company on 12 hours NTM.<sup>31</sup> This is a rather aggressive readiness posture for an element that is staffed, for the most part, by part-time soldiers who are often engaged in other employment or educational venues. The following limitations were placed upon the LFCA TDBG, after reflection upon the resident capabilities of the Reserve units within the NCR:

- a. unarmed response only;
- b. limited mobility using integral and rental vehicles;
- c. limited communications (short-range only, no secure communications); and

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<sup>29</sup> Brigadier-General G.R. Thibault, *Planning Guidance Territorial Defence Battalion Groups* (Joint Task Force Central Headquarters: file 1901-1 (Comd), 20 December 2006), 1.

<sup>30</sup> Lieutenant-General A.B. Leslie, *CLS Planning Directive...*, 2-3.

<sup>31</sup> Brigadier-General G.R. Thibault, *Planning Guidance...*, 2.

d. limited internal sustainment.<sup>32</sup>

The entity that is in the process of being created does little to appease the tasks contained within the NSP. There is the appearance of a significant disconnect between the military planners, in recognition of current, inherent Reserve capabilities, and the rhetoric of the government; however, the disconnect cannot be confirmed until the government actually states, with some clarity, what their expectations are.

The TDBG is to be a “force employment structure focused on domestic operations and modeled on (but not equal to) the IRU for structure and capability.”<sup>33</sup> The Reserve Canadian Brigade Group (CBG) is to be the force generation base. The structure, equipment, training and manning of mission elements will reflect the Regular Force and be aligned with expeditionary operations requirements.<sup>34</sup> This is a rather ambitious task for the Reserves to successfully assume given their considerable resource constraints. Further, the alignment with expeditionary operations is not required for domestic operations. Many of the skills and military trades required for external deployments are not required for domestic operations. The Reserves should be structured for the tasks that they are likely to realistically face. Do not stretch beyond grasp, even if it is highly desirable to do so in order to alleviate the stress currently shouldered by the Regular Force.

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<sup>32</sup> Brigadier-General G.R. Thibault, *Planning Guidance ...*, 2.

<sup>33</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major D. Fraser on Army Reserve Transformation (Dom Ops) – Force Employment Structure, Force Generation and Development Overview, 10 – 12 October 2007.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

## RESERVE CAPACITY TO COMPLY

I will offer a few quotes prior to launching into the discussion of the Reserves' capability to conduct the TDBG task.

“because of the difficulties in predicting exactly when and where future conflict will occur and the level of violence that will accompany it, ... Speed of response will be of the essence ... there will be decreased preparation time between observation of and the response to a crisis ... Hence, there will be a requirement for rapid reaction forces, necessitating high levels of operational readiness, deployability and self-sustainability.”<sup>35</sup>

“we’re trying to train the C team to do an A team job, and it just can’t be done.”<sup>36</sup>

“The simple truth is that, while the Militia has been very effective in providing individuals in substantial numbers for peacekeeping ... no Militia regiment in Canada can put a trained platoon in the field; most cannot provide a section, a situation that is readily admitted by honest senior reservists.”<sup>37</sup>

The Army Reserves have a paid ceiling of 18,500 personnel (average paid strength of 17,300),<sup>38</sup> who are spread throughout 130 units in 110 cities and towns across Canada.<sup>39</sup> The Regular Force has been very reliant upon the Reserves to augment overseas commitments, often

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<sup>35</sup> Department of National Defence, B-GL 300-000/FP-000 *Canada's Army: We Stand on Guard for Thee* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 1998), 115.

<sup>36</sup> T.C. Willett, *Canada's Militia...*, 177.

<sup>37</sup> Dr J.L. Granatstein, *A Paper Prepared for the Minister of National Defence – For Efficient and Effective Military Forces* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1997), 14.

<sup>38</sup> Army, *Strategic Operations and Resource Direction 2008 Draft 1*, 2008, 1-4, and Territorial Defence Battalion Groups – Army Reserve Working Group, October 2006, and Department of National Defence, *Land Force Reserve Restructure Master Implementation Plan...*, 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Special Commission on the Restructuring of the Reserves*, The Right Honourable Brian Dickson, Chairman, (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1995), and Land Force Reserve Restructure Speaking Notes to the 10 Nov 03 MND announcement of specific unit Growth for FY 03-04, 28 October 2003, and Department of National Defence, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2007-2008* (Ottawa: DND Canada, n.d.) 30, and Department of National Defence, *Land Force Reserve Restructure Strategic Plan* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2000), 2-41.

targeting Reserves to provide approximately 20% of the force.<sup>40</sup> For the most part, Reserve units are an administrative collective, not a combat capable entity. The units fluctuate in paid and effective strength from a few dozen to 300 soldiers.

There is no such thing as a typical CBG in terms of personnel strength.<sup>41</sup> Their numbers are significant when considered in isolation, yet insignificant when one thinks about how each CBG is to eventually create a TDBG of 450 to 1000 personnel, without a guaranteed response to the call “report for duty.” Given previous participation levels for exercises and operations, it will likely take three Reservists to equate to one being able to respond to a call-out for domestic operations.<sup>42</sup> Virtually all CBGs will not meet the requirement to form a TDBG using the basic three to one ratio.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, certain key positions must be protected at the armoury to facilitate force generation of follow-on forces and personnel undergoing training are to continue on course.<sup>44</sup> This is a very tall order indeed: for the most part, “Reservists are simply not rapidly deployable.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *In the Service of the Nation: Canada's Citizen Soldiers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, John A. Fraser, Chairman, (Ottawa: National Defence Minister's Monitoring Committee on Change, 2000), 13.

<sup>41</sup> In the West, the trained strength of the three CBGs ranges from 959 to 601. Ontario fares somewhat better with her three CBGs all being near the 1200 mark. Quebec's two CBGs have approximately 1400 and 1650 plus strength. The Atlantic region's two CBGs are between 700 and 800 strong.

Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major D. Fraser...

<sup>42</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.A. Trollope, *Planning Guidance...*, 3.

<sup>43</sup> There are many who use an even higher ratio, for example four to one or five to one, for the more technically demanding positions.

Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major F.A.W. Bak on Communication Reserves, 10 – 12 October 2007.

<sup>44</sup> *CLS Planning Guidance*. (Annex A: file 1901-3 (DGLCD), November 2007), 17.

<sup>45</sup> Minister's Monitoring Committee, *Land Force Reserve Restructure – Professional Development, Education and Leadership*, (Ottawa: Minister's Monitoring Committee, Final Draft, 2003), 53.

The CF does not have the resources, equipment or personnel to satisfy current commitments. The CF is expected to achieve more with less, leading to a commitment capability gap.<sup>46</sup> In recognition of this situation, the Army has created the Managed Readiness Plan (MRP) for its Regular Force component. The MRP injects resources at key times to ensure that those tasked as high-readiness units are able to train and deploy with the necessary assets needed to succeed. The complement to MRP is Whole Fleet Management (WFM), which coordinates the resource injects as demanded by the specific MRP phase. If the Regular Force struggles to maintain their asset holdings at a sufficient level in which to facilitate high-readiness training, why would one assume that the Reserves would fare any better? Further, much of the scarce individual soldier equipment managed under the WFM umbrella will be the same items needed by the TDBGs, without the potential for significant near-term purchases. Initially, the TDBG concept was to be launched as a “cost neutral” initiative,<sup>47</sup> which is severely restrictive in terms of equipment purchases.

“Effective Army Reserve friendly policies and procedures must be in place that recognizes the true part-time, voluntary nature of the individuals in the organization.”<sup>48</sup>

Reserve participation is often limited by bureaucratic hindrances. For example, a Reservist who is to partake in domestic operations is to have a current medical, which entails having a medical examination every two years if over 40 years of age, or every five years if under 40 years of age. Further, if the Reservist is to be placed on less than 72 hours NTM, they are required to be

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<sup>46</sup> Douglas L. Bland, *Chiefs of Defence, Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces*. (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1995), 211-261.

<sup>47</sup> Territorial Defence Battalion Groups – Army Reserve Working Group, 22 – 23 February 2007.

<sup>48</sup> Department of National Defence, *Land Force Reserve Restructure Strategic Plan...*, 2-19.

dentally screened for fitness.<sup>49</sup> This is a rather significant challenge for someone who may only parade a dozen times per year and not enjoy the same access to medical and dental staff as their Regular Force counterpart.

An additional obstacle is the requirement to have passed the CF EXPRES Test or the Land Forces Command Physical Fitness Standard (LFCPFS) within the last 12 months.<sup>50</sup> These tests are often not scheduled on a frequent basis and for many, there is an extensive build-up training regime required prior to being able to successfully complete the test. If this requirement is to be taken seriously, Reservists must be funded for periods of fitness training in addition to the current funding for basic soldier and trades training. It must be noted that the Commander of Canada Command (CANCOM) can waive the fitness requirement for short-notice operations;<sup>51</sup> however, this is not an automatic approval process. The processing of the waiver is only as good as the staff involved, which can be problematic in the time of a crisis when a less than full complement of staff is likely focused on dealing with crisis management, not ensuring that administrative minutiae are being dealt with.

Technical trades training for combat service support (CSS) soldiers has been a source of concern for many decades. The SORD states that “a maximum of ten class A training days per journeyman”<sup>52</sup> will be funded -- this appears to be in addition to the funding to maintain basic soldier skills, which is funded at 37.5 days plus seven days of collective training during the

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<sup>49</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, 19 – 22 June 2007, and Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major L.J. Regimbal on General Support Issues - Personnel, 10 – 12 October 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, 19 – 22 June 2007, and DAOD 5023-2, and Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major L.J. Regimbal...

<sup>51</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, 19 – 22 June 2007, and CANFORGEN 126/06, and Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major L.J. Regimbal...

<sup>52</sup> Army, *Strategic Operations and Resource Direction 2008 Draft 1*, 2008, 4-5.



summer.<sup>53</sup> This is woefully inadequate to maintain the technical skills required to stay current or update the skills necessary to be capable of performing the technical tasks. What is not known at this moment is whether or not additional funding would be received favourably as many Reservists have other employment or studies, so additional funding does not necessarily equate to more soldiers on the armoury floor.

The availability of Reservists is not a constant throughout the year. Factors such as schooling and civilian careers have an impact on availability, making planning and execution difficult. Furthermore, other military activities impact upon availability. For example, augmentation to expeditionary operations or the support thereof, and summer Reserve training concentrations, which are critical to the survival and long-term proficiency of the Reserves, results in much equipment and Reservists not being in their home armouries for a significant portion of the summer.

If one were to take each of the selected locations and conduct a detailed analysis of the potential to form a viable TDBG, it would rapidly confirm that the endeavour is not feasible at the moment. For example, the TDBG designated for Ottawa lacks sufficient artillery, engineer and CSS soldiers. Furthermore, the location completely lacks an armoured reconnaissance unit.<sup>54</sup> This is a rather significant deficiency from the planned 450 (later changed to a minimum of 350 personnel)<sup>55</sup> strong IOC TDBG comprised of:

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<sup>53</sup> J.L. Granatstein and Lieutenant-General (Retired) Charles Belzile, *The Special Commission on the Restructuring of the Reserves, 1995: Ten Years Later* (Calgary: Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute and the Centre of Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, 2005), 13, and Department of National Defence, *Land Force Reserve Restructure Master Implementation Plan...*, 16.

<sup>54</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.A. Trollope, *Planning Guidance...*, 3.

<sup>55</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.R. Mouatt, *TBG CONOPS DRAFT V.2 REVIEW*. (Land Force Central Area Headquarters: email, 1 November 2007), 6.

- a. a Headquarters (-) including Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Psychological Operations elements;
- b. an Armoured Reconnaissance Troop;
- c. an Artillery Troop;
- d. an Engineer Troop;
- e. two Infantry Companies (-); and
- f. an Administration Company (-).<sup>56</sup>

Designating TDBG locations was the easy part of the equation; actually manning the TDBG is the problem. Reaching the FOC of 1000 personnel whereby the Headquarters is complete, three complete Infantry Companies are formed and the Troops increase to Squadron or Battery size<sup>57</sup> is not achievable in the foreseeable future.

Given that the Reserves do not have one location where all of the designated TDBG assets are to be co-located, e.g. as per a Regular Force Brigade, command and control will be a significant challenge. Components of the TDBG will be located at significant distance from each other, creating obstacles to training proficiency, readiness assurance, and leadership oversight. If the components were to be located at a central location, which is desirable for many reasons, new challenges arise in relation to infrastructure, retention and attraction potential as well as potentially severing historical bonds to communities and organizations. There is no easy solution to this conundrum.

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<sup>56</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.A. Trollope, *Planning Guidance...*, 3, and Lieutenant-General A.B. Leslie, *Territorial Defence Battalion Groups (TDBG)*. (National Defence Headquarters: file 1901-6 (DGLRes), 1 Sep 2006), 2.

<sup>57</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.A. Trollope, *Planning Guidance...*, 4.

Initial equipment procurement is to include, per location, six command/liaison vehicles, 30 civilian radios, 50 Night Vision Goggles and one skid steer.<sup>58</sup> This equipment suite cannot be considered more than a token effort to equip a domestic response unit in today's complex environment, let alone be capable of operating in a whole of government framework. The equipment purchases need to better reflect the desired end-state of the TDBG or else the entity will forever be constrained by a lack of resources, resulting in the TDBG not reaching its full potential. This situation would permit the naysayer to critique the TDBG without ever really giving it a chance to succeed, perhaps a self-fulfilling prophecy.

“Soldiers need to be working with and on their equipment constantly. If it is not available at the armoury on evenings and weekends, skills cannot be maintained and interest eventually flags. Close order drill is not a reasonable alternative.”<sup>59</sup>

If the potential to fill certain manning obligations is considered, the picture is bleak. For example, the Approved Reserve Establishment (ARE) for CIMIC positions authorizes 303 positions, less drivers. Current manning shows that there is a shortage of 85 personnel, which is likely to increase as the TDBG adds to the requirement.<sup>60</sup> The Signals staff-check shows there to be a shortage of at least 350 personnel.<sup>61</sup> The Engineer Branch anticipates that it will not be able to reach IOC in the areas of Explosive Ordinance Disposal, dive, geomatics and construction.<sup>62</sup> The Infantry Corps is more capable than most to immediately contribute; however, major

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<sup>58</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.A. Trollope, *Planning Guidance...*, 6.

<sup>59</sup> CISS Annual Spring Seminar 1998, *The Past, Present and Future of the Militia*, Edited by Jim Hanson and Peter Hammerschmidt, (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies, 1998), 37.

equipment shortfalls exist. Even if all units had a 100% serviceability rate, there would still be a significant shortage of rovers and troops carrying vehicles,<sup>63</sup> the precise vehicles required to project forces and coordinate their efforts.

“The Army Reserve must have sufficient materiel and materiel support to maintain the level of training and administration required by their roles, missions and tasks.”<sup>64</sup>

The TDBG is to receive “just in time” delivery of training and injection of equipment.<sup>65</sup> From an efficiency perspective this may sound ideal when one looks at civilian production models; however, it is likely to prove to be unwise when dealing with natural disasters or terrorism where the military must react in a credible fashion immediately. The ability to function within the full spectrum of operations, with a war-fighting skill set, is not something that is put in place during the moment just prior to responding to a crisis. Delaying a response in order to equip or train the Reserves will not be acceptable to those suffering. Reserve training has historically been plagued by a lack of instructors, equipment, and funding. Is there some new variable that leads one to conclude that this is about to change? Further, will readiness levels remain extant or will there be some appreciable flexibility to accommodate the necessity to train and equip? “Just in time” has the strong potential to place the Reserves in an untenable position of mustering soldiers, who are eager to respond to a developing crisis, yet lacks the training and equipment to respond. “Just in time” will become “just too late.”

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<sup>63</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Lieutenant-Colonel G.B. Plourde on Infantry Corps Backbrief to Territorial Battalion Group, 10 – 12 October 2007.

<sup>64</sup> Department of National Defence, *Land Force Reserve Restructure Strategic Plan...*, 2-19.

<sup>65</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major D. Fraser..., and Lieutenant-Colonel C.R. Mouatt, *TBG CONOPS DRAFT...*, 3, and *CLS Planning Guidance...*, 16.

Land Force Atlantic Area has undertaken an initial estimate of the necessary training for their assigned TDBG.<sup>66</sup> In addition to the basic soldier and technical skills that are expected of each soldier, it is estimated that the identified training could require an additional 30 days of training for some. Admittedly, the TDBG in its entirety does not have to partake in every activity, but many of its' components do. Collective training is not to be overlooked, adding additional time and resources (up to 25 days for key leadership appointments and 15 days for soldiers).<sup>67</sup>

The initial draft Concept of Operations (CONOP) offered the following generic groupings of likely domestic operations:

- a. destructive weather event;
- b. earthquake;
- c. forest fire;
- d. flood;
- e. assistance to law enforcement;

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<sup>66</sup> Land Force Atlantic Area recommended the following training:

- a. rules of engagement theory and legal aspects;
- b. domestic and emergency planning;
- c. aid to civil authority;
- d. humanitarian relief, including working with the various levels of government and non-governmental organizations;
- e. negotiations and liaison skills;
- f. riot and large demonstration control;
- g. security of vital points and key officials;
- h. cordon and search procedures;
- i. static and mobile vehicle check points;
- j. media awareness;
- k. wildfire firefighting and search and rescue; and
- l. critical incident stress.

Territorial Defence Land Force Atlantic Area Concept Brief – Territorial Defence Battalion Group Working Group Ottawa, 21 February 2007, and Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Lieutenant-Colonel Gary Meisner on Territorial Defence Battalion Group Update, 19 – 22 June 2007.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

- f. armed assistance to law enforcement;
- g. event security;
- h. hazardous environment;
- i. arctic deployment; and
- j. defence of Canada.<sup>68</sup>

What is obvious from the list is that “just in time” training could severely hinder a response: can one immediately deploy to a very remote location in the arctic during most adverse winter conditions, provide for their own sustainment, and still be capable of rendering assistance if one has not been exposed to winter survival and operations training? It is doubtful, with the good intentioned soldier likely becoming more of a liability than an asset. Further, armed assistance to law enforcement could be a highly challenging situation that usually requires a timely response -- there will likely be little time to train people for this type of assistance, resulting in a response being either too late to have the desired effect or having an immediate response which delivers less than a professional, coordinated impact.

TDBG deployment timelines are to be:

- a. Reconnaissance Group – 12 Hours;
- b. Vanguard (lead element) – less than 24 hours;
- c. Vanguard Company (-) – 36 hours; and
- d. Main Body – 48 hours.<sup>69</sup>

This level of readiness is to be projected forward using integral regional mobility assets. This is not practical as the Reserves lack integral mobility assets for both deployment and sustainment,

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<sup>68</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.R. Mouatt, *TBG CONOPS DRAFT...*, 5.

<sup>69</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major D. Fraser..., and *CLS Planning Guidance...*, 11.

as could local civilian companies who are near the crises or are in support of a crisis. This also does not address the more remote portions of Canada, where airlift may be the only means of responding.

The initial CONOP stressed that the TDBG was to be self-reliant and capable of operating in an austere environment without impacting upon the local/affected community.<sup>70</sup> The TDBG is to be self-sustainable for 72 hours and capable of remaining deployed for up to 14 days.<sup>71</sup> In order to comply with this intention, additional mobility assets would have to be acquired and commodities would have to be acquired and pre-positioned in advance of a crisis. Further, the potential for dispersed operations was discussed, with perhaps up to 100 kilometres separating subunits.<sup>72</sup> Command, control and sustainment of these subunits would be an unwieldy challenge for the Reserves. The initial support concept was extremely vague: it is very difficult to create a support concept for an entity that does not have specific tasks, is lacking a concrete organizational structure, and is not sure of its area of operations or how it will initially be housed, etcetera. In other words, it is difficult to support a phantom.

The initial CONOP offers the following restraint:

“must not be a burden or reliant on civilian resources that may be scarce and required for the population and civil authorities, and must not be an undue burden of the RJTF or other superior HQs during a period of crisis.”<sup>73</sup>

The restraint may sound logical; however, it is fundamentally flawed. It is unrealistic to believe that the CF would not compete for certain scarce commodities. For example, most military installations have significantly reduced their capacity to store fuel, as have local businesses.

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<sup>70</sup> Territorial Defence Battalion Groups – Army Reserve Working Group, 22 – 23 February 2007.

<sup>71</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.R. Mouatt, *TBG CONOPS DRAFT...*, 6.

<sup>72</sup> Territorial Defence Battalion Groups – Army Reserve Working Group, 22 – 23 February 2007.

<sup>73</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.R. Mouatt, *TBG CONOPS DRAFT...*, 6.

There is limited spare refining capacity, meaning that there is limited potential to increase production in the time of crisis, should the need arise. There will be times when the military response will be reliant upon scarce resources, perhaps becoming a burden: this is to be expected and not hindered by an unenforceable restraint. Finally, the notion of not becoming a burden on the Regional Joint Task Force Headquarters (RJTFHQ) is not reasonable as well. Many of the key RJTFHQ positions are assigned other primary duties, with the RJTFHQ duty being manned only in time of crisis. During a crisis, the RJTFHQ duty becomes the primary, all consuming task. Given this, of course the TDBG activities will become an “undue burden” but this is to be expected and must be accepted as necessary. The restraint must be changed to reflect the desire to reduce the day-to-day reliance upon RJTFHQ personnel and to recognize that RJTFHQ personnel will likely become heavily engaged, at least initially, during a crisis. Further, the restraint must recognize that there will be times when the military response will be reliant upon civilian resources, perhaps even becoming a burden; however, this should only occur with the blessing of the government officials.

#### NEED TO ALTER DIRECTION

The initial direction is in need of adjustment. The best manner in which to proceed, while maintaining a credible domestic response capability, is for the Reserves to complement the current Regular Force IRU until the Reserves are able to mount a significant IOC. Once the Reserves are able to take the lead, due to inherent capabilities or due to the fact that the task is not of an overwhelming magnitude, the TDBG can be directly charged to conduct the operation.<sup>74</sup> The Reserves are currently equipped with limited domestic response capabilities

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<sup>74</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.R. Mouatt, *Territorial Defence Battalion Group - National Capital Region*. (Land Force Central Area Headquarters : file 1901-1 (ALFR), Jan 07).



due to previous initiatives, the Domestic Response Companies (DRC). These DRCs have not been sufficiently trained, resourced nor manned in the past; however, the impetus to do so in order to create the IOC for the TDBG is a logical step.

The notion of the TDBG being able to sustain itself for more than a very brief period of time is problematic. Simply stated, there is a lack of supplies, vehicle platforms and skills with which to do so. The chance of resolving this situation in the near-term is highly unlikely given the myriad of constraints that exist (availability of personnel, limited trades training opportunities, lack of readily available repair parts and expendable stocks, etcetera); therefore, sustainment will have to rest on the shoulders of the Regular Force elements in the geographical area. As the TDBG concept matures and full-time positions are manned within, there is the potential for the TDBG to eventually be charged with integral support and limited close support tasks, as well as Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOMI) for augmentation following the initial deployment of forces.<sup>75</sup>

Perhaps a conclusion to be reached is that the Regular Force should assume, or some may say retain, the lead for domestic response. This, in isolation, may be feasible, but once the tempo of expeditionary operations is considered, reliance upon the Regular Force definitely has risks associated with it. As pointed out by Land Force Western Area, their initial three TDBGs are not progressing to the extent desired due to their focus on expeditionary obligations, the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, summer individual training and their recent assistance to British Columbia during the potential floods in 2007.<sup>76</sup> There is too much on everyone's plate at the moment without adding another concept that is not adequately resourced. The other Army Areas

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<sup>75</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel C.R. Mouatt, *Territorial Defence Battalion Group...*

<sup>76</sup> Land Force Development Working Group, presentation by Major F.A.W. Bak...

echo the comments of LFWA by simply inserting their current or upcoming Task Force and by outlining a myriad of other tasks -- no one is exempt from the pressure.

“Canada cannot, because of geography, demographics and economics, afford a standing Regular army capable of conducting all of its military commitments by itself.”<sup>77</sup>

## WAY AHEAD

The Reserves need better clarity as to their role. They could be assigned specific roles that are to be performed on a full-time basis, acting as force generators of part-time personnel. The TDBG concept works to support this opinion. Another possible role could include maintaining the current thrust of Reserves generating augmentation for the Regular Force; however, this restricts the potential for Reservists to contribute at higher levels of command. Finally, Reserves could maintain their mobilization role, which has not served them well in the recent past as this role has diminished significantly in terms of prestige and in terms of resources dedicated.<sup>78</sup> This paper asserts that Reserves need to have a say and stake in whatever role they are to be assigned in order for there to be buy-in and commitment to the desired end-state. Reserves need the chance to contribute to a level where they can assert their unique capabilities. The TDBG initiative is exactly what the Reserves need in order to return to their prestigious past; however, the Regular Force, those who are in charge of allocating resources and tasks to the Reserves, need to embrace the Reserves' role in this endeavour. Do not pay lip service to the issue or issue vague direction, rather, set the Reserves on the path to guaranteed success. This must be the long-term plan for the TDBG initiative, as the Regular Force cannot maintain their current operational tempo overseas while also assuming a more robust domestic stance. For the

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<sup>77</sup> CISS Annual Spring Seminar 1998..., 98.

<sup>78</sup> C.G. Peschke, Lieutenant-Commander, “Making the Most...10.

short-term, it needs to be recognized that the decades of ignoring the Reserves has come home to roost: they cannot assume the TDBG task in the immediate future, and certainly not without a significant injection of resources including full-time staff, infrastructure and training enhancements. One of the major hurdles, job protection legislation, is finally making progress in favour of the Reserves. Most of the provinces have recently initiated job protection legislation, which will make it easier for working Canadians to become part of the Reserves and also promulgate the notion that Reserve service is valued by Canadians as a whole.<sup>79</sup>

There is a broad range of disaster response training available which should be studied in detail, funded where appropriate and included in unit training plans. These skills are not exclusive to one region of the country, rather, a central Reserves training establishment or mobile training cadre could eventually be charged to deliver the training in-house. Perhaps, there is even scope to share the procurement of certain equipment with our civilian counterparts in the spirit of optimizing domestic responses.

The Reserve Force must be included into the MRP, either as a stand-alone entry in the overall plan or their own MRP. Either way, the expectations on the Reserves must be mapped-out for several years, and of course, resourced so that the way ahead is more than a paper policy with no teeth.

We owe it to the Reserves and those charged to develop the TDBG into a fruitful domestic response entity, to provide the required resources and mandate to see this critical endeavour proceed to a successful end-state. World instability that may affect Canadians on their home soil, and the potential for natural disasters, demands that we take prudent measures to ensure that citizens are afforded a reasonable assurance of protection. The Conservative government has introduced “Canada First”, admittedly lacking details, and Canadians are

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<sup>79</sup> *Special Commission on the Restructuring of the Reserves...*

expecting positive steps to be made on their behalf in the cause of collective security. This is not the time to drop the ball.

Regarding sustainment, the TDBG should focus on developing the ability to provide integral support, with perhaps limited close support, as well as rapid RSOMI capabilities for follow-on forces. The TDBG CSS staff could also form the initial logistics footprint and provide the planning/coordination framework to include account husbandry, the maintenance of equipment and the creation of support arrangements. This CSS cell could be structured into a tiered response organization, including a certain portion on full-time status, to ensure that a basic capability would be resident on a continuous basis, with predictable augmentation arriving to complement capability requirements.<sup>80</sup> Finally, the relationship with our Field Partners, civilian first responders and logistics providers, must be solidified to create a mutually beneficial, more efficient and effective response to domestic crisis.<sup>81</sup>

## SUMMARY

For the Reserves of today, successfully assuming the TDBG task is a bridge too far. This need not be the case in the long-term; however, for the short-term, the years of neglect have diminished their potential to contribute to domestic operations in a significant manner. The selection of the Reserves for the TDBG task makes sense in many ways,<sup>82</sup> however, not all is positive, there are associated cons.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> JTFC/LFCA J4/G4 Staff, Table of Organization and Equipment Administration Company (TO&E Admin Coy) (-) Territorial Defence Battalion Group IOC, DRAFT 27 November 2006.

<sup>81</sup> Territorial Defence Battalion Group – JTFC/LFCA J4/G4 Concept, n.d.

<sup>82</sup> Advantages may include:

- a. they are located in numerous communities across the country;
- b. they have a regimental structure with inherent command and control;
- c. many possess a civilian skill set that facilitates interface with first responders;

To conclude, this paper offers that the government and the CF should immediately work to gain the trust of the Reserves by showing a genuine commitment to permit the Reserves to successfully assume the TDBG task in the near future (perhaps five years out). The initiative must be backed by persistence, working to a defined end-state that all stakeholders embrace. Return pride to the Reserves while ensuring that the time, money and sweat associated with the Reserves results in an appreciable contribution to Canada. The government and the CF should not risk the security of Canadians, nor raise the ire of the US by not contributing noticeably to the security of North America. The Reserves can be considered a sound choice to represent the military in this endeavour, should we truly wish to match history with the rhetoric that has been promulgated by both our political and military hierarchy. The missing ingredient appears to be the commitment to see this through to a successful conclusion, which is no fault of the Reserves.

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- d. the task will provide a focus for the Reserves;
  - e. it will relieve stress of the Regular Force;
  - f. it will permit senior leadership to command units of the requisite size and capability commensurate to their rank; and
  - g. it may secure their relevance.

Territorial Defence Battalion Groups – Army Reserve Working Group, October 2006 and Territorial Defence Battalion Groups, Staff Concept, prepared by Colonel Leon Jensen, n.d.

<sup>83</sup> Associated cons may include:

- a. not all personnel will be available when required, especially given demanding readiness response timelines;
- b. majority of units are under-strength;
- c. civilian job protection issues;
- d. majority of units are under-equipped;
- e. lack of domestic response specific training;
- f. internal administrative policy hindrances; and
- g. lack of concise direction from higher headquarters and political masters.

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