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INDEPENDENT INTELLIGENCE GENERATION IN CANSOFCOM: NOT THE WAY TO FIND

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NOT THE WAY TO FIND**

By LCdr J.C. Parker

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INDEPENDENT INTELLIGENCE GENERATION IN CANSOFCOM: NOT THE WAY TO FIND

AIM

1. The aim of this service paper is to discuss if the Canadian Special Operations Force Command (CANSOFCOM) is at the point where it can independently generate the quantity and quality of Intelligence required for the Government of Canada and the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) to employ Special Operations properly.

INTRODUCTION

2. Throughout CANSOFCOM's relatively short history the key functions of agility, adaptability and network access (through shared capabilities) have defined their organization.¹ The creation of the Canadian Joint Incident Response Unit (CJIRU in 2005), the Canadian Special Operations Regiment (CSOR in 2006) and 427 Squadron (2006) have leveraged the Canadian Armed Forces as a whole to provide the key requirements for intelligence support along with their organic unit intelligence. However, the success of CANSOFCOM intelligence comes from leveraging the larger Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) organization and not mimicking it to provide a special operation force (SOF) effect vice a conventional effect. Canada's new defence policy *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE) outlines the increased demand for intelligence under chapter 6 Anticipate, Adapt and Act² and this increased emphasis will require further intelligence support within CANSOFCOM. However, this will not change the method that CANSOF *finds a way* but will require them to expand their leveraging of other government assets and continue to use networks to achieve their effect.
3. The unique method in which CANSOF operates must be appreciated and applied to its intelligence architecture when viewing how it delivers intelligence to both its subordinate units and its superior commanders. The success of CANSOFCOM has been achieved through its agility, and not replicating the intelligence architecture of other military or government organizations. This service paper will provide an analysis of how CANSOFCOM's intelligence architecture drives its operations through a model of networked capacity, leveraging other organizations to achieve success, while providing recommendations to further enhance its efficacy. It will discuss the disadvantages of an independent intelligence architecture, how it retains quality, provides quantity and supports decision makers for proper SOF employment.

DISCUSSION

4. **INDEPENDENCE**- CANSOFCOM is neither at the functional point of working independently, nor should it be. While this paper will focus on intelligence, the networked model of how operations are conducted is designed to maintain an agile force throughout the command. CANSOFCOM is designed on an ability to work within a network of organizations to achieve a strategic effect with a tactical action. Working independently, outside conventional forces, without proper liaison with other government agencies or without allied support and coordination is contrary to CANSOFCOM's intent and is not aligned with SSE's overarching

¹ LCol Higgins, "Special Operations Forces- Introduction, Functions and Capabilities" (lecture, DS 545 Capability Brief, CFC Toronto, Toronto, September 20, 2018).

² Canada, Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged- Canada's Defense Policy* (Ottawa, Ont: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 63.

direction of the “lean nature and unique characteristics” of a Canadian Special Operations capability.³ The requirement for collaboration with the intelligence community and the 'Global Special Operations Forces' network is especially true within CANSOFCOM and how it drives operations. How CANSOFCOM relies on networked professionals is seen by;

- a) CANSOFCOM S2 staff are chosen from a common pool of Intelligence Officers/Operators that are trained, professionally developed and managed by the Canadian Forces Intelligence Command (CFINTCOM). While CANSOFCOM staff will receive specialized Special Operations training, their trade training is common amongst all intelligence personnel in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). This reliance creates a common understanding of the intelligence trade and the community as whole. This is beneficial and allows CANSOFCOM personnel to access, through personnel networking the intelligence organizations of all other Level 1 commands. As an example, if a unit of CANSOF was conducting an operation against a maritime threat, they could easily contact the Royal Canadian Navy's (RCN) intelligence production centre TRINITY and liaise with subject matter experts to assess a threat in a maritime environment.
 - b) As special operations go beyond the realm of conventional warfare it is essential to maintain contact with Other Government Departments (OGDs) and their respective intelligence organizations. This interdependence within the intelligence community allows for several benefits. First, it enhances collaboration so that intelligence organizations can learn best practices from each other. Second, it allows for the broadening of perspectives at the analytical level. Finally, it informs decision makers regarding the capabilities of each organization while capitalizing on the strengths and reducing risk from weaknesses.
 - c) Beyond the Canadian perspective is the requirement to support our allies. By collaborating with allies and providing personnel in key SOF positions, we ensure that we maintain situational awareness by leveraging the entire SOF intelligence community of another nation. This mutually beneficial relationship allows for personnel development, maintenance of ties between allied governments and the ability to leverage strengths among partners. The use of liaison officers in SOF training units may also be beneficial to see best practices amongst allies.
5. A relationship with CAF conventional forces, OGDs and allies should not be viewed as a weakness within the SOF community. By leveraging the strengths of other organizations and maintaining interoperability, CANSOFCOM can ensure that remains agile, adaptability and importantly continues to contribute to network access that is provided throughout the larger armed forces, domestic or international community.
 6. Lastly, it is not solely the role of CANSOFCOM to produce intelligence to provide to higher decision makers (the Government of Canada and/or the Chief of Defence Staff) for their own employment. The generation of intelligence to influence a decision maker to employ a specific capability or provide evidence for a pre-ordained decision is unethical and inherently biased. Intelligence should be produced independently of the decision that may be taken based on its

³ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged- Canada's Defense Policy* (Ottawa, Ont: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 40

assessment. Intelligence professionals are obligated to produce intelligence without situating the assessment or attempting to influence a decision maker to take one course of action over another. One only needs to look towards the intelligence failures surrounding the invasion of Iraq in 2003 to find how intelligence was influenced to arrive at a pre-destined decision. The UK's government 2016 Chilcot Review stated 'The dossier was designed to "make the case" and secure Parliamentary (and public) support for the Government's position that action was urgently required to secure Iraq's disarmament.'⁴ The report continues to demonstrate the dangers of making assessments with a desired end state already in mind, or with institutional biases not accounted for. The independence of intelligence is essential to ensure proper support to decision makers.

7. **QUANTITY OF INTELLIGENCE-** Unlike other J codes, J2/S2 capabilities are not a measurable amount of capability that can be estimated to be provided to an operational commander. Unlike rations, fuel or water, the amount of intelligence that is needed to successfully conduct an operation is unknown and not quantifiable. Unlike the Operational Planning Process, there is not an agreed upon plan to ensure that risk can be mitigated by the "correct amount" of intelligence support. Through Mission Analysis, intelligence managers plan for the right combination of collectors and capabilities, but much of the quantity of intelligence is provided by leveraging other organizations rather than developing one's own organic capability for each SOF mission. This is due to the time latency for some capabilities,⁵ but also ensures that CANSOF organizations do not have to maintain a global situational awareness that is provided by CFINTCOM, Canadian or allied OGDs. Furthermore, the Force Generation and Force Development of unique intelligence specialties are shared with the CAF to ensure the federated provision of a unique skill. As an example;
 - a) CFINTCOM's L2 Command, the Canadian Forces Intelligence Group (CFINTGRP), provides unique intelligence collection capabilities that support the entire spectrum of operations of the CAF. Providing a duplicate organization to CANSOFCOM for HUMINT, and IMINT would create a large and onerous duplicate organization to accomplish the same tasks. CFINTGRP provides specialist intelligence capabilities by providing Force Development and Force Generation of specialists for Force Employment by the Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC) or CANSOFCOM. In this manner, intelligence support can be task tailored to CANSOF's needs. While the demand for these specialist capabilities is high across the spectrum of CAF operations, creating more organizations to manage the capability would not solve the Force Employment issues of the capabilities.
8. **QUALITY OF INTELLIGENCE** – CANSOFCOM is reliant on CFINTCOM for the provision, development and generation of intelligence capabilities for Force Employment by CANSOF units. While SSE emphasizes the greater demand for intelligence, it also iterates that CFINTCOM is the 'only entity within the Government of Canada that employs the full spectrum of intelligence collection capabilities while providing multi-source analysis.'⁶

⁴ United Kingdom, House of Commons, *The Report of the Iraq Inquiry- Executive Summary*, by John Chilcot et al (London, UK: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2016), 72.

⁵ As an example HUMINT sources may take weeks or months to develop in a given theatre of operations

⁶ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged- Canada's Defense Policy* (Ottawa, Ont: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 65

Therefore, the sole source of intelligence capability development will remain within CFINTCOM, and will be bolstered by the addition of 300 CFINTCOM personnel to address the demand.⁷ This increase in personnel will address growing demands, and some will be employed within CANSOF lines. Some examples include;

- a) The strategic human resource function that CFINTCOM provides for the employment of all intelligence personnel ensures that the specialty requirements of intelligence personnel are provided for and addressed by employers. Furthermore, CFINTCOM ensures that personnel balance their time in SOF organizations and conventional organizations to ensure that career progression is not hindered by sole employment in tactical organizations. Lastly, the strategic HR function ensures that the quality of personnel is based on the need set by the environment intelligence advisors (the N2, G2, A2, S2 and J2 of respective L1s) so that all environments can benefit from a common source.
- b) Intelligence Force Generation comes from one source, through trade training by CFINTCOM at the Canadian Forces School of Military Intelligence (CFSMI). One of the key areas that will be bolstered by more personnel will be the training establishment, after which personnel will be posted to CANSOF units. However, at this juncture intelligence personnel are posted through a member's request, and through CANSOF selection.

9. **EMPLOYMENT OF CANSOF UNITS:** The proper employment of CANSOF units can be achieved through numerous means that may meet a Commander's intent. One example of how to achieve this, that SSE mentions the need to continue building, is the CAF Targeting Capability.⁸ It is through this capability that SOF can be employed to the best of their ability. As an example;

- a) The composition of a Joint Targeting Coordination Board includes representatives from all elements and OGDs and ensures that the proper capability is employed by the Commander.⁹ It is through this method that a SOF or conventional force might be given a task to achieve the Commander's intent. This allows all component commanders to review intelligence, review options and assign forces to achieve the aim. The outline of a Strategic Targeting Board (Annex A) demonstrates how the decision to utilize SOF or the forces of another component commander might be achieved.
- b) At times, given the sensitivity of a threat, CANSOFCOM will be tasked due to its unique capabilities without engaging with the rest of the conventional CAF. However, this decision should be arrived at by considering all sources of intelligence and not just that intelligence provided by CANSOFCOM. This ensures that the decision maker (the CDS or government of Canada) is fully informed by all available means.

⁷ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged- Canada's Defense Policy* (Ottawa, Ont: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2017), 66

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ NATO, NATO Standardization Office, *NATO STANDARD AJP-3.9 ALLIED JOINT DOCTRINE FOR JOINT TARGETING*, April 2016, 4-6, accessed October 09, 2018,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628215/20160505-nato_targeting_ajp_3_9.pdf.

CONCLUSION

10. In conclusion, CANSOFCOM is not at the point where it can independently generate enough intelligence that it can influence a decision maker without having to access other means within the government or the CAF. Further, this ability to access other capabilities is a key tenet of Special Operations and enables resources to be shared and intelligence and personnel to collaborate on process and product. CANSOFCOM should not be a completely independent force, as CAF conventional forces can benefit from the professionalism, guidance and leadership that SOF provides, it also acts as a balance to ensure that decision makers are not solely influenced by the source from which intelligence is derived, produced or disseminated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

11. In order to remain agile, adaptability and have network access to other organizations CANSOFCOM should continue to invest in strategic relationships amongst CAF intelligence organizations, OGDs and allied SOF Commands and Training Centres. Through this method CANSOFCOM will continue to be able to provide tactical actions for strategic effects. While their employment should not be decided upon by the intelligence that they alone provide, given the collaborative based approach within the intelligence community, intelligence should be shared amongst Whole of Government partners to ensure the right asset is used in a given situation.
- a) **INDEPENDENCE:** The collaborative nature of the intelligence community provides a method to share personnel, resources and knowledge across the entire spectrum of CAF operations. However, to assist in collaboration domestic CANSOFCOM Liaison positions would allow for ongoing understanding of environmental threats, and allow CANSOFCOM liaison officers to draw from the RCN, Canadian Army (CA) and Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) intelligence organizations. This would allow for both organizations to draw from the expertise of liaison officers. Moreover, CANSOFCOM should continue to support liaison officers and their routine rotation through other government departments to enable the same information exchange within the Whole of Government. Lastly, the continued routine exchange of liaison positions in allied SOF organizations, operational commands or in training centres, can continue to monitor best practices, intelligence sharing and the leveraging of other national strengths.
- b) **QUANTITY:** Provide recruiting bonuses and specialist pay for in-demand intelligence capabilities (Interrogators, Source Handlers, Imagery Analysts and Language and Cultural Advisors) will ensure that personnel remain motivated to remain with these units. While the issue of specialist pay has arisen in the past, and been denied, the creation of CANSOFCOM detachments could be created within these units. These detachments would benefit from the CANSOFCOM Special Operations Allowance¹⁰, and the esprit du corps that comes from being associated with CANSOF, but remain with the CFINTGRP unit to ensure proper skill development while awaiting employment. They can then be forward deployed with CANSOF when required.

¹⁰ National Defence, "Chapter 205 - Allowances for Officers and Non-Commissioned Members (Effective September 1, 2017)," CBI Ch 205 Allowances for Officers/Non-Commissioned Members | DND CAF, October 04, 2018, , accessed October 11, 2018, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/about-policies-standards-benefits/ch-205-officer-ncm-allowance-rates-effective-01-sept-2017.page#sec-3851>.

- c) **QUALITY:** The top 10% of graduating intelligence personnel from CFSMI should be offered to CANSOF for a first refusal. This allows candidates that are highly motivated to compete for positions and provide an incentive to achieve the highest grades on trades courses. This would also ensure that CANSOF continues to receive the highest quality of personnel in their respective intelligence organizations.
- d) **EMPLOYMENT OF CANSOF:** The intelligence utilized to task/employ/deploy CANSOFCOM units should be vetted amongst all available intelligence. The compartmentalizing of information and solely producing intelligence within the SOF community for the SOF community can lead to an inherent confirmation bias. Assessing information with the sole purpose of arriving at a pre-conceived result can lead to using the wrong tactic to address a threat and violates current best practices in the intelligence community.

Annex: A. Typical composition of the NATO Joint Targeting Coordination Board

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ANNEX A

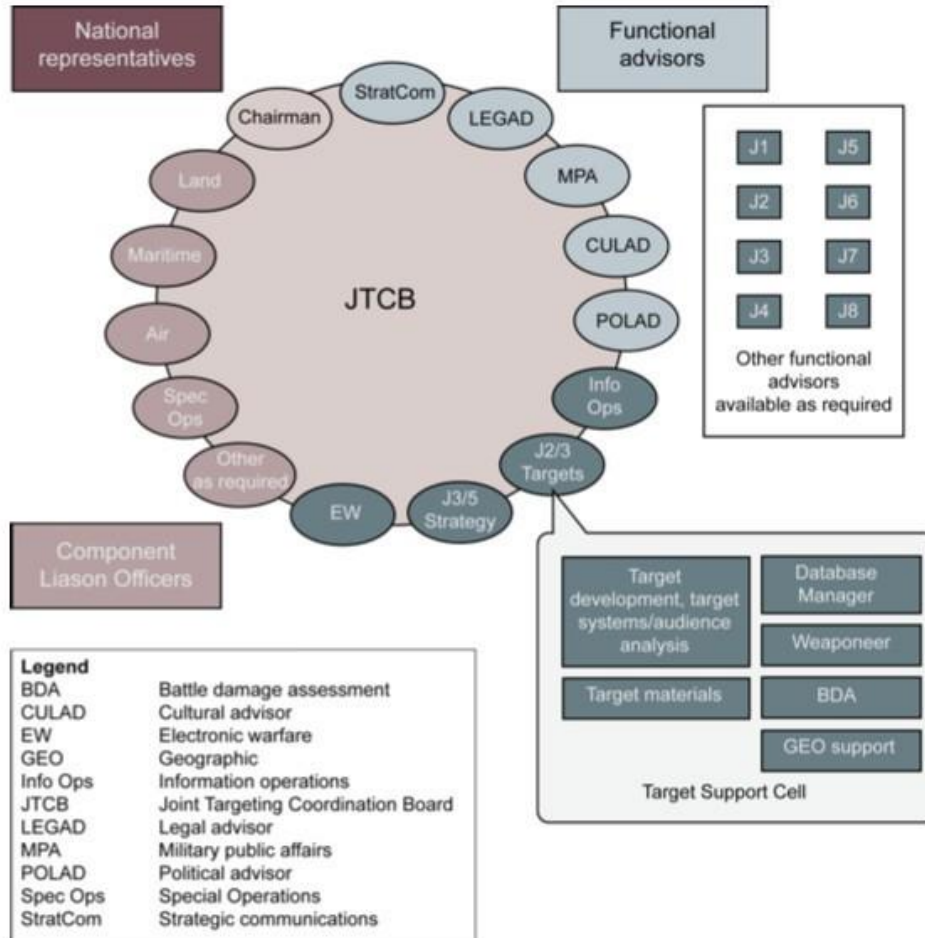


Figure 1 – Typical Composition of the NATO Joint Targeting Coordination Board¹¹

¹¹NATO, NATO Standardization Office, *NATO STANDARD AJP-3.9 ALLIED JOINT DOCTRINE FOR JOINT TARGETING*, April 2016, 4-6, accessed October 09, 2018, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628215/20160505-nato_targeting_ajp_3_9.pdf.