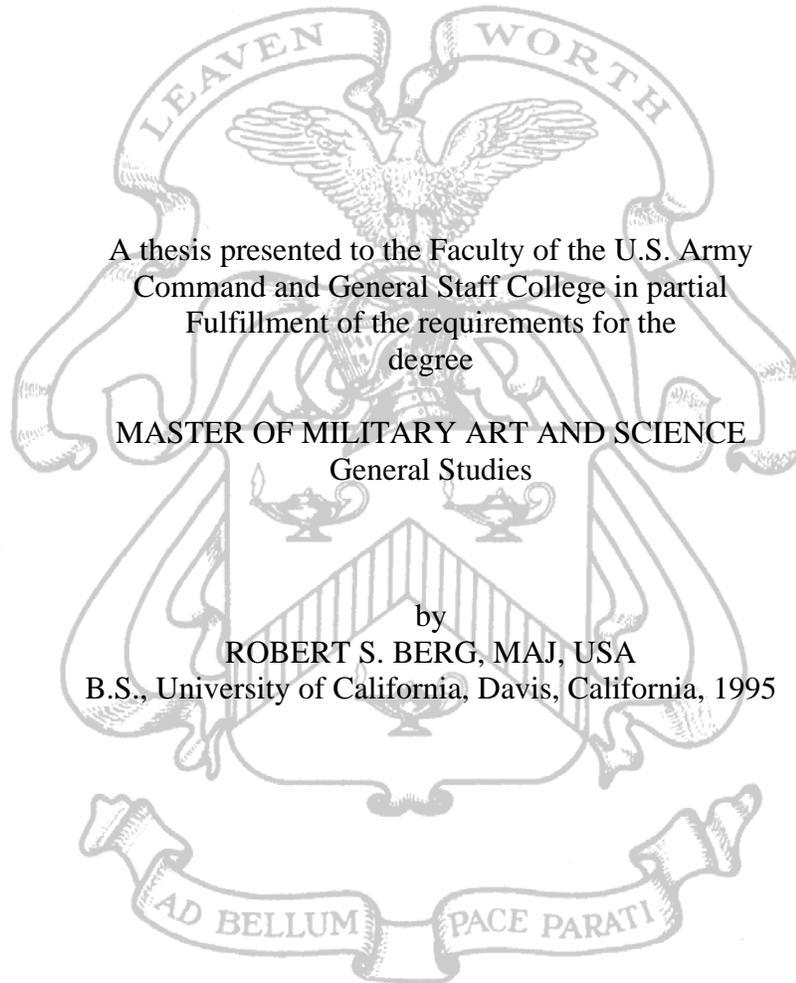


REFORM OF COMMAND AND CONTROL STRUCTURES
IN NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION
SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES



A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
Fulfillment of the requirements for the
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General Studies

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ABSTRACT

REFORM OF COMMAND AND CONTROL STRUCTURE IN NATO SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES, by MAJ Robert S. Berg, 63 pages.

The current NATO Special Operations Forces (SOF) capability is an ad hoc force which does not provide a synchronized, integrated Special Operations response capability to the alliance. There is no standing NATO SOF combat force or Command and Control architecture to frame the transformation effort. NATO has declared its intentions to transform from a static collective alliance for the defense of the common members, to an expeditionary force capable of responding to the needs of a growing global security concern. The central research question is: Does NATO require a standing Special Operations Force command and control structure and combat capability to meet the emerging global security requirements of the Alliance? This research revealed that a more robust and interoperable SOF capability is both advocated and supported amongst member states. The comparison of recommended structure reforms produced consensus only in the function of improved SOF and not in the form of that innovation. Interviews with subject matter experts within the NATO SOF community revealed support for a standing command and control structure but not to a standing NATO SOF combat force. This research supports the current NATO SOF transformation initiative with the addition of growth to an inner core and wider network standing force.

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ACRONYMS

C2	Command and Control
DA	Direct Action.
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JFC	Joint Force Command
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSCC	NATO Special Operations Coordination Center
NSTI	NATO SOF Transformation Initiative
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SR	Special Reconnaissance.
UW	Unconventional Warfare
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Humans are more important than hardware
Quality is better than quantity
Special Operations Forces cannot be mass produced
Competent Special Operations Forces cannot be produced after
emergencies occur.¹

Special Operations Forces Truths, United States
Army Special Operations Command (Airborne)

In the former Soviet Bloc capital of Latvia, the 26 member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) gathered for the Riga Summit in November of 2006. These heads of state declared and reaffirmed the Alliance's commitment to a unified defense and the expanded mission to combat the threat posed by international terrorism:

We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, reaffirm today in Riga our resolve to meet the security challenges of the twenty-first-century and defend our populations and common values. . . . Our 26 nations are united in democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.²

Combined with the declarations initiated in the 2002 Prague Summit and the expansion of the Alliance to the current 26 members, the explicit identification of terrorists and terrorist networks as a threat to the Alliance as a whole has fundamentally altered the scope and nature of NATO. At the strategic and even operational level Headquarters within NATO and SHAPE, military decisions are inextricably interwoven with national and global politics. The proclamation issued in Riga is a consensus document which includes eleven initiatives to transform NATO forces to “address contemporary threats and challenges,”³ including a special operations forces transformation initiative focused

on achieving interoperability within the NATO SOF community. The form and function of this transformation is not addressed, as could be expected from what is essentially a political document. However, the fact that SOF has been singled out and recognized as a key component in the ability of the alliance to combat the contemporary threat marks a significant turning point in the NATO perspective of providing for the common defense. With the political backing of the Riga summit, those charged with implementing the transformation initiative are left to craft the ultimate endstate for the force-multiplying capability that resides in NATO SOF. How does this force achieve interoperability and form to provide a militarily useful asset to NATO?

The primary research question for this thesis is whether NATO requires a standing Special Operations Forces command and control (C2) structure and combat capability to meet the emerging global security requirements of the Alliance. This thesis evaluates the requirements of NATO to create and maintain a standing SOF C2 structure and capability in order to meet the growing challenges of global security. The 2002 Prague Summit was a watershed event for the Alliance as the decision to create the NATO Response Force (NRF) marked a dramatic and strategic shift from previous NATO engagement policies. The NRF was envisioned to provide a rapid and potentially global response and serve as the transformation vehicle of NATO's military capabilities. The previous, now defunct, focus of the Alliance's common defense against the Warsaw Pact threat generated much debate over the continued utility of NATO, particularly within the U.S. The decision to employ NATO outside the geographic boundaries of the Alliance borders unequivocally altered the required military capabilities and commitment implications of the member nations. There was, however, no analogous force generation,

funding or approval process changes to keep pace with the impending military operational changes.

This new mission set has been subsequently validated by the Alliance's commitment to transformation, the assumption of the International Assistance Security Force-Afghanistan, and the summer 2006 full-operations capabilities exercise Steadfast Jaguar for the NATO Response Force (see figure 1). As the repercussions of the global fundamentalist Islamic terrorist movement are felt across Europe, via the Madrid train station bombings and the London Underground bombings, the professed NATO mission set appears not only appropriate but also necessary. Certainly within the United States military structure the execution of full-spectrum operations includes Special Operations as an integral and irreplaceable facet in any application of military power. As the U.S. and other NATO nations maintain or increase troop commitments against the global terrorist threat, the U.S. desire for NATO to shoulder a greater portion of the burden for the member nation's collective security may necessitate a significant transformation of strategic capabilities. The alliance possesses at least nascent forms of the majority of projected capabilities requirements, while NATO SOF C2 remains entirely ad hoc.⁴ The primary research question is derived in part from the author's professional experiences within the standing U.S. SOF military structure and the inherent comparison of the lack of that structure while serving within NATO from 2005 to 2006. This question, if answered fully, may provide an operationally sound basis to advocate the maintenance of the status quo or the adoption of a more robust standing SOF force structure within the Alliance. The result will advocate the solution that most sufficiently meets the NATO member nation's espoused reason for existence:

NATO's essential purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means in accordance with the North Atlantic Treaty and the principles of the United Nations Charter. The Alliance has worked since its inception for the establishment of a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe based on common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. This central Alliance objective has taken on renewed significance since the end of the Cold War because, for the first time in the post-war history of Europe, the prospect of its achievement has become a reality.⁵

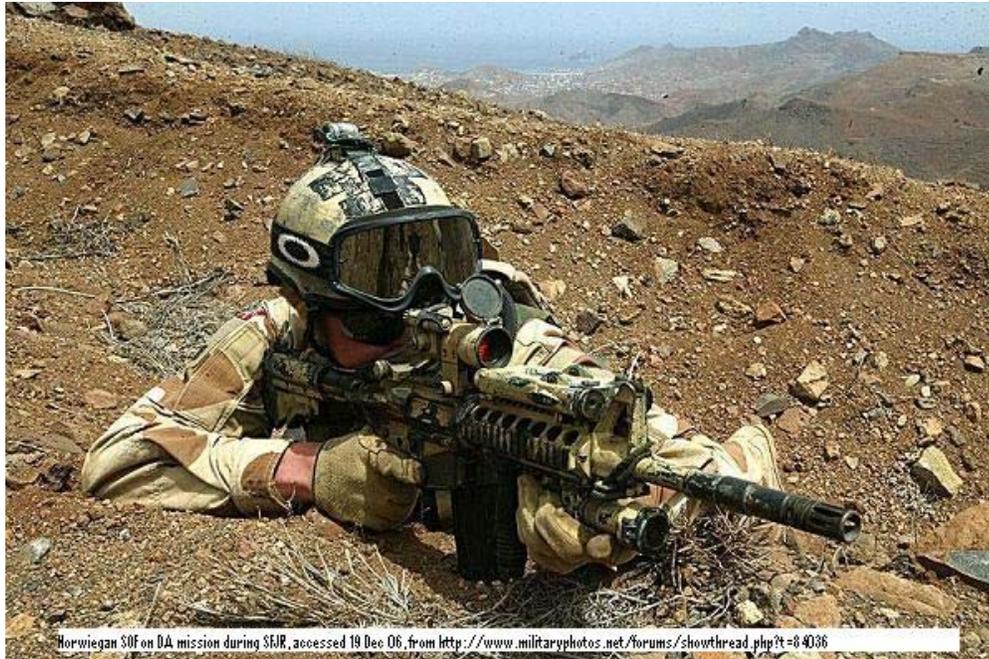


Figure 1. Austere Location Deployment Capabilities of NATO
Norwegian SOF soldier overwatches the Cape Verdean landscape during Steadfast Jaguar
Source: Militaryphotos.net, available at www.militaryphotos.net/forums/showthread.php?t=84036, accessed 19 December, 2006

There are several subordinate questions to answer in the course of this research. First is an examination of the current SOF capabilities and core competencies in the Alliance, and how do these compare with the U.S. capability and competencies. This aspect is critical in determining whether the expanded overall NATO mission translates into an expanded mission for NATO SOF in support of the alliance objectives. The potential exists that the anticipated role of NATO SOF is limited in nature and thus does

not warrant the increase in resources, in equipment, manpower, and political capital, to establish the standing structure. The opposite finding would support such expenditure.

Second is determination of the cost versus benefit ratio of a standing NATO SOF capability, and whether it merits the investment of low-density U.S., and Alliance nation, national SOF assets. Inherent in this question are the predicted losses to national military capabilities by giving up permanent party slots to a NATO billet. This area of concern looked at the potential benefits in terms of force capabilities, doctrinal advances, and collective security while contrasting the costs of degradation of unilateral capabilities, sensitive intelligence sharing, and initial manpower investments. This research was not limited to the United States perspective but solicited the input from NATO nations and SOF counterparts as available. This is critical to the legitimacy of any conclusions as the costs, capabilities, and benefits or lack thereof will be borne somewhat equally in part across the 26 member nations of the Alliance.

A third question that must be answered in order to determine either of the above questions is the proposed architecture and C2 relationships within the NATO hierarchy of a standing SOF C2 structure. This research examined recommendations from published sources and the input from interviews with subject matter experts and evaluated how those structures may or may not facilitate an enhanced overall capability of the Alliance to meet the global security threat. The location of a headquarters or standing force was addressed only as it applies to the C2 structure (i.e., where in the line and block chart and not where on the map) and not tied to any specific existing facilities.

An assumption is made for this research that any proposed new SOF structure or capability will require, at least at the onset, a heavy United States contribution as the

largest and most developed Special Operations capability. Additionally, the U.S. military is unique in the existence of US Special Operations Command. Therefore, as an assumption of this research, should a standing force be merited then the U.S. would desire efficiencies similar in nature, if not in scale, to those brought to the US SOF capabilities by USSOCOM.

This thesis examined the current global threat as envisioned by NATO and the requirements for Special Operations to operate within a NATO coalition mission environment. The scope of this work is limited to the comparison and determination whether the current ad hoc structure is sufficient to meet NATO's future operational SOF requirements and the Feasibility, Acceptability and Suitability (FAS) test of a standing C2 structure. This thesis addressed the cost versus benefit both to the United States and the NATO member nations as a means of determining whether a standing C2 structure is validated, as well as the skill set that NATO could currently field and will require from a standing NATO SOF structure. The need for a NATO SOF structure and components was judged against published NATO policy and mission statements as well the Subject Matter Expert (SME) interview responses. This research was limited by the geographic distance to the SMEs within NATO. These interviews were conducted through a combination of in-person, telephone conversations, and electronic mail correspondence. This research is further limited by ongoing NATO SOF transformation initiatives, such as the NATO Special Operations Coordination Center, which may alter the inherent NATO SOF capabilities during the research time frame.

This research did not delve into the specific nation contributions or manning implementation of a C2 structure, except in looking at potential key billets where this

relates to the cost versus benefit analysis. Additionally this thesis did not examine the processes external to the C2 structure and NATO SOF capabilities, specifically the requirements or procedures to approve this change through the North Atlantic Council (NAC) or the Military Committee (MC). This aspect, while critical in the overall translation of the recommended NATO SOF concept into reality, is largely political in nature and outside the influence and scope of this research. A final delimitation of this paper is the budgetary resourcing of any potential new headquarters and the associated manpower and equipment. This is also a critical factor in translating any potential recommendation into reality, but beyond the scope of this research.

The significance of this study is in the utility of adopting the research findings to most efficiently support the NATO efforts to combat the current and emerging global security threats of the twenty-first century. Resources, both natural and human, are becoming more constrained, not less. The competing domestic issues and internal national politics of each of the member nations demand that the NATO structure continues to “enhance and meld multilateral capabilities for combined action.”

¹United States Army Special Operations Command, *SOF Truths*; available from <http://www.soc.mil/sofinfo/truths.shtml>; Internet; accessed 28 January 2007. SOF truths are common knowledge across the US SOF community, widely quoted and applied, but not specifically attributed to one author.

²HQ NATO, “NATO Press Release, Riga Summit Declaration” (Brussels, Belgium, 2006), 1,); available from <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 December 2006.

³Ibid., 7.

⁴COL Stuart Bradin, “NATO SOF Transformation Initiative” (briefing presented to CGSC students enrolled in the SOF track studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 15 November 2006).

⁵NATO Information Service, *NATO Handbook 1999*, 50th Anniversary ed. (Brussels, Belgium: Office of Information and Press, NATO, 1999), 6.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous chapter describes in detail the problem set generated by the current lack of a standing NATO Special Operations Force C2 structure and capability. This chapter will review the current schools of thought on NATO Transformation as it applies to SOF. In general, there is consensus amongst many published articles that some form of standing NATO Special Operations Force capability is required in order to meet the global security challenges of the twenty-first-century. There is, however, no apparent consensus on just what that force should consist of, what capabilities need to be inherent and what the C2 structure would be. Ergo, the genesis of this thesis.

There are four categorical divisions relevant to this research that emerged during the literature review. The first are the several direct recommendations on a potential for either a SOF capability or a C2 structure. These are both published articles and interviews with prominent SOF leaders within NATO. There does not appear to be a single work linking the requirement for one or the other. The second body of work relates to NATO Transformation as a whole, inclusive of the NATO-European Union (EU) paradigm, and addresses the Alliance's declared intent to morph into a more expeditionary and relevant force, capable of flexible, timely response to global crises. The third logical grouping of work is the multiple public declarations of NATO's policy and mission statements. It is based on these writings that a valid baseline for the expected mission parameters, and thus a derived military capability for NATO, can be determined. The final division is the

existence of analogous historical case studies, primarily the advocating and creation of the United States Special Operations Command.

The first area of focus, a potential for either a SOF capability or a C2 structure, includes the work of Dr. Hans Binnendijk, the Director of the Center for the Study and Technology and National Security Policy. Binnendijk argues in his May 2005 article “A New Military Framework for NATO” in *Defense Horizons* that NATO must build capability while unity exists.¹ He argues for a capabilities based Alliance that stands ready for full-spectrum operations, including major combat, spanning diverse geographic locations. In order to achieve that readiness posture, Binnendijk advocates the development of a “warehouse of defense capabilities” which include (in order):

1. NATO Special Operations Force
2. NATO Response Force
3. NATO High Readiness Forces for major combat operations
4. NATO Stabilization and Reconstruction Force
5. NATO capacity for Defense and Security Sector Development for countries in transition²

Special Operations Command (Europe) argues that NATO’s current SOF organization “is inadequate to address rapidly growing need for SOF and has been unable to facilitate solutions at operational levels, in support of NATO strategic vision.”

SOCEUR advocates the creation of a NATO Special Operations Coordination Center with the following mission statement: “The NSCC provides SACEUR with a capability to ensure the synchronization of NATO Special Operations development and employment in support of NRF, ISAF and emerging JFC/CJTF missions to achieve unity

of effort and facilitate solutions at the operational and strategic levels, in support of NATO's strategic vision."³ The SOCEUR vision advocates the creation of a standing coordination cell of approximately 114 personnel consisting of a command group, a training and exercise division, an operational support division and a strategic concepts and interoperability division. In essence this provides a capability to bridge the gap between the current state and the potential endstate that is the focus of this research; generation of a standing NATO SOF capability and C2 structure. The subsequent interviews that provided much of the data for this thesis will delve into the genesis of this recommendation, but on the surface there did not appear to be a holistic analysis of the actual requirement for a standing SOF capability. The SOCEUR proposal, while providing a viable mechanism for NATO SOF development, is an interim step between current state and actually fielding a force. The staff estimate appears predicated on a predetermined notion that more SOF integration is a requirement. This may be the case, but this thesis did not accept that as an assumption.

The strongest advocate in a published work on a standing NATO SOF capability is by David Gompert and Raymond Smith in their March 2006 article in *Defense Horizons*, "Creating a NATO Special Operations Force." Gompert, a senior fellow at RAND, is staunchly in the pro standing force corner, recommending the creation of a NATO SOF core capability centered on counterterrorism with a standing force of approximately 500, along with associated equipment and SOF-peculiar systems. His proposal is to maintain the standing force on a rotational basis with various Alliance SOF and a Standing Joint Task Force within Allied Command Operations (the Operational Force HQ (vice transformation) in NATO).

Amongst these three sources there is no single unified solution; however, the framework espoused by Binnendijk, though not explicitly laid out in the other two, is inclusive of all three recommendations. Specifically:

1. Capabilities for common action are needed, even though this action may not always be chosen.
2. If and when a common strategy emerges, NATO must have the capabilities to execute it.
3. The United States and its European allies must be able to agree on necessary capabilities, even while unable to agree on grand strategy or on when and where those capabilities should be used.⁴

The second focus area is the generalized NATO Transformation. In an article authored by the European program manager for the Center for Civil Military Relations at the Naval Postgraduate School, Thomas Durell-Young explains one of the greatest obstacles to change within the military structure of NATO that is particularly germane to SOF.⁵ Given the peculiar mission set of SOF, operating often far from centralized Headquarters, with a requirement for often ambiguous engagement criteria (particularly in a prehostilities or support and stability operation), Young argues in general that the delegation of command authority to multinational commanders is one of the weakest areas in the NATO employment policy. Young points out that many of the prerequisites for a flexible, responsive military capability, hallmarks of SOF, are “among the more sensitive powers nations are reluctant to turn over to an Alliance commander.” Young supports the transformation of the NATO mission oriented command procedures, but only after the procedures are formally developed, evaluated, and validated.⁶

Within the transformation works is a recommendation for reconfiguring the American military presence in Europe, developed by LTC Ray Millen, the Director of European Security studies at the Strategic Studies Institute. This study, while focused on

the US presence on continental Europe, devotes specific attention to maintaining the ability of NATO to provide “credible land power for the full spectrum of operations.”⁷ LTC Millen advocates transformation that maximizes the technological and procedural interoperability while enhancing the expeditionary nature of NATO forces. Since the 2004 publication of this article, the US has initiated a significant draw down of forces within Europe. LTC Millen makes the now equally relevant argument to the research question at hand, that “a withdrawal of U.S. ground forces would create the impression that the US is no longer serious about the continued preservation of the Alliance. Alleged Pan-Europeanists would use this action to replace the United States with the European Union Rapid Reaction Force.”⁸ This research, though not specifically focused on SOF, is particularly relevant in analyzing the cost versus benefit of a multilateral SOF capability within NATO and the U.S. contribution within that framework.

The third category of source for postulating an answer to the primary research question are the various published and nonpublished NATO concepts, documents, and presentations on the NATO SOF Transformation Initiative and the resultant NATO SOF Coordination Centre. Along with NATO non paper analysis of a proposed Allied Command-Operations organizational restructuring, the primary source interviews with several Special Operations senior officers within NATO advocate for the furtherance of the NSCC at a minimum with the end-state of NATO SOF becoming a separate component command led by a three-star or four-star commander. These SMEs and the internal NATO documents stress the critical need for SOF interoperability and the near ground-zero starting point with which NATO is confronted. The interviewees also agree there should not be a standing NATO SOF force, but rather that the NRF-like force

generation process is entirely sufficient for application of SOF combat power in a NATO construct. Though this research is delimited in the pursuit of analyzing the requisite changes in the NATO Military Committee and North Atlantic Council mission approval and force generation process, these aspects were unanimously brought to bear during the conduct of all of the interviews. In so much as SOF is a severely constrained asset, all the SMEs agreed that the monolithic NATO political bureaucratic process makes it infeasible and unacceptable in terms of lost capabilities and likelihood of timely employment to maintain a standing SOF unit or element under a NATO flag.

The fourth applicable body of information is the existence of any historically analogous paradigms. In researching for this phenomenon, the creation of USSOCOM is uniquely parallel to the NATO SOF predicament. There is historical concordance between USSOCOM development and the current NATO SOF dilemma. The NATO heads of state and heads of government recently convened the NATO Summit in Riga, Latvia. From their resultant proclamation the 26 nations have reaffirmed their “resolve to meet the security challenges of the twenty-first century and defend our populations and common values.”⁹ The heads of state also agreed that the twenty-first-century threats, and in particular NATO’s role in the International Security Assistance Force-Afghanistan, includes as a central tenet the “need to disrupt the networks that finance, supply and equip terrorists. The Riga Summit also provided a broad brush way-ahead for the transformation of NATO. Included in the proclamation is the “launch of a special operations forces transformation initiative aimed at increasing their ability to train and operate together, including through improving (upon) equipment capabilities.”¹⁰ The SOF initiative is one of eleven identified under the transformation umbrella in Riga.

Clearly, the need for reform and innovation for NATO SOF has been identified, yet the end-state remains unclear. That the Riga summit has confirmed the alliance's commitment to NATO SOF transformation makes the primary research question of this thesis more relevant, not obsolete.

In attempting to answer the primary research question of whether or not NATO should have a standing SOF C2 structure and capability, it is critical to set the benchmark for the NATO mission construct. Establishing the Alliance's declared mission scope and their espoused appetite for an expanded global role allows for analysis of the feasibility and criticality of a robust Special Operations capability to meet those mission goals. The fundamentally altered scope of the NATO mission is most resonant in the International Security Assistance Force-Afghanistan. NATO implemented a phased assumption of operational control of the entirety of the country, culminating with the transition of Eastern Afghanistan to NATO control in the late summer of 2006. This mission, entirely outside the borders of the Alliance, and addressing a threat that had yet to be codified by NATO prior to ISAF, provides a litmus test for the validity of the NAC and Military Committee political proclamations. As previously mentioned, many NATO critics point specifically to the delta between the strong political rhetoric pledging the confrontation of global terrorist threats and the seemingly incongruent elements of military, diplomatic and economic power that are brought to bear under the NATO umbrella.

The Comprehensive Political Guidance issued from the Riga Summit in conjunction with the NATO Strategic Concept form the basis for the scope and level of ambition for the NATO mission. The political guidance identifies terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction as the principal threats to NATO countries for the

next decade and one half.¹¹ While the political guidance certainly allows for military full-combat operations, there is a focus on security and development, specifically stabilization operations and support of post-conflict reconstruction operations.¹² The Riga Summit declaration includes the pledge to remain “committed to an enduring role to support Afghan authorities, in cooperation with other international actors.”¹³ This shift in NATO strategy only serves to amplify the Alliance’s appetite for continued and aggressive involvement in arenas previously untouched and deemed entirely inappropriate for NATO action. In concert with the two Riga Summit documents, the 1999 NATO Strategic concept advocates that the Alliance must “above all, maintain the political will and the military means required by the entire range of its missions.”¹⁴ Under the guidelines for the Alliance’s Force Posture, NATO’s approved strategy states, “The size, readiness, availability and deployment of the Alliance’s military forces will reflect its commitment to collective defence and the conduct crisis response operations, sometimes at short notice, distant from their home stations, including beyond the Allies’ territory.”¹⁵ This foundational document also stresses the requirement that NATO’s military forces must be interoperable and develop suitable doctrine to execute their missions. Particularly relevant to NATO’s ability to effectively employ SOF are three measures mentioned under the specific guidance on the force posture. First, in looking to potentially emerging threats (this was 1999 prior to transcendence of the global terrorist threat) the alliance must possess the correct force structure and procedures to “permit measured, flexible and timely responses in order to reduce and defuse tensions.”¹⁶ Additionally the strategy enumerates the Alliance must possess a balanced mix of forces and response capabilities

coupled with the requirement that the forces and infrastructure of member states are to be protected against terrorist attacks.¹⁷

The statements issued from both the Prague 2002 and Riga 2006 Summits significantly amplify the NATO mission scope and clearly advocate an increased SOF capability, but the 1999 Strategic Concept is far more telling in establishing the baseline from which to address the primary research question. The strategic concept that was generated in 1999, two years prior to the 9/11 attacks which fostered NATO's first invocation of Article 5, is far less reactive in nature and thus more indicative of the true appetite for a commitment to the efficient application of military resources under the Alliance's auspices. The strategic concept does not mention Special Operations Forces by name, but clearly allows and demands that the capabilities which could uniquely reside within NATO SOF are an absolute necessity for the continued assurance of trans-Atlantic security.

Another significant published document that relates to the established mission parameters the member nations are currently and may potentially take on, is the NATO Concept for Defense against Terrorism. This military strategy document after being approved by the NAC was endorsed in November of 2002 by the Heads of State and heads of government at the Prague Summit. In part, the concept lays out the basic military roles for NATO in defense of terrorism:

“Anti Terrorism, essentially defensive measures

Consequence Management, which is dealing with, and reducing, the effects of a terrorist attack once it has taken place

Counterterrorism, primarily offensive measures

Military Cooperation”¹⁸

Three of these four measures fall within alliance SOF-appropriate mission capabilities, with the final two roles, counterterrorism and military co-operation, falling in the SOF unique arena. The counterterrorism mission, broken down into two categories of either NATO in support or NATO in the lead, specifically calls for an increase in specialized anti-terrorist forces and the planning, C2 capabilities to execute crisis action planning and service time sensitive targets.¹⁹ In addition to the roles defined, several critical procedural developments are indicated in this concept, of note “Making Alliance decision making as effective and timely as possible in order that, given the very short warnings that are likely for terrorist activity and intentions, Alliance forces can be deployed and employed appropriately.”²⁰ A final relevant NATO document is in the form of a SHAPE nonpaper²¹ which analyzed the current Allied Command Operations (ACO) structure.

The follow-up to the foundational and published documents of NATO to form a benchmark for the mission set, against which the primary research question may be evaluated, is the body of statements issued by top NATO military officials. General officers within NATO are equally adept in the political arena if not more so, as the military arena and the public statements they offer can be construed to form an unofficial consensus of the organization. The non-US officers are particularly relevant, as it has increasingly been several European Allies that have spearheaded any dovish impediments to NATO military engagement. The former Chairman of the NATO Military Committee General Harald Kujat, a German Air Force 4-star, in his farewell interview advocated several positions in favor of expanding NATO’s military capabilities. In particular, he identified the need to expand common logistics and common funding in support of

fielding forces capable of meeting future risks and combating terrorism in the present.²² Another NATO leader Canadian General Ray Henault, the current MC chairman, stressed in his remarks to the Conference of Defense Associations in Ottawa the necessity for a proactive stance and engagement policy for NATO, with special emphasis on defending against terrorism.²³ GEN Henault advocates a capabilities-based approach vice a threat-based approach and the transformation of NATO's military capability through the NRF to an "expeditionary, multi-role force, capable of rapid deployment and operations across the (entire) spectrum of conflict."²⁴ Interestingly, though specifically delimited in this research, the Chairman is adamant that the military transformation is essentially for naught if there is not concurrent political reform to allow the timely and flexible application of power.²⁵ This is precisely the same argument that was injected by all of the SMEs interviewed in support of this research. There is significant utility in examining historical precedence for the introduction of SOF organizational reform. As an example amongst the Alliance, the United States development of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) bears many remarkable similarities in the genesis of the organization as well as a possible road map to inception. While Germany, France and the United Kingdom possess a robust Special Operations capacity with various versions of standing headquarters, the aggregate forces of the NATO (non-US) special operations capabilities are roughly one-half the total US SOF force (see table 1).²⁶ USSOCOM is unique in its scope and authority, thus bearing greatest relevance to any potential NATO reformation. The creation of USSOCOM is largely attributed to the failed Iranian hostage rescue attempt, infamously referred to as Operation Eagle Claw. Many believe that, as a result of the seeming chaos and confusion encountered at Desert One, where the joint

special operations rescue effort was aborted after an aircraft collision resulted in the death of eight men, the U.S. Congress elected to react towards solving the problem. The Defense Department convened the Holloway Commission, upon whose recommendation there was the formation of the Special Operations Advisory Panel and creation of a Counterterrorist Joint Task Force.²⁷ The evolution of the reform led to the creation of the Joint Special Operations Agency (JSOA) in 1984 and ultimately USSOCOM in 1987.

The charter mission of USSOCOM included amongst the key mission responsibilities to:

1. Develop SOF doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures
2. Conduct specialized courses of instruction for all SOF
3. Train assigned forces and ensure interoperability of equipment and forces²⁸

These are nearly identical to the requirements and stated desires agreed upon by the 26 heads of state and heads of government at the NATO Riga Summit in regards to the transformation of NATO SOF. A further parallel exists in the particular journey USSOCOM experienced on the way to being formed. The “foot in the door” was the formation of the Special Operations Advisory Panel (SOAP). This construct is entirely analogous in function if not form to the NATO SOF Coordination Centre (NSCC), currently standing up an Initial Operating Capability (IOC) at the time of this writing. Similar to the NSCC, the JSOA maintained no command or operational authority over the Nation’s separate SOF elements. Without this capability, the US Congress was largely disillusioned with the agency’s lack of capability to generate the wholesale organizational improvements in capabilities, readiness or policies.²⁹ The expressed need for a standing C2 element, with parity to the other combatant commands, was the result. This evolution within the United States does not dictate the furtherance of the NATO SOF structure to

follow, however it does provide a historical example of a large-scale SOF organization, given an identifiable changing strategic and operational situation, with identified shortcomings that transcend the individual unit capabilities. The conditions present in the creation of USSOCOM are entirely analogous to the current NATO SOF paradigm and bear relevance in identifying the potential resolution.

On a much smaller scale but applying similar principles is the creation of Romania's Counterterrorism Unit (CTU), expected to be operational by the end of 2007. The CTU was formed in response to the strategic partnership with the US and Romania's expanding role and desired expansion of their role in multinational operations. As a troop contributing nation to both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom and the lessons learned from those operations, the need for an interoperable, expeditionary Special Operations Force. This unit is being stood up for the express purpose of deploying outside of Romania under NATO command as a niche capability.³⁰ In the Romanian military's quest to establish and increase their Special Operations capabilities and contribution to the international fight in the contemporary operating environment, the officers tasked with standing up the units have turned to USSOCOM for their model.³¹ In much the same vein noted in the previous pages, applying the paradigm of USSOCOM to the greater NATO SOF question, Romania of its own accord and analysis has reached the same conclusion. The time line generated for Romania's SOF continues out through 2010 at which point they intend to field a Joint Special Operations Task Force staff. The Romanians have planned as the next step after creating the capability to contribute to the multinational SOF operations, the ability to C2 those elements via a standing organizational structure.³²

Table 1. NATO SOF Capabilities	
Country	SOF Capabilities
Belgium	1 para-commando brigade (2 x paratroop/parachute, 1 x commando, 2 x mechanized infantry, 1 x reconnaissance, 1 x artillery)
Bulgaria	1 x Special Forces (SF) Command
Canada	1 x commando unit
Czech Republic	1 x SF Group
Denmark	1 x SF unit
France	2,700 SOF: 1 x command headquarters, 1 x paratroop/parachute regiment, 1 x helicopter unit, 3 x training centers (48), five hundred x marine commandos in 5 groups: 2 x assault, 1 x reconnaissance, 1 x attack swimmer, 1 x raiding
Germany	1 x SOF division with 2 x airborne (1 x crisis response force), 1 x SF command (1 x commando/SF brigade)
Greece	1 x special operations command (including 1 x amphibious commando squadron, 1 x commando brigade (3 x commando, 1 x paratroop/parachute squadron))
Italy	Naval special forces command with 4 x groups: 1 diving operation, 1 navy SF operation, 1 school, 1 research
Latvia	1 SF team
Lithuania	1 SF team
Netherlands	1 SF battalion
Norway	1 Ranger battalion
Poland	1 special operations regiment
Portugal	1 special operations unit; 1 commando battalion
Spain	Special operations command with 3 special operations battalions
Turkey	SF command headquarters; 5 commando brigades
United Kingdom	1 Special Air Services Regiment, 1 marine commando brigade, 1 commando artillery regiment, 1 commando air defense battery, 2 commando engineer units, 1 landing craft squadron

Source: “Creating a NATO Special Operations Force,” *Defense Horizons*, March 2006, 3, table 2.

In this chapter the review of available literature and data resources yielded four distinct and logical grouping which lend themselves towards answering the primary research question of whether NATO should maintain and standing SOF C2 structure and SOF capability. The first are primary SMEs and secondary sources which either advocate or contraindicate a direct answer to the primary question. Second, the published speeches

and articles on NATO transformation, which, as a whole, lends to the third grouping of the foundational NATO documents and various non-published internal NATO documents. Those NATO documents serve to establish the current and project-future strategic and operational mission parameters for the Alliance. The final review grouping is the analogous creation of USSOCOM and the lessons that may or may not be extracted from that United States experience. This review provides the basis for the next chapter which explains the methodology of synthesizing the information collected into a supported answer to the primary research question

¹Hans Binnendijk, David C. Gompert, and Richard L. Kugler, “A New Military Framework for NATO,” *Defense Horizons*, no. 48 (May 2005): 17.

²Ibid.

³COL Stuart Bradin, “NATO SOF Transformation Initiative,” 15 November, 2006.

⁴Binnendijk, Gompert, and Kugler, “A New Military Framework for NATO,” 2005; 2.

⁵Thomas Durell-Young, “NATO Command and control for the Twenty-First-Century,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 29, (2001): 40.

⁶Ibid., 41.

⁷Raymond A. Millen, *Reconfiguring the American Military Presence in Europe* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2004) 3-4.

⁸Ibid.

⁹HQ NATO, “NATO Press Release, Riga Summit Declaration,” 1.

¹⁰Ibid., 7.

¹¹NATO, “Comprehensive Political Guidance” (Riga, Latvia, 29 November, 2006), 1; available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/b0611293.htm>; Internet; accessed December 13, 2006.

¹²Ibid., 2.

¹³HQ NATO, “NATO Press Release, Riga Summit Declaration,”2.

¹⁴North Atlantic Council, “The Alliance's Strategic Concept, Press Release NAC-S(99)65” (Brussels, 2006), 2; available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>; Internet; accessed 29 December, 2006.

¹⁵Ibid., 15.

¹⁶Ibid., 17.

¹⁷Ibid., 21.

¹⁸NATO Information Service, “NATO's Military Concept for Defence Against Terrorism” (2003); available at <http://www.nato.int/ims/docu/terrorism.htm>; Internet; accessed 14 March, 2007.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹The term “nonpaper” is a NATO and diplomatic peculiarity which describes a professionally analyzed and constructed staff estimate, which does not constitute official positions or policy of NATO. It is in a sense a non-attribution disclaimer which allows the presentation of potentially contentious issues in a framework which does not politically tie the hands of the alliance.

²²General Harald Kujat, interview conducted by NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace (2005): 171.

²³Ray Henault, “NATO in the Twenty-First-Century,” *Military Technology* 30, no. 3 (2006): 42.

²⁴Ibid., 39.

²⁵Ibid., 40.

²⁶Binnendijk, Gompert, and Kugler, 1.

²⁷USSOCOM History and Research Office, *United States Special Operations Command History, 15th Anniversary* (MacDill AFB, FL: Headquarters, USSOCOM, 2002): 3.

²⁸Ibid., 9.

²⁹Ibid., 3.

³⁰Tudor Radu, “Romania Creates New Counterterrorism Unit,” *Jane's Intelligence Review*.17, no.1 (2005): 19.

³¹ Ibid., 20.

³² Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In examining the determination whether NATO requires a standing C2 structure and capability the previous chapter reviewed the input from subject matter experts, several published recommendations and theories on the various options for implementing said capability, and the existence of any historically analogous paradigm. This chapter will review the methodology employed in determining the answer to the primary research question.

The basis for this qualitative research is a blend of research review, in-depth interviews and a case study. There is no current standing SOF C2 structure within NATO, and the Alliance's requirements for a SOF force have yet to be quantified and or published. This thesis will combine a collaboration of the existing published recommendations with several interviews with NATO SOF or SOF general subject matter experts. The research used the interviews and the published recommendations to form a baseline of commonalities within the various courses of action. These recommendations will then be compared and contrasted with both the established NATO mission parameters, as well as the future force capabilities envisioned by Allied Command Transformation. The result of this comparison will confirm or deny the capabilities gap or lack thereof, for a standing NATO Special Operations Force. Each of the published courses of action and the interview responses will be analyzed for its feasibility, acceptability, and suitability.

In determining the feasibility of a proposed model I analyzed the current capabilities within NATO for Special Operations to ascertain if the proposed architecture is within the current or foreseeable resources of the NATO member nations. This evaluation will be limited to the operational feasibility specifically, meaning does the proper expertise exist to man the force structure and does the proposed force provide the requisite capability identified by NATO leadership.

The acceptability of any proposed C2 or force structure will be gauged by the cost and benefit analysis of the recommendation. Specifically, does the model meet the existing NATO requirements and force generation constraints? Additionally, the proposed model can be evaluated in regards to the near term and long-term gains and losses to unilateral Special Operations capabilities across NATO. As the United States has the preponderance of SOF elements and capabilities, this portion necessarily slanted heavily towards the U.S. perspective while attempting to incorporate the viewpoints of various NATO SOF elements to maximize the validity of any resulting determinations.

The suitability of a proposed force structure was measured by the projected capability to field and C2 SOF in concert with the anticipated NATO mission set. This aspect of the analysis focuses on matching projected capabilities with projected requirements. Models that more fully meet the projected requirements are therefore more desirable. Again, referring to the delimitations, the suitability of the model was viewed purely through the operational lens, and did not delve into the budgetary or procedural committee issues associated with the recommendation.

In determining the interviewees for this research, several members of Special Operations Command (Europe), Joint Force Command, Brunssum, The Netherlands and

the International Training School and Centre, Pfullendorf, Germany were solicited for input. The determination to engage these particular individuals and organizations was made based on personal professional interaction, knowledge and established working relationships as a career Special Operations officer. The interviews were conducted through a variety of means, as all interviewees were both senior in grade and constrained for availability. Using the determinate research question and sub questions, a formatted interview was developed to provide open ended responses based on each interviewees subject matter expertise and experience. In the case of MG Gary Harrell, the Deputy Chief of Staff-Operations and Commander, Deployable Joint Task Force, JFC Brunssum, two preliminary emails established the frame of reference for the interview topic which was followed by a forty five minute telephonic interview. COL Stuart Bradin, the current NSCC Implementation Team Chief, was available both for a two hour presentation to Special Operations officers attending the Command and General Staff College as well as an in person forty five minute interview. The remainder of the interviewees were contacted in the initial email solicitation for support and then followed up with email interviews, conducted using the same formatted interview.¹ Due to the access and placement of several of these individuals within coalition SOF planning or training centers and their willingness to assist this research, the promulgation of the formatted interview to allied SOF members was the intended technique to garner non-U.S. input. Unfortunately, there were no allied SOF expert responses due to unknown factors, potentially an unwillingness to commit to a position for concern of contradicting their parent nation's positions on the issue. Further speculation as to the reason no international SOF members responded is neither appropriate nor substantiated, but the

difficulty in obtaining the international perspective lends credence to the deeply sensitive nature of committing such a constrained asset to a multi national force under NATO C2.

In the absence of available interviewees from the alliance realm, further research was conducted into the professed desired future capabilities as espoused by the NATO senior political and military leadership. As an organization of consensus, the attempt to research positions arguing against an expansion of SOF was fruitless, as all published statements and reports located during the process were affirmation of proposals or statements of generalized agreement. There does not exist within the NAC or Military Committee decision making process, a vehicle to record dissenting opinions as in the U.S. Supreme Court where the specific arguments and objections to a passed ruling are codified. Thus, the statements and published documents of the senior leadership which provide a general outline of desired future capabilities were coalesced to form a framework for the transformation of NATO. Against this framework, almost entirely from non-U.S. leaders, and thus more genuinely reflecting a consensus, the proposed structures and resolutions to the lack of SOF C2 and capability were compared to evaluate the degree to which the proposals included in this research would satisfy the desired transformation objectives of the Alliance.

The data and literature research executed for this thesis was generated with the assistance of Combined Arms Research Library professional staff who responded to a research request provided with the primary research question. The subsequent research based on those findings as well as personally executed database searches (EBSCOHost, ProQuest Direct, Lexis Nexis, etcetera) and generated the previously published data and proposals available. The criteria applied for including works as reference material were

naturally the source of the material and whether it appeared in a bonafide journal, military publication or report. Secondly, the date of the material was of particular consideration. Works published prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, less foundational NATO documents, were excluded due to the cold war mission and focus of the alliance and the subsequent nonapplicability of works from that period when addressing the contemporary operating environment. The second period is post-11 September 2001 and the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in the United States. Articles and sources generated during this period are naturally more current, but more importantly are able to specifically address the emerging and growing international terrorist threat which has formed much of the basis for NATO expansion, both in mission scope and member nations.

This chapter summarized the methodology used to reach my thesis conclusions and the parameters by which the collected data was analyzed. The analysis of the published NATO policy and mission statements provides the basis to delineate the projected military capabilities requirements for the Alliance engaged in the contemporary operating environment. Against this backdrop, the analysis of the gamut of potential SOF capabilities, from the current ad hoc structure, through transformation initiatives and proposed force structures, provide a solid foundation in support of this thesis' findings. The next chapter explains, analyzes and interprets the evidence produced via the methodology presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

The previous chapter detailed the methodology to be employed in answering the primary research question of whether a standing NATO SOF C2 structure and capability is warranted to address the current and future NATO mission set. This chapter presents four courses of action as generated through the research process and evaluates each according to the thesis methodology. One of the sub-questions identified in answering the primary research question relates to recent and ongoing NATO transformation initiatives. Identification of the current modality for military transformation within the alliance is relevant in analyzing future transformation efforts.

Amongst the most significant organizational transformation in the last decade for the alliance is the complete revamping of the military structure into the current bi-modal construct of Allied Command-Operations and Allied Command-Transformation. The adopted ACO structure (figure 2) carried significant strategic, operational and tactical impacts (table 1). This reorganization was considered a critical part of NATO transformation by the leaders of the alliance, as expressed by the former SACEUR:

Allied Command Operations is in the process of its second reorganization since 1998. As the command structure is streamlined and headquarters are closed or reorganized with new functions, the new command will provide a leaner and more effective organization to meet the new security environment of twenty-first-century.²

The vision for this transformation was a streamlining of the NATO command structure and the effective synchronization of deployed NATO forces through operational level headquarters.

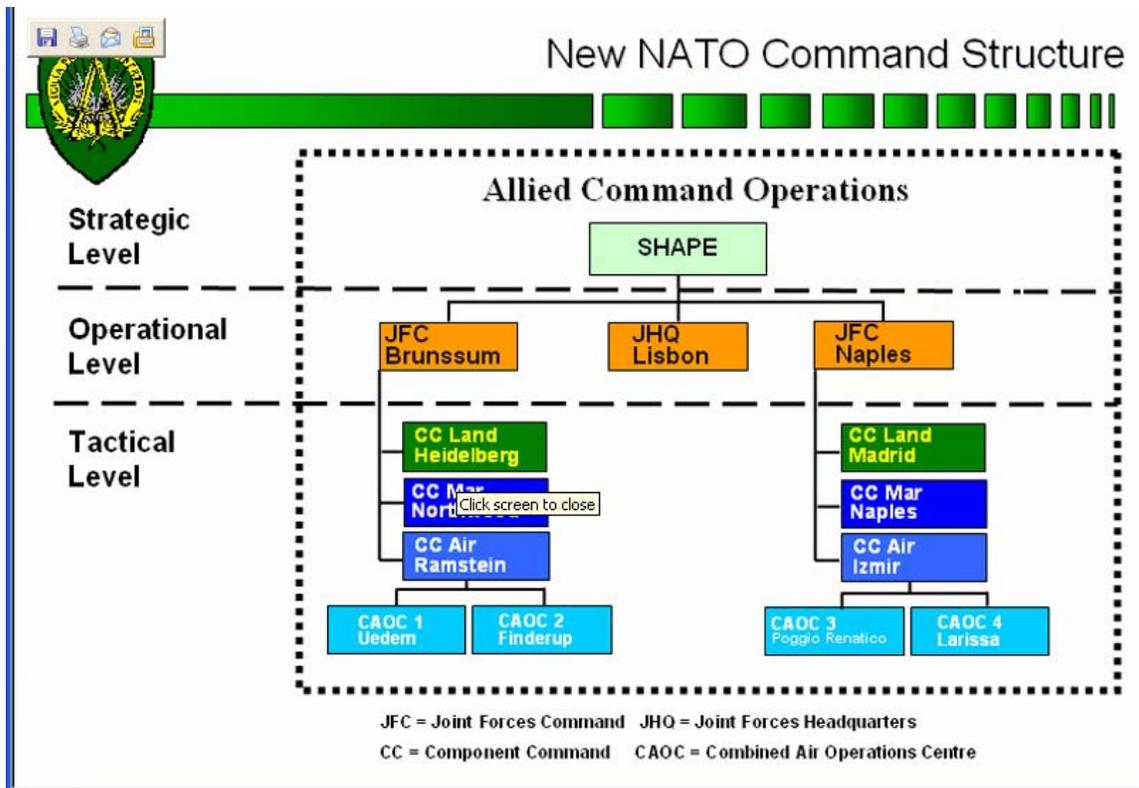


Figure 2. Current NATO Command Structure

Source: NATO website, available from www.nato.int/shape/issues/ncs/ncsindex.htm, accessed 27 March 2007.

This recent reorganization bears significant relevance in answering the primary research question as the adoption of an integrated command and force structure for the conventional forces paves the way, or at a minimum establishes precedent, for initiatives to generate the same efficiencies in the NATO SOF capabilities. This reorganization involved a significant reduction in coveted command billets, a politically sensitive issue, in the name of more adequately structuring the alliance to meet the challenges of current threats (see table 2). This level of ambition in molding NATO to maintain relevance in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 environment bodes well for the potential receptiveness of the political and military leadership for analogous NATO SOF transformation.

Table 2. Strategic, Operational, and Tactical Impacts of NATO Reorganization		
	Previous command structure	Present command structure
Strategic Command (SC) level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allied Command Europe (ACE)/ Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) Allied Command Atlantic (ACLANT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allied Command Operations (ACO)/ Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE)
Operational Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allied Forces North (AFNORTH) Allied Forces South (AFSOUTH) Regional Headquarters Eastern Atlantic (RHQ EASTLANT) Regional Headquarters Southern Atlantic (RHQ SOUTHLANT) Regional Headquarters Western Atlantic (RHQ WESTLANT) Striking Fleet Atlantic (STRIKFLTLANT) Submarine Allied Command Atlantic (SUBACLANT) 	<p>Joint Forces Commands (JFC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JFC Brunssum JFC Naples <p>Joint Headquarter (JHQ)</p> <p>JHQ Lisbon</p>
Component/Tactical Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allied Air Forces North (AIR NORTH) Allied Navel Forces North (NAV NORTH) Joint Command Centre (JC CENTRE) Joint Command Northeast (JC NORTHEAST) Joint Command North (JC NORTH) Allied Air Forces South (AIR SOUTH) Allied Navel Forces South (NAV SOUTH) Joint Command South (JC SOUTH) Joint Command South Centre (JC SOUTH CENTRE) Joint Command Southeast (JC SOUTHEAST) Joint Command Southwest (JC SOUTHWEST) Combined Air Operation Centres (CAOC) 1 - 10 	<p>Components Commands (CC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CC Land Heidelberg CC Air Ramstein CC Mar Northwood CC Land Madrid CC Air Izmir CC Mar Naples <p>Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC)/ Deployable Combined Air Operations Centre (DCAOC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAOC 1 Udem DCAOC Udem CAOC 2 Finderup CAOC 3 Poggio Renatico DCAOC Poggio Renatico CAOC 4 Larissa

Source: SHAPE website, "NATO's new operational Military Command Structure" (24 May 2006); Internet; available at <http://www.nato.int/shape/issues/ncs/ncsindex.htm>; accessed 27 March 2007.

The current vehicle for transformation for NATO is the NATO Response Force (NRF), which includes an element from the Special Operations Component Command but does not specifically address SOF specific issues. It is germane, however, to include a basic explanation of the NRF construct and development to establish a reference point for recent significant military transformations in NATO. The vision of the NRF is to provide “a permanently available, multinational joint force at very high readiness. . . . able to deploy with five days notice and self sustainable for 30 days.”³ The NRF was in its seventh six-month iteration when it declared Full Operating Capacity in late 2006. The transformational driver for the NRF was the meeting of foreign ministers in 2002 which identified largely strategic political transformational goals, namely combating global terrorism. The follow-on declaration at the Prague summit officially launched the NRF initiative.⁴ There was no significant modification to the force generation process, namely determining terms of reference, identifying requirements and then opening bidding for posts and capabilities to be filled by willing nations. The NRF is an approximately 20,000 person force which at FOC is comprised of a brigade-sized land component, a carrier battle group, a surface action group and amphibious task force and an air component capable of launching and supporting 200 fighter sorties per day. The special operations component is described as “an additional component of the force, which can be called upon when necessary.”⁵ As the main military transformational effort in NATO does not specifically address the SOF component, it is thus the NATO SOF Transformation Initiative come to bear.

NATO SOF Coordination Center

The first course of action to be analyzed, the now existing nascent organization, the NATO Special Operations Coordination Centre is the system primarily advocated by the subject matter experts interviewed in the research of this thesis. Figure 2 displays the C2 relationship that is actually being introduced into the NATO architecture. In determining the Feasibility, Acceptability and Suitability (FAS) of the NSCC model, it is important to recognize, that in its current form, the NSCC is manned entirely by Voluntary National Contributions (VNCs). These are posts that are above and beyond those jobs and positions to which alliance members have formally committed under either the Peacetime Engagement (PE) or Crisis Engagement (CE). The current NSCC differs from the primary recommended C2 structure advocated by the subject matter experts. All interviewees advocated a standing C2 structure, with an end state of a 3-star component command headquarters with parity to the current three JFCs: Brunssum, Naples and Lisbon.⁶ All of the SMEs indicated the NSCC is a starting point to establish a more capable, credible and robust architecture to plan, synchronize and integrate NATO SOF operations.

In determining the feasibility of the NSCC structure and the potential metamorphosis into a 3-star Joint Force Special Operations Command the ability to maintain the manning in perpetuity. The 100-man model currently approved by SACEUR is limited by design to a 40-person manning cap for the U.S. (figure 3). The formation of the NSCC is predicated on the U.S. as the lead nation for the center with the remainder of the posts filled by ally nation VNCs. According to COL Bradin, the issue with many of the contributions is not in the primary staff planners and chiefs, but rather with their staff

enablers. Nations have indicated their willingness to provide, for example, an OF-5 (U.S. O-6 equivalent) Division or Branch chief, but balk at providing the support staff required for that position. In forming the NSCC, these contributions were linked, heightening the buy-in cost from participating allies.⁷

NATO SOF C2 Relationship

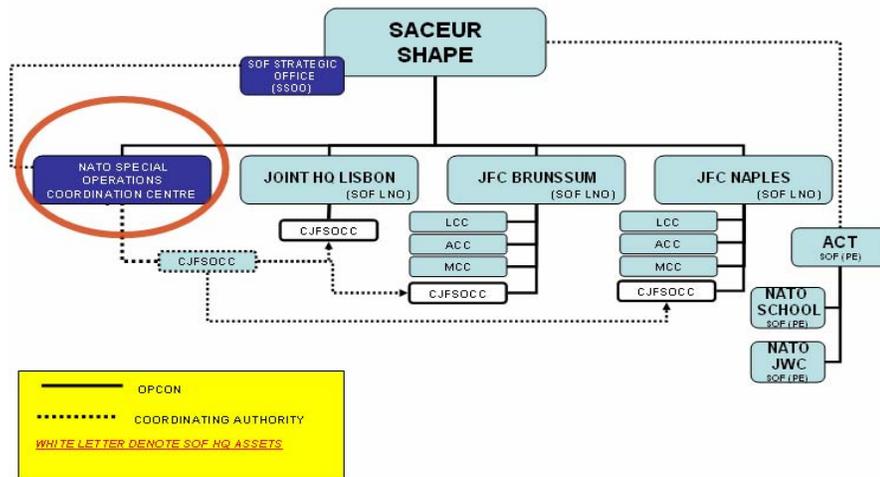


Figure 3. NSCC Proposed Command and Control Relationship
 Source: “NATO SOF Transformation Initiative Briefing,” Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2006.

The NSCC is clearly feasible for the initial iteration (see figure 4), as it has stood up during the writing of this thesis. The larger question, of whether the 3-star command is feasible is linked to the performance and return on investment, both to NATO and the contributing nations, of the NSCC. The second iteration or assignment rotation of these positions will also shed significant light on the feasibility of a permanent SOF C2 structure. This aspect of the NATO force generation process, reliant on voluntary compliance with little to no recourse to coerce commitment fulfillment, is equal both in the NSCC and the formal PE and CE structure. During interviews the SMEs highlighted

the criticality of showing a demonstrable value added to SHAPE, the supported JFCs and component commands. This is a nebulous metric at best, as the determination of value added will be as much, if not more so, in the perception of the NSCC capability as any real operational synchronization that is achieved. These aspects of the feasibility are directly linked to the next evaluation criteria, that of Acceptability.

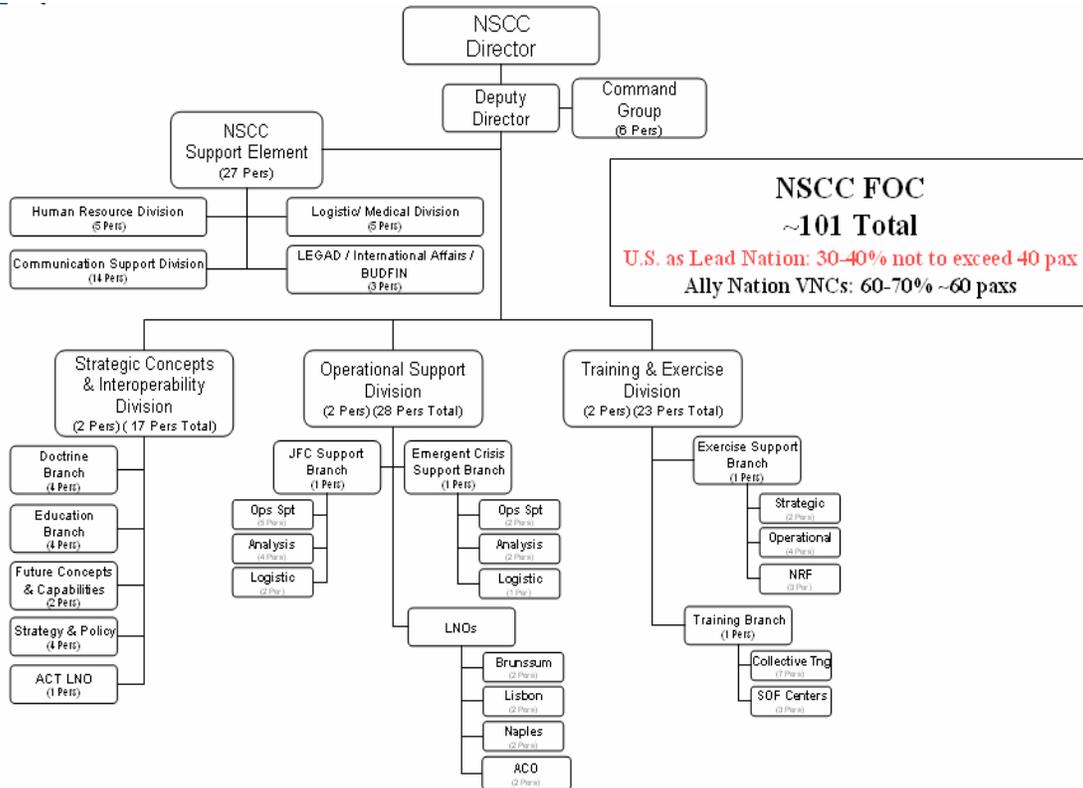


Figure 4. Proposed NSCC Structure.

Source: COL Stuart Bradin, SOCEUR, “NATO SOF Transformation Initiative Briefing,” Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2006

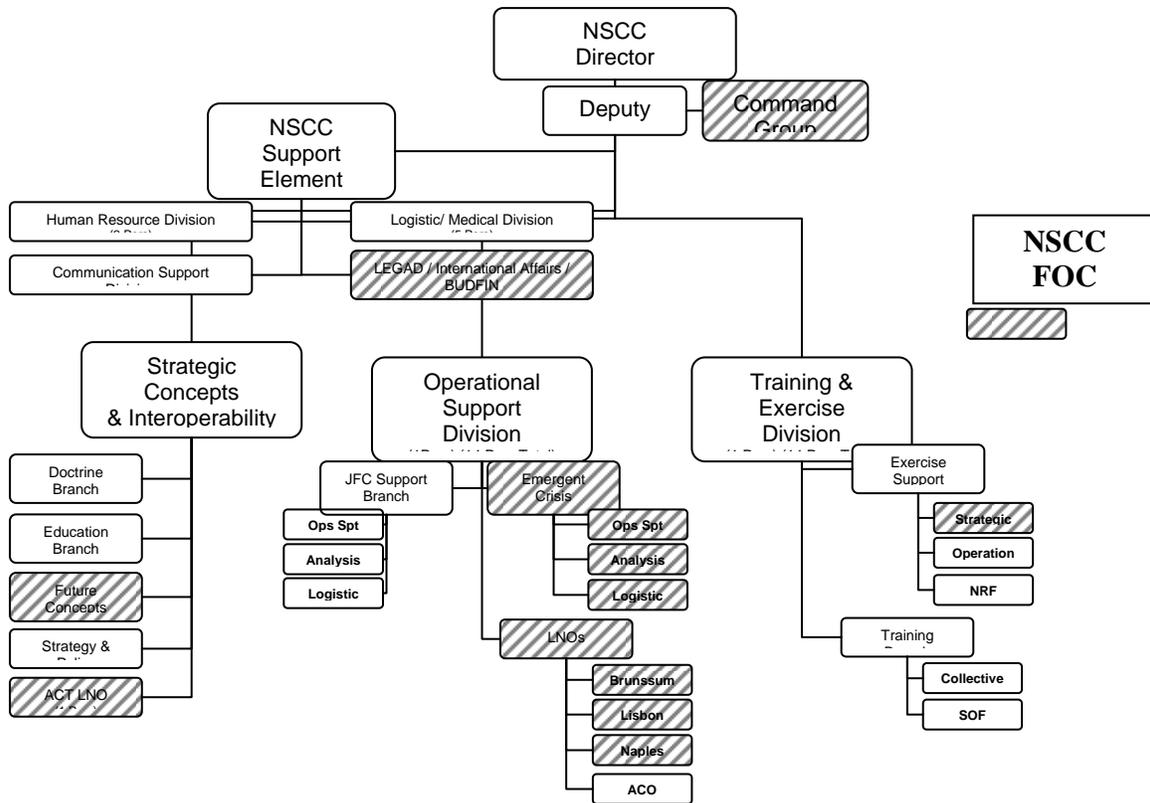


Figure 5. NSCC Initial Operating Capability

Source: "NATO SOF Transformation Initiative Briefing," Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2006.

The acceptability of the NSCC structure, as with feasibility, is already demonstrable in the initial standing-up of the organization and approval from SHAPE. Given the statements made and published during the Riga Summit in late 2006 which specified the implementation of a NATO SOF Transformation Initiative, there is a basis for introducing a standing C2 structure:

The adaptation of our forces must continue. We have endorsed a set of initiatives to increase the capacity of our forces to address contemporary threats and challenges. . . . [T]he launch of a special operations forces transformation initiative aimed at increasing their ability to train and operate together, including through improving equipment capabilities.⁸

While this is not a mandate to establish a permanent C2 structure, the bland political language which can be expected from any document which twenty-six heads of state can agree to, certainly affirms the intent and scope of the NSCC. The goal of the NSCC which specifically addresses the head's of state expressed desires for NATO SOF is expressed in the mission statement: "The NSCC provides SACEUR with a capability to ensure the synchronization of NATO Special Operations development and employment in support of NRF, ISAF and emerging JFC/CJTF missions to achieve unity of effort and facilitate solutions at the operational and strategic levels, in support of NATO's strategic vision."⁹ As previously noted, the appearance of a U.S.-led fiefdom would seriously hamper the acceptability of any proposed C2 architecture or standing-SOF capability. There is a feeling amongst Europeans that the US is reluctant to subject itself to the alliance framework, preferring a coalition of the willing which, by design, can reduce or negate NATO involvement in the chain of command.¹⁰ The built-in personnel cap of 40 US positions significantly contributes to the acceptability of the implemented structure and was offered up from allied planners, not U.S. planners.¹¹

Another factor in evaluating the acceptability of the NSCC and a follow-on morphing into a 3-star command is the governing NATO policies and Peacetime Engagement structure. Does NATO allow for growth of this nature statutorily? The North Atlantic Council, which is the only NATO body which derives its authority directly from the North Atlantic Treaty, is authorized to expand or contract the military structure subject to the council's approval.¹² While there may be practical political hurdles and implications for implementing a stand-alone Special Operations command, there is no statutory prohibition to do so. In specific, the Defense Planning Committee (DPC)

maintains the principal decision-making authority on matters relating to the integrated military structure of NATO.¹³ Additionally, the NATO military concept for defense against terrorism specifically addresses the need for appropriate, responsive C2 measures:

In order to carry out successful Counterterrorism operations, NATO must have adequate Command and Control and intelligence structures, as well as forces trained, exercised and maintained at the appropriate readiness levels. . . . Therefore the following planning aspects need special attention:

- Procedures and capabilities that support accelerated decision cycles, in order to be successful in detecting and attacking time sensitive targets in the Counter Terrorist environment.
- Access to flexible and capable Joint-Fires, ranging from precision-guided stand-off weapons to direct conventional fires.
- The need for more specialized anti-terrorist forces.¹⁴

Thus, in the consensus-approved official policy for NATO, the case for a SOF specific C2 organization which synchronizes and facilitates the operations of anti-terrorist forces is undeniably acceptable from an organizational transformation standpoint.

Some nations, especially new member nations, such as Romania, have specifically developed capabilities in their military designed to fill this need within NATO and to provide a niche capability and significant value added to the alliance. The creation of the Romanian counterterrorist unit, initiated in 2003, was specifically targeted to create an interoperable SOF unit that will grow from a team to company, then battalion and group employment capability, modeled after the U.S. Army Special Forces. The Romanians are building this unit as a Joint Operating Asset, planning to grow their capability through 2010 with an endstate of manning a Joint Special Operations Task Force staff in support of NATO operations. Though modeled after the U.S. SOF paradigm for interoperability sake, other allied nations, such as Turkey, were also involved in the development process.¹⁵ Although the research interviews conducted for

this thesis do not include allied SOF SMEs, the developments such as Romania's CTU are prima facie evidence of an existing willingness to subordinate national SOF assets to a NATO C2 structure, which translates into support in the affirmative for the acceptability of the NSCC and potentially a follow-on JFC level command.

The Romanian example segues well into the next analysis criteria, that of feasibility. In determining the feasibility of the NSCC structure and a potential morphing into a JFC level command, the relevant information is both in the force capabilities within the alliance and the political receptiveness of member nations to standing SOF C2 structure. As highlighted from Gompert and Smith's work suggesting a standing SOF combat capability, the sum total of the NATO allied SOF forces is roughly equivalent to half of the U.S. national SOF assets. This represents a significant force structure of theoretically available assets should member nations adopt and embrace an integrated SOF command.

The final analysis piece in examining the NSCC structure is the cost versus benefit ratio of instituting this paradigm. Under the NSCC, there will be a personnel cost of one hundred staff officers, forty of which will be U.S., and the remainder parsed out to member nations willing to fill the Volunteer National Contribution positions. It is noteworthy however, that based on the endstate structure represented in figure 3, at least one-third of the one-hundred-person center are non-SOF specific functions. Thus, the feasibility of manning these positions is dramatically increased as the SOF specific billets and subsequent cost to a nation's organic SOF capability are similarly reduced. As the NSCC has already generated the manning for an initial operating capability, this model is clearly feasible when evaluating the political willingness of nations to support the

concept. As previously mentioned, the much less clear metric for measuring the success or sustainability of the center will be the backfilling of these positions as staff members conduct habitual permanent change of station moves. Another significant metric in maintaining a running estimate of the feasibility and long term viability of a standing SOF C2 structure will be the number of new member nations willing to contribute to the architecture, both the quantity and caliber of SOF and non-SOF personnel dedicated to the NSCC or its eventual endstate structure. Aside from the cost in specialized manpower, which dips into national SOF capabilities and assets, there are also the associated budgetary costs of paying additional officers and non-commissioned officers for service abroad. NATO policy dictates that temporary duty per diem payments as well as the cost of living adjustments afforded NATO assigned military members are nationally assumed costs. There is no NATO common funding for these additional slots in the NSCC, thus, in a European framework where defense spending is typically less than 2 percent of gross domestic product, there are budgetary constraints which impact many of the smaller nations.

The benefits to nations under this model are essentially two tiered: there is the potential operational and strategic benefit to the twenty-six member nations as a whole, of a more effectively employed critical asset which contributes to the specifically identified gaps in capability: counterterrorism and rapid response surgical strikes. This capability is successfully synchronized through the NSCC contributes both to the current and future stability and security of all alliance by effectively eliminating emerging threats while garnering an increased level of diplomatic capital through the controlled use of deadly force. Effectively employed NATO SOF would go a long way to counter any

perception of NATO as a paper tiger. The second tier of benefits lie in the professional and doctrinal development envisioned within the NSCC in establishing the system of SOF centers of excellence. Nations with a general or niche capability already resident within their defense structure afford, and are reciprocally afforded, the remainder of the alliance SOF the opportunity to receive and provide training at these schools and facilities. This initiative represents a significant benefit to the developing SOF structures as the burden of infrastructure building and maintenance is diversified. Additionally, the interoperability of alliance SOF, so critical to any effective employment is drastically enhanced through the increased interaction among alliance capabilities and the resultant mimicked training base achieved from attending the same schools. Beyond the SOF specific development opportunities is the doctrinal development potential represented in the Strategic Concepts and Interoperability Division (see figure 3). The creation and adoption of common doctrine, training standards and documentation and adaptation of operational methods to achieve increased interoperability, is again a long-term but significant benefit to the nations with developing or limited in scope SOF capabilities. This is not to say there is not a substantial benefit to those nations with the larger, more mature SOF capabilities. The advancement of common doctrine and the combined training opportunities achieve an overall proficiency and capability increase for the alliance, thereby reducing the actual operational burden on the larger forces in the long term. A larger pool of credible, capable, interoperable SOF forces is in the interest of all twenty-six member nations.

Inner Core, Wider Network Model

The next model or proposed structure which emerged during research is the model proposed by Gompert and Smith for a standing SOF-core capability of approximately five-hundred personnel, which would serve as an in-extremis force, capable of being augmented or built up for larger employment requirements. The same model of feasibility, acceptability and suitability is being applied to this proposal. Though this was a singly produced document, some of the SMEs interviewed also advocated a standing force in addition to the C2 structure. Only after the SME offered this view was the Gompert and Smith model then introduced into the interview, and subsequently supported as a potentially viable solution.

The basic tenets of the Gompert-Smith model are a five-hundred-man inner core with a primary mission of counter-terrorism and possibly hostage rescue. The second pillar is the wider network which encompasses a full Range Of Military Operations (ROMO) including Foreign Internal Defense (FID), Counterinsurgency (COIN), Civil Affairs Operations (CAO), Information Operations (IO), peacetime advising and intelligence gathering.¹⁶ The feasibility of manning a five-hundred-man force is dubious in the current construct as these counter terrorist forces are the actual national assets vice senior staff officers and planners. Under the analysis rubric of existing NATO policies and procedures, the intelligence sharing aspects of a standing joint and combined multinational counterterrorist force are prohibitive and would require significant modification. The current force generation for Joint Force Special Operations Component Commands which fall under the NATO Response Force, follow the traditional NATO force generation process. These forces fall within the C2 architecture under the ACO

hierarchy, subordinate to one of the operational level headquarters (see figure 6). The Gompert-Smith model advocates the establishment of the inner core and wider network force structures with a near simultaneous political decision to create a Standing Joint Task Force (SJTF) with assignment of a commander and multilateral staff. It is this latter recommendation which severely impinges on the feasibility of this model. Based on the input from all of the SMEs, any creation of a standing headquarters must be incrementally implemented, showing return on investment throughout the development process. It is this political decision in conjunction with a standing capability which significantly degrades the feasibility of this particular COA.

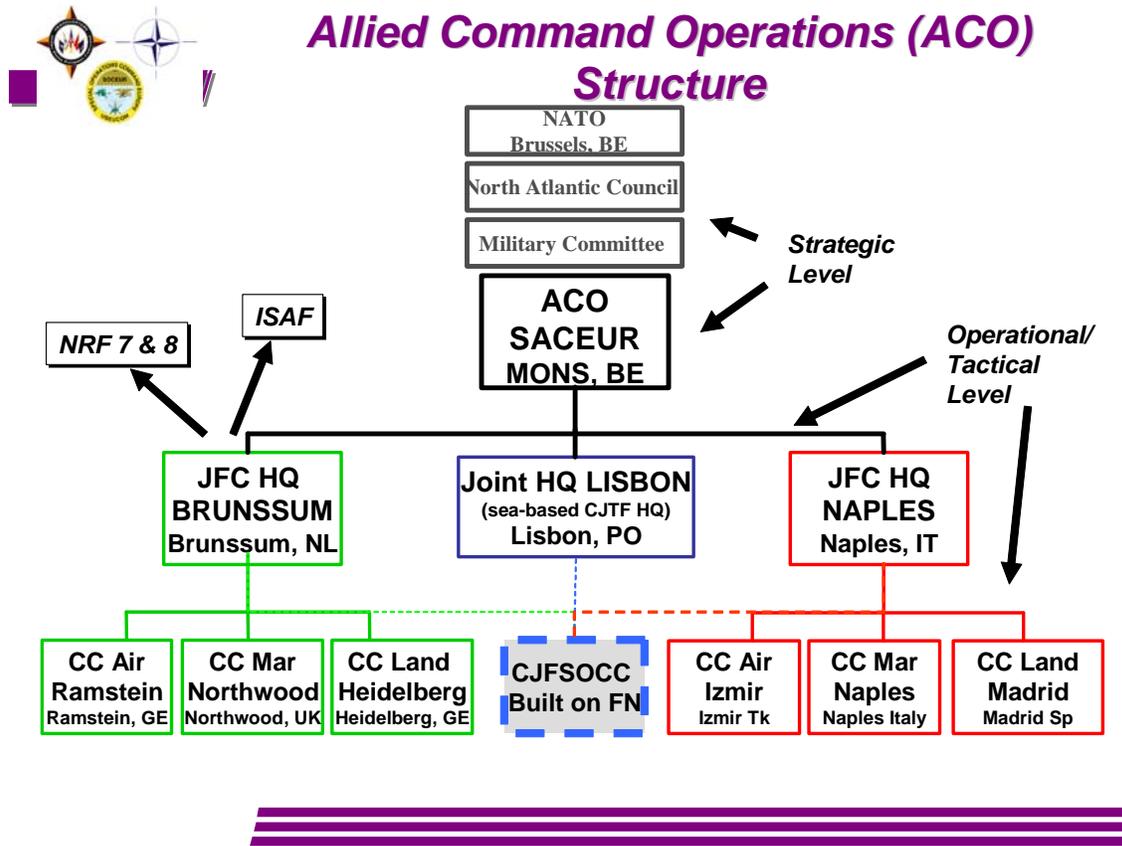


Figure 6. ACO Structure with SOF Component Integration Possibility
Source: SHAPE, “Proposal for an Adjusted ACO Command Structure (a SHAPE non-paper)” (2006).

The acceptability of the Gompert-Smith model is determined for the purposes of answering the primary research question by considering the costs versus benefits and the force generation requirements of this course of action. The costs for this model are twofold and significant, in terms of impact to national SOF assets and unilateral capabilities. The inner core five-hundred-man force is proposed as a three-month, rotational-framework nation iteration. The non-U.S. nations are envisioned in this model, contributing no larger than a 50-person force, or roughly an assault team equivalent. For smaller nations, this may represent a significant percentage of their overall total organic counter terrorist capability. The model is thereby limited to the larger and more mature forces with an entry cost perhaps too high for smaller, less mature SOF capabilities to overcome. There is anecdotal support for the counter argument however. The Czech Republic, for example, has twice sent a unique Special Forces unit in its entirety, based out of Prostějov, in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Afghanistan mission.¹⁷ This alliance SOF capability does in fact represent a large percentage of the Czech national capability, but along with the Romanian CTU example, indicates a willingness, particularly on the part of new member nations with developing military capabilities, to subordinate low density specialized forces to an alliance command at the cost of decreased availability for national employment. The return on investment for these new member nations is an asymmetric contribution, as SOF by its

very nature, is designed to asymmetrically contribute to the range of military operations. Also, within Afghanistan, the German Special Forces Command (KSK) has been employed in support of both Operation Enduring Freedom and ISAF.¹⁸ The German SOF capability is among the largest and most mature within the alliance, while Norway has also significantly contributed to the SOF operations in Afghanistan. Norway's SOF contingent represents a smaller, yet also very mature capability. Elements of the Norwegian Special Forces, the Ranger Command and Naval Ranger Command have all deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in a counter-terrorist role as well as in support of ISAF. These three examples together represent the spectrum of NATO SOF: the small, developing capability; the large, mature capability; and the small, mature capability.

An additional factor in determining the acceptability of this COA, which is not easily categorized into a cost or benefit but remains a significant issue, is the inherent intelligence sharing requirements that would be generated in a standing SOF combat force. This issue is not SOF peculiar as intelligence sharing has been singled out as a stumbling block for the progress of many NATO operations. It is similar to the personnel constraints however, as this aspect or issue which is common across the alliance, is compressed or exacerbated by the nature of SOF operations.¹⁹ The nature of SOF operations are generally more politically sensitive, time constrained and involve higher level national assets, as well as potentially classified tactics, techniques and procedures. Any such standing SOF combat force would force the hand of contributing nations to decide the volume, nature and classification level of intelligence to share with allied forces. This decision would obviously present a "cost" to those nations possessing greater

unilateral intelligence assets and capabilities which provide an advantage over friend and foe alike. Access to greater intelligence and potentially intelligence gathering methodology and equipment would be an enormous benefit to developing allied SOF efforts. The issue of sharing sensitive intelligence sharing, while it may be justified and supported by military operational assessments, becomes a largely political decision.

The benefits of this model are also significant if the hurdles identified in the feasibility analysis are overcome. Particularly, the capability increase for the alliance constituting a quick strike response force is more internationally palatable due to the multi-national flavor of said force. The sticking point in analyzing the acceptability hinges on the concurrent political will towards employing this force. As with the NSCC model, the employment of capable, synchronized SOF troops can have a strategic information operations effect with regard to the perception of NATO's military prowess. As with the previous COA, the increase in capable SOF and the increased interaction between forces conducting handover of rotations and combined training, is in the interest of the entire alliance.

In evaluating the suitability of the Gompert-Smith model the projected capabilities and the projected requirements overlaid with the NATO mission parameters present another difficult situation. The capability precisely meets several of the specific criteria as delineated in the NATO Military Concept for Defense Against Terrorism, but at a cost to nations that may prove to be prohibitive. The concept calls for more specialized antiterrorist forces and procedures and capabilities supporting accelerated decision cycles, but falls short of advocating a standing SOF counterterrorist capability already apportioned to NATO C2. The baseline is formed in this military concept to

support the Gompert-Smith model, however the employment criteria for such a force juxtaposed with the existing NATO employment capabilities does not support this model as suitable in the near term. The precise capability, advocating a limited to no-notice employment of a surgical strike capability, remains a shortfall within NATO. This shortfall is identified both within the NATO concept and the Gompert-Smith model proposal. The requirement for the alliance to push this course of action into the suitable arena is a fundamental shift in rules of engagement for NATO SOF to mirror the national SOF rules of engagement.²⁰ This powering down of the operational decision making authority, identified as a shortfall by Gompert and Smith, is more explicitly identified as an overall shortfall of NATO C2 by Dr. Thomas Durell Young: “The cross-assignment of units, the frequent need to change missions rapidly to respond to a developing situation, and the legitimate need for a commander to establish supply and training priorities are among the more sensitive powers nations are reluctant to turn over to an Alliance commander.”²¹ The suitability therefore of the inner core and wider network model with a Standing Joint Task Force is predicated on political decisions which have yet to be made and to which there exists significant pushback based on the comments from SME interviewees.

USSOCOM Model

The final transformation course of action for NATO SOF considered in this research is based on the historical example resident in the formation of USSOCOM. As previously identified in chapter 2, analogous conditions exist within the alliance with respect to SOF as existed in the United States SOF community, or lack thereof, in the mid-1980s. Specifically, the disparate SOF capabilities across the services with no

mechanism for synchronizing operations, standardizing doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures and growing the interoperability between systems. Additionally, an organizational hierarchy that has identified the operational shortfall and is searching for a solution where none previously existed, in essence implementing transformation out of whole cloth. In the case of USSOCOM, the interim model that was adopted, the Special Operations Advisory Panel and creation of a Counterterrorist Joint Task Force, was limited in scope of authority and possessed no budgetary control. U.S. congressional review of the panel and task force determined the operational efficiencies were not substantial enough and the morphing into USSOCOM, with servicelike responsibilities, and SOF specific budgetary and acquisition control was the result. The question then is, How does the FAS test apply for this course of action within NATO?

Is it feasible to create a cross-service parent organization for all SOF within the alliance? In examining whether the force structure exists from which to draw the manning for such a headquarters, the comprehensive political guidance calls for expeditionary, deployable, and scalable forces. Specifically in the proposal for an adjusted ACO command structure the advocated line of operation for adjustment is to “exercise effective C2 through a balanced, standing HQ structure supported by an appropriate, earmarked force structure.”²²

In determining the acceptability of a servicelike SOF command with budgetary and acquisition propriety, the cost and benefits are significant yet can be reduced to a few simple main ideas. The cost is significant both in terms of personnel, infrastructure requirements and the loss of national SOF assets. Additionally, this form of transformation would seem entirely superfluous if there were not a standing, dedicated

SOF force of which this new command exercised control. Thus, this COA would require the simultaneous institution of a large SOF capability permanently dedicated to NATO, in order to justify the large scale command. There is no precedent, less the actual initial formation of NATO, of this level of organizational transformation within the alliance. The SMEs, multiple authors and the NATO official documents all specify and recommend a graduated approach. The very multilateral, consensus nature of the alliance does not facilitate cataclysmic shifts or revolutionary change.

The suitability of the USSOCOM model must compare the projected NATO requirements and missions with the construct of the proposed COA. The NATO SOF transformation initiative specifically identifies three elements of transformation: the NSCC, the NATO Federation of SOF Training Centers and enhanced capacity in the SHAPE Special Operations Office (SSOO). The Riga Summit declaration in regards to SOF goes only so far as to call for the SOF transformation initiative, without details as to scope. Within the defense against terrorism concept, again already expounded, there is a call for expanded capability and decision making efficiency, but far from the fundamental shift which would support a third pillar of command specifically for SOF. Additionally, as identified by each of the SMEs and in the ACO structure review, the suitability of even a 3-star command, much less a servicelike headquarters, is predicated on a wait-and-see mentality.

Two final aspects in applying the FAS test to the USSOCOM model are the matters of NATO policy for funding and resourcing and the implementation time line. Specifically identified as an area that requires transformation in and of itself, the principle of NATO common funding, vice the current status quo of costs fall where they lay, is a

matter of significant controversy within the alliance. GEN Kujat, former chairman of the NATO Military Committee, in a farewell address took the opportunity to express his concern for this matter as such:

We need to expand common funding. We need to provide support to nations, specifically those nations that contribute with quite a substantial force. . . . We need to change our procedures in the way that we reimburse nations. It doesn't make any sense. For instance, when we rotate forces every six months that all nations bring their equipment into theater, they take it out, and the next nation is deploying equipment for a lot of money.²³

Effectively engaging such a large organizational change and endowing a new SOF command with budgetary and resourcing responsibilities, would necessitate as a precursor, the wholesale transformation of the funding and NATO acquisition process.

The time line for implementation is the other factor mentioned above. USSOCOM was instituted over the span of a decade, creating a headquarters where none existed before. While the U.S. bureaucracy is notorious for slow response, especially the Department of Defense in the 1980s and 1990s, the multilateral NATO process is even further bogged down by the consensus and committee requirements for advancing transformation initiatives. As an example, the NATO Response Force, the officially proclaimed vehicle for transformation of the entire alliance was four years and eight rotations through process to declare full operating capability. Add the lead time from the initial proposals and procedural committees and one can generate an idea of the extended time line associated in standing up a SOF servicelike headquarters. The tactical patience of member nations for initiatives to bear fruit is significantly less in the multilateral arena than unilaterally driven national agendas. Thus, there does not appear to be support for this course of action as suitable based on the projected NATO capability requirements and expectations.

The final course of action which must be considered is that of the status quo (prior to NSCC initial operating capability, as the NSCC still exists outside the formal PE structure). This course of action comprises maintaining the Special Operations planning cells within each of Joint Force Command headquarters operations sections, and generating Special Operations capabilities for specific missions through the traditional NATO force generation process.

The feasibility of this COA is fully supportable in the manning aspect, as this structure is already officially in place. The more significant question is whether the status quo provides the requisite capability as delineated by NATO leadership and member nations. The call in the Riga Summit Declaration for a NATO SOF transformation initiative is a clear indicator that the current capability is deemed as insufficient to meet the current, emerging and projected threat, which is equally delineated in the same document. Thus, remaining with the status quo is not supported as a COA by this criteria.

The acceptability of remaining with the status quo in terms of cost and benefit to both NATO and member nations is neither strongly supportive nor against. The cost to NATO is two-fold. First the fiscal impacts are negligible as funding, PE and CE structures, physical locations and staff integration for these positions are already established and habitually resourced. The greater cost is in the lack of added capability which has been directed and supported by both the military and political leadership of the alliance. Certainly, greater efficiencies could be leveraged from the existing structure, though not delved into within this research, but the current structure does not lend itself to a tailorable SOF capability, force, or C2 structure. These aspects are called for in all NATO forces, not just specifically SOF. The cost to nations is primarily in the arena of

unrealized returns. Without a transformed SOF structure, capable of adapting and expanding to meet the mission needs and Alliance objectives, the developing coalition SOF capabilities are reduced to unilateral or bilateral development and are unable to capitalize on the pooled resources of the 26 contributing nations. For the larger nations, the cost is again in maintained operational burden and unrealized returns of an overall increase in coalition SOF capability which provides for a diversification of effort across the range of military operations.

The benefits to NATO as an alliance for the status quo course of action are primarily a preservation of resources and capital, both fiscal and political. The creation of a transformed, and by design more capable, SOF capability likely brings with it the expectation both by the contributing nations and subsequently the international community, that these precious national commodities will not remain shelved, untested and unvetted. The NATO leadership by maintaining the status quo does not, in effect, sign up for the fight to use or not use a SOF capability which may be perceived as a far more attractive, thus more expeditiously employed, military resolution option. The corollary benefit to member nations is the preservation of national SOF assets for employment in support of national objectives and missions.

This COA is most strongly contra-indicated by the suitability criteria. When matching projected requirements and projected capabilities, all of the cited sources, those being: NATO official strategy, political leadership statements, and professional military and expert commentary, specifically identify the contemporary operating environment and the counter terrorist threat as the operational setting for future NATO missions. The Allied Command Transformation is charged with morphing the whole of NATO military

capability into a more expeditionary, tailorable, responsive, technologically advanced and integrated force. At a minimum, the SOF capability in NATO must keep pace with the remainder of the NATO force transformation, and thus the status quo option is not supported via the suitability criteria.

Course of Action Comparisons

The final step in this analysis is the comparison of the three courses of action and the results of the FAS test as applied to each. Figure 7 depicts the projected Allied Command Operations force structure in the coming years. There is not a delineated SOF command in the 2008 structure, though the review calls for further evaluation based on the future success of current SOF transformation initiatives. Against this background, the FAS test comparison may provide support for the future ACO structure modification.

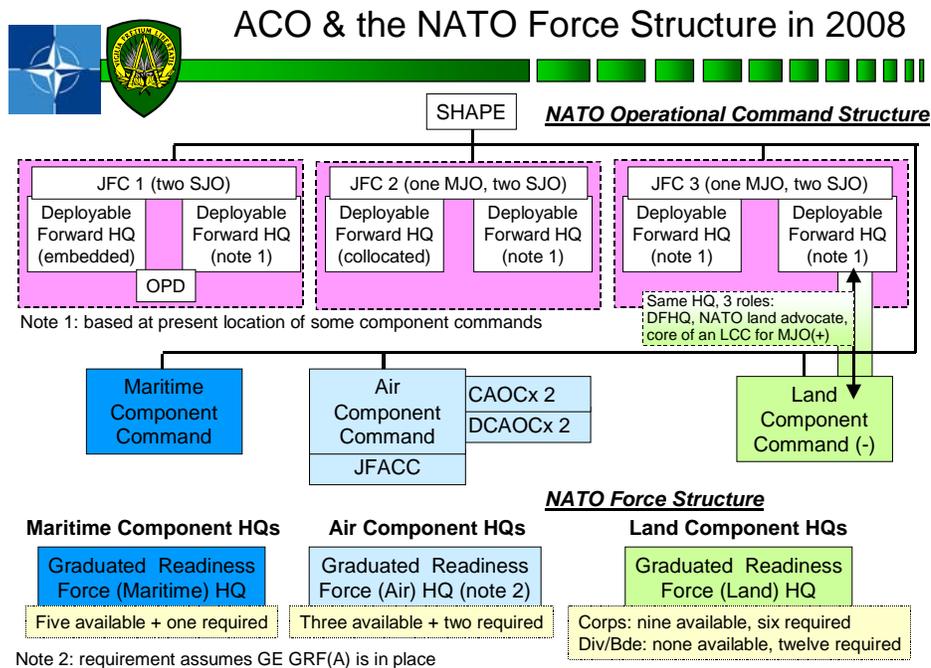


Figure 7. 2008 Proposed Allied Command Operations Structure

Source: SHAPE, “Proposal for an Allied Command Operations Structure (a SHAPE non-paper),” SHAPE, Mons, Belgium, 2007.

The four courses of action evaluated were: (1) the NATO SOF Transformation Initiative which is inclusive of the NATO SOF Coordination Center, the SOF Federation of Training Centers and the expanded SHAPE SOF staff capacity; (2) the Inner Core-Wider Network standing SOF capability; (3) the USSOCOM model, a servicelike headquarters which includes resourcing and budgetary responsibilities; and (4) Status quo. Table 3 displays the four COAs with each of the three criteria and the relative determination of each. Each COA is scored as a positive (+), negative (-) or neutral (0).

Table 3. Course of Action FAS Comparison			
	Feasibility	Acceptability	Suitability
NSCC, SOF training centers, SSOO	+	O	+
Inner Core-Wider Network	O	O	+
Servicelike headquarters	-	-	-
Status Quo	O	-	-

To reiterate the parameters of table 3, feasibility is determined by whether the proper expertise exists to man the force structure and does the proposed force provide the requisite capability identified by NATO leadership. The acceptability is analyzed by the cost and benefit analysis of the recommendation in regards to NATO as a whole and the

individual member nations. The final criteria of suitability are based on matching projected capabilities with projected requirements. Positive, neutral, or negative scores indicate to what degree the recommended course of action supports these analytical criteria. A positive (+) rating shows the COA is strongly supportable in accordance with the related criteria, a neutral rating indicating the COA is neither indicated nor contra-indicated by the criteria and a negative rating indicating the COA is unsupported for implementation according to the aligned criteria.

This chapter has analyzed four courses of action as generated through the research process. By applying the feasibility, acceptability and suitability test as described in Chapter 3 forms the data set to provide recommendations and conclusions in answering the primary research question of this thesis.

¹Additionally interviewed subject matter experts included U.S. Army Special Forces COL Fred Jones, the commander of the Special Operations Component Command-Forward for NATO Response Force 7 and exercise Steadfast Jaguar, and U.S. Army Special Forces LTC Otis McGregor, the Deputy Operations Officer for Special Operations Command-Europe.

² General James L. Jones, "SACEUR on ACO Transformation," 29 April 2004; Internet; available at <http://www.nato.int/shape/news/2004/04/i040429a.htm>; accessed 28 March 2007.

³Luca Bonsignore, "Defence Transformation - Key Element of NATO Transformation -- The NATO Response Force (NRF)," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace*, no. 2 (2005): 44.

⁴Ibid., 45.

⁵Ibid., 48.

⁶MG Gary Harrell, Deputy Chief of Staff-Operations, JFC Brunssum, telephone interview conducted by author, 2006, Ft. Leavenworth, KS.

⁷ COL Stuart Bradin, interview conducted by author at Fort Leavenworth, KS, 17 November 2007.

- ⁸ HQ NATO, “NATO Press Release, Riga Summit Declaration,” 4.
- ⁹LTC Otis McGregor, Special Operations Command-Europe, electronic mail interview conducted by author, 19 December 2006.
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- ¹⁴NATO Information Service, “NATO's Military Concept for Defence Against Terrorism,” 2003.
- ¹⁵Tudor, 18-21.
- ¹⁶ David C. Gompert and Raymond C. Smith, “Creating a NATO Special Operations Force,” *Defense Horizons*, no. 52 (March 2006): 7.
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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter provided analysis of the four courses of action generated for consideration during this research, by applying the Feasibility, Acceptability and Suitability test to each. In answering the primary research question of: Does NATO require a standing Special Operations Force C2 structure and capability to meet the emerging global security requirements of the Alliance? the four courses of action in order of most supportable to least supportable are: (1) NATO SOF Transformation Initiative; (2) Inner Core-Wider Network; (3) Status Quo; (4) Service like headquarters (USSOCOM model).

During the course of this research the NSTI has been adopted as a roadmap for NATO SOF transformation, as expressed by the former Supreme Allied Commander-Europe, General James L. Jones and published in the second quarter of 2007. General Jones states, “the NATO Special Operations Forces Transformation Initiative will provide a complete SOF solution set at all levels: tactical, operational and strategic.”¹ The current NSTI specifically avoids developing a standing SOF combat force, citing the “immense value that these elite forces represent at the national level.”² The original intent of this research sought to separate the analysis of the military and operational requirements of the NATO SOF capabilities from the practical political implementation roadblocks. This separation proved untenable as nearly without exception, the commentary, recommendations and supporting evidence all contain a significant political component, either in molding the recommendation to navigate pre-existing political

impediments or acknowledging within the commentary that any such changes must be preceded by, or coincide with, political or regulatory change in order to remain viable.

What is revealed through this research, overarching any recommended COA, is that any proposal must be incremental in implementation. Sweeping transformational changes, rapidly implemented, are simply counter-culture to the NATO political and military approvals process. The NSTI has built in some limitations which provide assurances to less eager member nations, safeguarding national SOF assets and the command authorities to employ those forces. At the same time the NSCC and Federation of SOF Training Centers are expandable concepts and structures, able to grow to meet any increased demand should the organizations provide the significant value-added for which they are intended. The COA comparison table (Table 1) in the previous chapter depicts the NSTI as positive in both feasibility and suitability while neutral in regards to acceptability. The primary factor in limiting the acceptability of the NSTI is the constrained nature of all national SOF assets, even at the planner or staff officer level, the reluctance of member nations to offer forces or fill billets for concepts and structures that remain yet unproven. This COA is strongly supported as suitable, in that it offers a realistic level of ambition in the achievable initial steps of reforming NATO SOF, while providing a professional Special Operations architecture to grow the alliance SOF capacity to meet emerging missions and threats.

Based on the analysis of the inner core-wider network model as providing a highly suitable solution, in relation to the mission needs and projections of the alliance, but neutral in both acceptability and feasibility, it is the conclusion of this thesis that the inner core-wider network should be incorporated as the final phase into the NSTI. The

stated desires of the alliance and the desired responsiveness of the SOF capabilities are well supported by this model. The incorporation of the inner core, wider network into the final stages of the NSTI leverages the aforementioned incremental process while the model internally provides the limitations and controls which safeguard many of the concerns of releasing national SOF assets. If applied within a proven construct, already paved through the NSTI, this model could also serve as a forcing function for requisite political change in the operational employment authorities and approval methodology.

Both the USSOCOM and status quo models fail to provide a comprehensive or realistic solution with a legitimate chance of furthering NATO's strategic and operational goals. The funding and acquisitions authorities for SOF specific training and equipment have no analogous or statutory basis anywhere within the alliance, while simply maintaining the current set is counter the directive guidance. The status quo reinforces that member states with robust SOF capabilities will maintain a disproportionate risk and burden of this mission set.

Recommendations

The delimitations established for this thesis specifically avoided evaluating the political reformation process that would be necessitated in order to implement some of the courses of action presented here. However, many of the sources cited and the interviewees work to establish the logical link between the two. There is ample room for further research into the political reformation process not only as a by product of military transformation, but in analyzing what political measures could or should be adopted. The recommended reforms to the NATO structure, in order to promote adaptability and responsiveness from the entire organization, are specifically targeted in regards to the

force generation process, which is both cumbersome and time consuming. The commitment by a nation to provide a specific asset or capability is often rendered essentially nonbinding when national caveats are added into the equation.

Another topic which merits examination which has surfaced during the course of this thesis research is the parallel, often redundant and sometimes contradictory development of an independent European security structure. There is significant volume of commentary and analysis both on the pro and the con side of developing an EU or common European security apparatus. One of the main contentions in these arguments is one that surfaced for this thesis, that of constrained assets. Primarily, the overlap of requirements and capabilities in creating a separate EU structure while maintaining NATO military capacity, requires drawing from the same limited pool of available forces. Were it even politically feasible, there is simply not enough manpower to maintain both forces. The impact of a viable EU security structure would eventually attempt to garner a percentage of national SOF assets, which pending the next few years of NATO SOF transformation, may represent an increasingly effective and politically palatable solution. It would be an interesting examination to analyze the potential diminishing returns of non-European nation contributions which promote the development of European national SOF, subject to being siphoned off for a parallel EU security apparatus.

The relevance of NATO continues as a subject of much debate, even as the alliance has and is undergoing significant transformation to meet and counter the threats of the modern battlefield and provide for the common security of the alliance. The transformation of the NATO Special Operations capability by instituting a standing C2 structure with an earmarked SOF combat force represents a substantial improvement in

the organization's ability to achieve the strategic, operational and tactical successes to ensure the continued and prosperous transatlantic union that has shaped the planet for over half a century. With the proper thought and effort applied to the changes deemed necessary for the Alliance to remain viable, this force can remain a vital component to the security of the Free World for many years to come.

¹General James L. Jones, "A Blueprint for Change: Transforming NATO Special Operations," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 45 (2007): 38.

²*Ibid.*, 39.

GLOSSARY

SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, NATO military Headquarters in Mons, Belgium
SOF	Special Operations Forces: This term refers to the entire body of forces within the Alliance that maintain the Special Operations mission within their respective country. In the U.S., these forces are across all four services, while many NATO nations maintain commando-type units only. For the purposes of this research, SOF includes all forces to include non-defense ministry paramilitary forces that could be aligned against a NATO SOF structure.
NAC	North Atlantic Council: The North Atlantic Council (NAC) has effective political authority and powers of decision within NATO, and consists of Permanent Representatives of all member countries
NSCC	NATO Special Operations Coordination Center: The current initiative being implemented within NATO to provide a Command and Control capability to NATO SOF. Ongoing during the process of this research, the NSCC reached Initial Operating Capability in early 2007.
JFC	Joint Force Command: The operational headquarters level within the NATO Command and Control structure. Commanded by a 4-star flag officer, NATO is comprised of JFC-Brunssum, JFC-Naples and JC-Lisbon.
SR	Special Reconnaissance (SR) missions—covert, fact-finding operations to uncover information about the enemy.
DA	Direct Action. Direct Action missions are short duration strikes that are used when Special Operations Forces want to seize, capture, recover or destroy enemy weapons and information or recover designated personnel or material.
UW	Unconventional Warfare: A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes guerrilla warfare and other direct offensive, low visibility, covert, or clandestine operations, as well as the indirect activities of subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and evasion and escape.
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command

Article-5 Operations Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, the founding and binding document, which provides the legal basis for NATO's existence, calls for the common defense of the Alliance nations under the banner that an armed attack on one is an attack on all.

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