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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

FORCE OF CHOICE: OPTIMIZING THEATER SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMANDS TO ACHIEVE SYNCHRONIZED EFFECTS

by

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December 2012

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SOCAFRICA, a theater special operations command (TSOC), executes the full spectrum of Special Operations in complex environments, emphasizing the indirect approach to operations. The operational emphasis on preventive activities in a steady-state environment provides access, awareness, and options to the U.S. and its partners in the event of crises. Special Operation Forces (SOF) have doubled in size over the past decade, and SOCOM has built tremendous capabilities in that time, but TSOC's—the regional-level SOF organizations—have not shared in these capability increases. Because TSOC's are under-manned and under-resourced, they are not capable of effectively applying the indirect approach to achieve long-term effects for Geographic Combatant Commanders and Chiefs of Mission. Change is needed to improve TSOC effectiveness. This thesis will analyze the organizational shortfalls of TSOC's through the lens of the newest TSOC, SOCAFRICA, and will examine USSOCOM's Global SOF Network concept which intends to provide authorities, capabilities, and resources to TSOC's to make them the force of choice at the regional level. SOCOM has established a road map to optimize TSOC's. However, the GSN alone is not capable of implementing the necessary changes; it will require commitment and continued support from the individual services, the GCC's, and from Congress.

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FORCE OF CHOICE: OPTIMIZING THEATER SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMANDS TO ACHIEVE SYNCHRONIZED EFFECTS

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MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

SOCAFRICA, a theater special operations command (TSOC), executes the full spectrum of Special Operations in complex environments, emphasizing the indirect approach to operations. The operational emphasis on preventive activities in a steady-state environment provides access, awareness, and options to the U.S. and its partners in the event of crises. Special Operation Forces (SOF) have doubled in size over the past decade, and SOCOM has built tremendous capabilities in that time, but TSOC's—the regional-level SOF organizations—have not shared in these capability increases. Because TSOC's are under-manned and under-resourced, they are not capable of effectively applying the indirect approach to achieve long-term effects for Geographic Combatant Commanders and Chiefs of Mission. Change is needed to improve TSOC effectiveness. This thesis will analyze the organizational shortfalls of TSOC's through the lens of the newest TSOC, SOCAFRICA, and will examine USSOCOM's Global SOF Network concept which intends to provide authorities, capabilities, and resources to TSOC's to make them the force of choice at the regional level. SOCOM has established a road map to optimize TSOC's. However, the GSN alone is not capable of implementing the necessary changes; it will require commitment and continued support from the individual services, the GCC's, and from Congress.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1206	NDAA Section 1206 (FY2006)
1207	NDAA Section 1207 (FY2012)
1208	NDAA Section 1208 (FY2006)
3D	Diplomacy, Development, and Defense
AFRICOM	Africa Command, also USAFRICOM
AO/AOR	Area of Operations/ Area of Responsibility
AQIM	Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
BILAT	Bilateral Exchange Training
BPC	Build Partner Capacity
C2	Command and Control
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force- Horn of Africa
COCOM	Combatant Command (authority, command relationship)
COM	Chief of Mission
CNT	Counter-Narcotics Terrorism
CT	Counter terrorism
DC2	Distributed Command and Control
DCR	DOTMILPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Personnel, Facilities) Change Recommendation
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
DSG	Defense Strategic Guidance (Refers to the formally titled *Sustaining Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century*. January 2012)

FY	Fiscal Year
GCC	Geographic Combatant Command
GFM	Global Force Management
GSN	Global SOF Network (aka EGSN)
IA	Interagency
IATF	Interagency Task Force
JCET	Joint Combined Exchange Training
JPAT	Joint Planning and Advisory Team
JPME	Joint Professional Military Education
JSOTF	Joint Special Operations Task Force
JSOTF-TS	Joint Special Operations Task Force – Trans Sahel
JTF	Joint Task Force
LOO	Lines of Operation
MSRP	Mission Strategic Resource Plan
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NSS	National Security Strategy
OAA	(SOCAFRICA) operations, actions, and activities
OEF-TS	Operation Enduring Freedom – Trans Sahel
OPCON	Operational Control
PCA	Pre-crisis activities
PE	Preparation of the environment
PDP	Partnership Development Programs
PKO	Peacekeeping Operations

ROC Drill	Rehearsal of Concept Drill
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SOCAFRICA	Special Operations Command Africa
SOCOM NCR	SOCOM National Capital Region (see USSOCOM)
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOST	Special Operations Support Teams
SSO	SOF Strategic Objectives
TSC	Theater Security Cooperation
TSCTP	Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership
TCP	Theater campaign plan
TSO	Theater Security Objectives
TSOC	Theater Special Operations Command
UCP	Unified Command Plan
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command (aka SOCOM)

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

> Much like Goldwater Nichols accomplished for our Armed Forces two decades ago, we should assess what new or revised authorities are needed to enhance interagency coordination, and build a more joint and integrated process.[1]
>
> Gen. Peter Pace- 2007
> Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

The U.S. military recognizes the need for enduring engagement across the globe as a means to address today's threats, and further, it understands the importance of synchronization among U.S. Government (USG) organizations. The Commander of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has said that Special Operations Forces (SOF) can help achieve the integration of Diplomacy, Development, and Defense (3D) efforts through the indirect approach to operations with forward presence and enduring engagement in regions where the Department of State (DoS) has primacy, also called Title 22 environments.[2] The current security environment has demonstrated an increased demand on dwindling resources, persistent regional instability, empowered non-state actors, the continuing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and failed states. "Within the past two decades, prominent foreign policy organizations. . . have perceived serious deficiencies in the authorities, organizations, and personnel used to conduct interagency missions that prevent the United States from exercising its power to full advantage."[3] These security challenges present an opportunity to apply all elements of national power to counter threats to security.

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1 General Peter Pace, in his Posture Statement to Congress, 2007. Taken from Christian M. Averett et al., "An Analysis of Special Operations Command-South's Distributive Command and Control Concept (Master's Thesis, Monterey, Calif: Naval Postgraduate School, 2007), 7.

2 William H. McRaven, Statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee, *Posture Statement of the Commander, United States Special Operations Command, before the 112th Congress,* March 6, 2012.

3 Nina M. Serafino, Catherine Dale, and Pat Towell, "Building Civilian Interagency Capacity for Missions Abroad Key Proposals and Issues for Congress," Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, December, 22, 2011, http://www.cq.com/pdf/crsreports-4008205, (accessed 2 Oct, 2012), 1.

National security interests in recent years are driven by increasingly complex threats and problems around the globe, most of which are not solvable through military activities alone. Michele Malvesti states in her report titled *To Serve the Nation: U.S. Special Operations in an Era of Persistent Conflict*, that SOF's abilities to address future threats have outpaced policies to optimally employ SOF, and that therefore, it is important that SOF provides policymakers with innovative options to address future national security threats:[4]

> Today, the SOF community has invested in strategic and operational relationships across departments and agencies in Washington. . . . In many ways, SOF are now serving as both a nucleus of action and as the center for a community of practice, frequently driving interagency discussions on . . . national security threats and challenges.[5]

But at the regional, theater level of SOF organizations, these relationships have not been codified, nor have the requirements for regional SOF structure been institutionalized. This is relevant because National Security Reform issues focus on the need for more a coherent and consistent whole of government approach for the instruments of national power. SOF's investment over the past decade at the strategic and tactical level of SOF capabilities merits similar emphasis at the regional level.

While SOF has adapted to the complexities of the past decade, organizational modifications at the regional level have not kept up. A Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC), the regional level SOF organization, is designed to maintain an enduring presence and develop long-term relationships in their region, including with other U.S. government departments in a region. But regional SOF are chronically understaffed and not optimally organized to achieve this in complex operating environments due to legacy command and control structures that impede synchronization—in part a result of each Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) lacking expertise in the strategic employment and resourcing of SOF at the regional level.

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4 Michele L. Malvesti, "To Serve the Nation: US Special Operations Forces in an Era of Persistent Conflict," Center for a New American Security, Washington, D.C., June 2010, 27.

5 Ibid, 4.

This reduced effectiveness, at a time when GCC's rely on SOF more, requires changes to the authorities, capabilities, and resources for the TSOC's, which will enable them to better achieve theater strategies through whole-of-government collaboration. With a leaner military, SOF will be asked to remain capable of meeting a wider range of security requirements.[6] To help achieve national security objectives, USSOCOM intends to better integrate SOF across the interagency (IA) by reorganizing regional SOF over the next several years through a concept called the Global SOF Network (GSN).

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the organizational shortfalls of the TSOC's through the lens of SOCAFRICA, and examine the implications of USSOCOM's Global SOF Network concept on the future role of SOF at the regional level. National Security policy is executed at the regional level, most prominently in the form of the Department of State's country focused embassies and the Department of Defense's (DoD) Geographic Combatant Commands. But the mismatch of directive authority within the USG—at the National Security Council level and then again at the bilateral-focused embassy country team—creates a large gap in the regional level, in which the GCC stands out as a large DoD entity trying to accomplish its mission.[7] As such, our work seeks to illustrate how the SOCOM GSN will improve those regional SOF organizational issues that prevent better synchronization in areas where the DoS has primacy.

The thesis will examine the required authorities and capabilities SOCOM needs to implement changes to improve the overall effectiveness of the TSOC to operate in steady-state environment. Specifically, our work will examine six aspects: The TSOC's ability to sustain enduring engagements with partners; The lack of personnel expertise to plan regional SOF campaigns; Degraded ability to conduct distributed command and control (DC2) and lack of assigned forces; Inflexible logistics support mechanisms;

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6 Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, *2012 Army Posture Statement.*, 2012, https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil/VDAS_ArmyPostureStatement/2012/pages/StrategicContext.aspx, accessed 5 August, 2012.

7 Peter Phillips and Charles Corcoran, "Harnessing America's Power: A U.S. National Security Structure for the 21st Century," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 63, 4th qtr. 2011, 42.

Complexity in authorities and funding; and synchronization of SOF plans with other regional entities.

Africa and the Special Operations Command- Africa (SOCAFRICA) will be the case study through which the aforementioned improvements will be examined within the context of a steady-state environment. SOCAFRICA was selected because it is the newest TSOC, only four years old, and as part of the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), was deliberately conceived to focus on the whole-of government approach. Further, Africa is a region with increased U.S. strategic emphasis, but more importantly it is a region where the full range of security challenges exists.

C. METHODOLOGY

The thesis topic is inductive in nature, using background research on current policy and plans to gain an understanding of the National Security environment and how SOF organizations are adapting to changes within it. Chapter two provides an explanation of the GSN as it applies to TSOC improvement and synchronization, relying primarily on existing draft concepts within SOCOM and interviews with SOCOM staff. Next, Chapter Three will characterize the steady-state environment, providing a focus for future operations and highlighting the importance of lexicon and common understanding of terms, roles, and capabilities across U.S. Government organizations. It will analyze the regional level of operations—the level at which TSOC's conduct campaign planning. Specifically, it will cover the indirect approach to Special Operations (SO) at the regional level; the TSOC as the regional SOF organization, and Africa as a complex steady-state environment. Chapter four is the case study examining SOCAFRICA and the SOCOM NCR. The case study will identify major organizational shortfalls of the TSOC, tying these and the organizations to the steady-state environment and to the synchronization needed for coherent U.S. foreign policy. This chapter will rely extensively on SOCAFRICA concepts, guidance, and interviews with staff members from SOCAFRICA and SOCOM. The case study will help identify implications and recommendations, which may be applicable to other regional SOF or DoD organizations. The final chapter will examine the GSN and its proposed solutions to improve the capabilities and

synchronization of regional SOF organizations. Additionally, our work addresses implications of the GSN on the Services to generate further analysis and research.

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II. THE CALL FOR CHANGE

> Indeed, as we end today's wars, we will focus on a broader range of challenges and opportunities. . . . As a new generation across the Middle East and North Africa demands their universal rights, we are supporting political and economic reform and deepening partnerships to ensure regional security. . . . we will ensure that our military is agile, flexible, and ready for the full range of contingencies.[8]
>
> President Barack Obama-Jan 2012
> Defense Strategic Guidance

A. THE GLOBAL SOF NETWORK

This chapter will provide an overview of SOCOM's Global SOF Network. It will examine efforts to improve the regional level of SOF by adding capabilities to the TSOC's, and improve SOF synchronization within the interagency by adding a staff element in Washington, D.C., called SOCOM National Capital Region (NCR). This thesis focuses on two of the four GSN lines of effort, explained below.

Since 9/11, U.S. Special Operations has experienced staggering growth and operations tempo—nearly doubling in manpower, tripling in budget, and quadrupling in deployments[9]—while TSOC's were largely ignored over the time that SOCOM grew the force, its capabilities, and its headquarters. Despite the overall growth of SOF, TSOC's do not have adequate capabilities, authorities, or capacity to plan and executed full-spectrum operations in steady-state environments. Although they are Special Operations Commands, there is currently no formal command relationship with SOCOM—TSOC's are the special operations subordinate unified commands of the GCC. The role and command relationships of TSOC's are unclear within DoD, and even DoS does not recognize their role except in a combat theater.[10]

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8 Leon E. Panetta, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* Washington, D.C: Dept. of Defense, January 2012, 1.

9 Andrew Feickert, "U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress", Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., July 15, 2011, http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=682416, (accessed 10 October, 2012), summary.

10 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Commander's Estimate on Expanding Global SOF Network," MacDill, AFB: Special Operations Command, November 4, 2011, B1.

As a result, the SOCOM enterprise grew while at the regional level the ability to C2 SOF and collaborate with the IA in steady-state environments remained static. SOCOM, and SOF in general, focused the majority of its efforts and resources on the most visible aspects of its capabilities—the direct approach to counterterrorism (CT).[11] CT was and still is the priority effort of the United States, and SOCOM was given responsibility for synchronizing the military's CT efforts. Therefore, SOCOM headquarters used resources in an attempt to become an executive level warfighting HQ. This created a cumbersome organization—a misallocation of resources since SOCOM does not C2 most deployed SOF. Figure 1 on the left depicts the skewed growth, creating a top-heavy organization. Based on its overwhelming CT focus, SOCOM had little incentive to invest in the TSOC's. In essence, SOCOM focused its growth in the areas over which it had control, and since TSOC's are subordinate to GCC's, it was difficult to resource the TSOC's congruently with SOF growth.

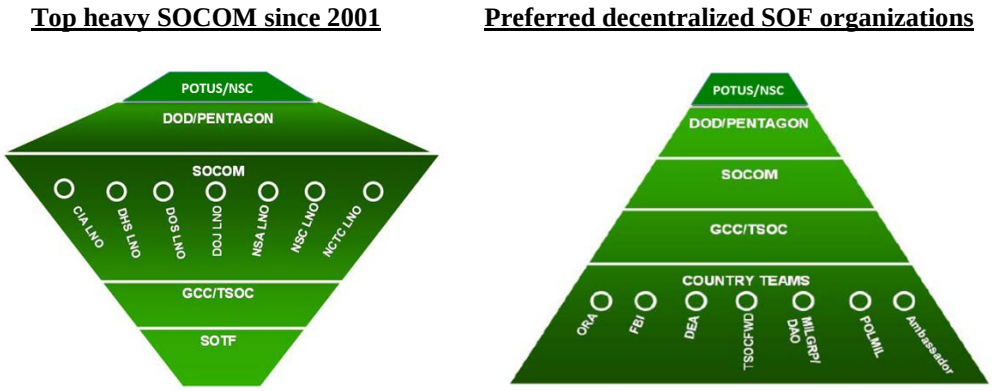

Figure 1. Growth of SOCOM since 2001 (From Averett et al., "Approaches to the GWOT.")[12]

In 2011 SOCOM looked at how SOF, specifically SOCAFRICA, should be presented to the GCC for operations in a steady-state environment. Among its findings were the following observations: First, while overall mission success depends on collaboration and unity of effort between SOF and other stakeholders, SOF's roles and

11 Linda Robinson, "The Future of Special Operations: Beyond Kill and Capture," *Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec 2012, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/138232/linda-robinson/the-future-of-special-operations, (accessed 15 November, 2012).

12 Averett et al., "An Analysis of SOCSOUTH," 19,20.

capabilities at the strategic and operational levels are not well understood by other USG agencies.[13] Second, a lack of common planning processes within the IA negatively impacts collaboration. Further, the TSOC's were originally established as warfighting organizations, but in the expanded role of sustained operations in a steady-state environment, they do not have the manpower and resources to carry out their mission.[14]

After assuming command of USSOCOM in 2011, Admiral McRaven set out to address how SOF should be organized to meet future security challenges. Recent Presidential and DoD strategic guidance has called for a downsizing of the military, and to creatively use smaller elements in its global efforts.[15] SOCOM's reassessment determined it needed to increase its focus on the indirect approach to operations, in particular to how SOF plans and conducts "enduring engagements and distributed operations when the U.S. chief-of-mission (COM) has primacy."[16] The indirect approach is described as including "empowering host nation forces, providing appropriate assistance to humanitarian agencies, and engaging key populations."[17] It is intended to be part of long term efforts to generate host nation security force capability and promote rule of law. This reassessment specifically means addressing command relationships and resourcing for the TSOC to provide responsive, sustained SOF support at the regional level.[18] Figure 1 on the right depicts a less top heavy SOF structure, with the majority of resources ideally at the TSOC's.

While global threats continue to evolve and become more complex, all elements of U.S national power must be applied to meet national strategic guidance. Recognizing the need for an integrated approach to solve problems in complex, steady-state environments, the GSN seeks changes in authorities, command relationships, and

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13 USSOCOM J7/9-F, Wargame Branch, "Global Scout 2011 Limited Objective Experiment 2 Final Report" Team CACI, USSOCOM, Tampa FL, August 2011, 6.

14 Ibid. 8.

15 Panetta., *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership.*

16 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Concept of Operations for the Global Special Operations Forces Network," Draft, USSOCOM, Tampa, FL, Oct 2012, ii.

17 McRaven, *Posture Statement*, 6.

18 Andrew Feickert, "U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF): Background and Issues for Congress June 26, 2012," Congressional Research Service, Washington D.C., June 26, 2012, 2.

organizational structure to enable TSOC's to be the primary regional link to help GCC and Chiefs of Mission achieve their objectives.[19] By seeking changes which will affect the way SOF is structured, assigned, and deployed in support of GCC, the GSN represents one of the most significant and innovative attempts at reform in DoD since Goldwater Nichols.[20]

To ensure SOF is "agile, flexible, and ready," the GSN will better integrate SOF with GCC, USG agencies, and non-U.S. partners, by increasing SOF's forward posture, expanding TSOC effectiveness, improving interagency relationships, and building partner capacity.[21] However, given the downsizing in the military and limits to budget growth, the GSN is not an attempt to grow SOCOM or the force, rather it seeks to reprioritize SOF efforts towards the regional level integration. These changes are overdue, but it was not until a confluence of events—the winding down of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a changing strategic environment and current support for SOF, a need and opportunity for increased multi-national burden sharing, and increasing U.S. fiscal austerity—allowed SOF to be introspective and develop feasible solutions to tomorrow's challenges. As the SOCOM Commander outlined in *SOCOM 2020, The Global Force of Choice*, "The end state. . . is a SOF network seamlessly integrated into a globally networked force of interagency, allies, and partners able to rapidly and persistently address regional contingencies and threats to stability."[22]

1. Authorities Required for Global SOF Operations

In order to meet the GSN objectives, SOCOM has sought changes in the way that SOF is structured, assigned, and deployed in support of GCC's. These changes are represented in a recommendation to modify the Unified Command Plan (UCP), assigning all SOF under Combatant Command (COCOM) to USSOCOM and further delineating

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19 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Commander's Estimate on Expanding".

20 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Authors' Notes, USSOCOM, Tampa FL, October 17-18, 2012.

21 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Concept of Operations", 1.

22 William H. McRaven, "SOCOM 2020: The Global Force of Choice", sent to authors by EGSN OPT on 31 August, 2012, USSOCOM, Tampa, FL, undated, 9.

assigned SOF under Operational Control (OPCON) to the GCC.[23] Changes to the UCP are significant because this would make TSOC's subordinate unified commands under SOCOM, rather than the GCC's, thus finally enabling SOCOM to fully resource the TSOC's. Changes to the UCP typically occur every two years, but can happen anytime as directed by the Joint Staff and approved by the President. But by maintaining OPCON of the TSOC's, unity of command is maintained with the GCC still responsible for employment of SOF in theater. SOCOM recognizes in order to better meet the needs of warfighting commands—the GCC's—the command relationships in the current UCP must be revised.[24] The recommended changes are intended to develop a more agile and flexible force, by providing SOCOM the authority to position SOF elements around the globe to accelerate responsiveness to the Geographic Combatant Commanders, and Chiefs of Mission.[25]

While SOCOM seeks authorities to position SOF elements globally, the employment of these forces will remain the responsibility of the GCC. Figure 2 represents a depiction of the proposed relationship change, highlighting the supporting role of SOCOM to the GCC, but emphasizing the responsibility through COCOM for resourcing the TSOCs. Further, the figure helps to clarify SOF unity of effort by indicating SOF in theater have a supporting role to the TSOC's.[26]

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23 Ibid.

24 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Optimizing TSOC Effectiveness Concept Paper" sent to authors by EGSN OPT on 31 August, 2012, USSOCOM, Tampa, FL, 2011.

25 McRaven, "SOCOM 2020".

26 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline.

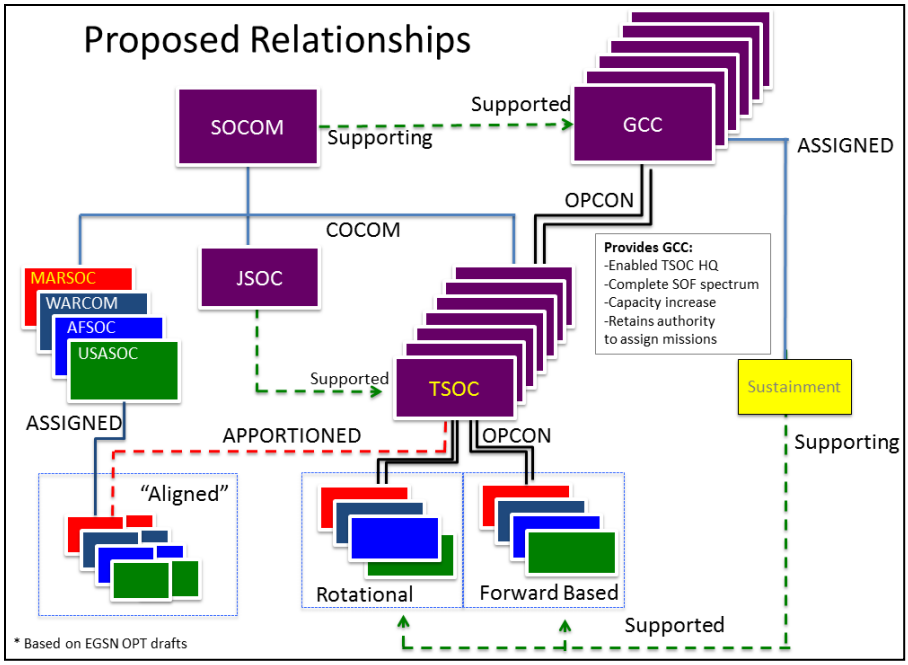

Figure 2. Proposed relationships between SOCOM, TSOC, and GCC (After: A depiction based on draft from SOCOM EGSN OPT.)[27]

2. Improve TSOC Effectiveness

The GSN is a multi-year plan intended to enhance the overall effectiveness of the TSOC's for each of the GCC's. The GSN seeks to provide each GCC with an enabled SOF capability to conduct and effectively C2 SOF elements executing a full range of indirect and direct operations in theater.[28] This initiative would allow for TSOC's to respond and provide C2 for multiple lines of operations and contingencies as the subordinate SOF command. The GSN further seeks to improve theater special operations commands by "building out" their current organizational structure to increase staff and support personnel with regional expertise to address theater challenges through a synchronized SOF subordinate campaign plan.[29]

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27 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, The "A verbs" are 1. Assign- a relatively permanent placement of personnel or units under an organization; 2. Attach- a relatively temporary placement; 3. Apportionment- a distribution of assets as a planning start point; 4. Allocated- distribution of assets among competing requirements; and 5. Aligned- a non-doctrinal term- the proper positioning or adjustment of assets in relation to another.

28 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Commander's Estimate on Expanding", B-1.

29 Ibid.

To assist GCC's and TSOC's in determining the required SOF capabilities and resources, SOCOM has conducted a series of rehearsals, called Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) Drills, in which they brought in the GCC and TSOC commands to determine what SOF capabilities the GCC's needed for current and future missions and objectives. To support required (GCC validated) SOF capability increases and additional forward based SOF, the TSOC's need a more robust HQ enterprise, more effective C2 of dispersed forces, and improved ability to manage resources.[30]

The objectives of the ROC drill in October 2012 were to identify the baseline TSOC capability requirements, determine the optimal C2 and support relationships, and develop a plan of action to posture SOF forces, in order to validate requirements for changes needed to be successful in 2020.[31] The ROC drill helped to establish a start point level of effort that TSOC's need for the foundational staff and resource capability required to effectively conduct distributed operations and manage resources.

3. SOCOM National Capital Region

In addition to optimizing the TSOC's effectiveness as part of the Expanding Global SOF Networks, SOCOM intends to improve the synchronization of effort across the broader spectrum of UGA. To accomplish this initiative, the SOCOM Commander directed the establishment of USSOCOM National Capital Region.[32] To fully integrate SOF in tomorrow's complex steady-state operating environment, SOCOM has initiated modifications through institutional changes at SOCOM headquarters repositioning and reorganizing SOCOM personnel in the NCR. SOCOM NCR's role will emphasize indirect lines of effort as they relate to coordinating and synchronizing regional SOF campaign plans with IA and multinational efforts.[33] Furthermore, this effort will establish mechanisms at the heart of where American foreign policy is developed, and along with other USG entities, develop integrated solutions to national security strategy.

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30 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline.

31 USSOCOM, "Global Scout 2011", 2.

32 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Commander's Estimate on Expanding".

33 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Annex C to Building the Global SOF Network: Establishment of the USSOCOM NCR; Operating Processes", MacDill AFB: Special Operations Command, 2012, C-1.

Ultimately, USSOCOM NCR will also provide a critical link between GCC/TSOC plans and activities to integrate operational strategy and whole-of-government approaches to national level decision-makers.[34]

34 CAPT Pete Phillips and Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "USSOCOM National Capital Region (SOCOM NCR)", MacDill, AFB: Special Operations Command, September 5, 2012, 4.

III. THE STEADY-STATE ENVIRONMENT

> The global security environment presents an increasingly complex set of challenges and opportunities to which all elements of U.S. national power must be applied. . . . It will be necessary to examine how this strategy will influence existing campaign and contingency plans so that more limited resources may be better tuned to their requirements. This will include a renewed emphasis on the need for a globally networked approach to deterrence and warfare.[35]
>
> Secretary Leon E. Panetta, Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense.

Recent strategic guidance articulates a requirement for our military to do more with less as resources become constrained following more than a decade at war. Nonetheless, the security environment has become more complex as SOF is being asked to develop creative approaches to address regional threats, non-state actors, and developing security partners across the globe. This chapter will first characterize the steady-state environment and SOF's role within it. The second section will address the regional level of SOF and how it is uniquely suited for steady-state environments. The final section will illustrate why Africa is a complex, steady-state environment. As the nation has become increasingly weary of war, the threshold for committing substantial U.S. military forces has become higher. However, as destabilizing regional conflict persists and vital national interests must be protected, the regional level of SOF will have an increased role in complex environments short of major conflict.

A. STEADY-STATE ENVIRONMENT DEFINED

The term "steady-state" is being used to characterize the future operating environment. This section will define and explore the steady-state environment concept and define SOF's role within it. Further, this section discusses the importance of common understanding and lexicon in describing operational approaches in a steady-state environment in order to achieve synchronized effects with other government agencies. Currently U.S. Special Operations Forces are deployed in over 70 countries conducting a

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35 Panetta., *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership,* 7.

broad range of civil and military activities in support of Geographic Combatant Commanders and Department of State's objectives. In most cases, these deployments can be characterized as small elements conducting a broad spectrum of military, civil, and humanitarian operations in what is described as a steady-state environment.

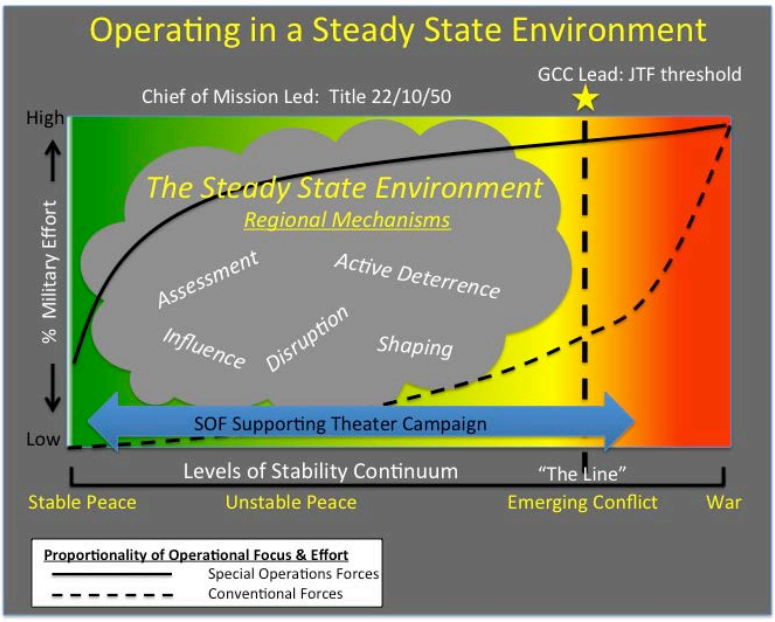

Figure 3. Steady-State Environment (After: Pilewski, et al., in "SOF Campaigns-Closing a Gap in National Defense"; After: ADP 3–05 *Special Operations*.)[36,37]

The steady-state environment does not imply that the system is in placid equilibrium or an absence of change. In fact it should be broadly viewed as an environment with varying degrees of stability—from stable peace to sudden crisis. In this sense, it takes on a much larger and more important role for military efforts than when viewed as merely "phase 0" of the joint operational phases.[38] For the purpose of this paper, steady-state describes an operating environment "left of the line" or within the

36 Jerry Pilewski, Aaron Ressler, and Chuck Chappell, "SOF Campaigns- Closing a Gap in National Defense" draft article, Joint Force Staff College, Joint and Combined Warfighting School Class 11-4, Seminar 8, Norfolk, VA, November 2011, 6.

37 HQDA, Army, *ADP 3-05 Special Operations*, Washington D.C., August 2012, http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_a/pdf/adp3_05.pdf, accessed 25 October 2012, 8-9.

38 Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-0 Joint Operations*, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C, 11 August, 2011, http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo30082, accessed November 2012, V-6.

joint operational phases of shape and deter. The line represents a threshold for establishing a Joint Task Force (JTF) under the authority of the GCC (see Figure 3). In this steady-state environment, SOF conducts a broad range of synchronized activities that are joint, multi-national, and interagency in nature;[39] and typically under the primacy of the U.S. Chief of Mission who is explicitly responsible for all U.S. activities and efforts being conducted.

SOF is uniquely suited to contribute to a holistic approach to address theater security objectives. "Special operations are executed throughout the full range of military operations; however, special operations in the shape and deter phases focus on preventing conflict."[40] Additionally, in a steady-state environment SOF activities can be generally characterized as indirect.[41] But steady-state implies that a range of activities may be conducted, and given the appropriate authorities, the level and type of activities are scalable. They can range from advisory to combined operations, or as a last resort to unilateral operations. Further, in this environment there may be no termination criteria for SOF and their partner nation security forces to cease activities against violent extremist organizations or hostile states.[42] SOF activities should be enduring and may experience periods of unstable peace and flash points of violence. Therefore, a SOF campaign plan ideally equates to synchronization among SOF, other DoD and USG entities, and partner nation efforts. From stable peace to open conflict the level of U.S. military effort and focus will be determined by the level of U.S. interest (see Figure 3).

In an environment absent major combat operations and where DoD is in a supporting role, military activities are described several different ways. Terms such as "Left of the Line," "Phase-0 Operations," "Indirect Approach," "Pre-Crisis Activities," "Stable State" and "Special Warfare" are being used to describe both the operating environment and activities short of major combat operations. Even within DoD and the

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39 Ibid.

40 Army, *Special Operations*, 3.

41 McRaven, *Posture Statement*, 6.

42 SOCCENT, "TSOC Distributed Command and Control (DC2) DCR Overview", received by authors from SOCOM EGSN OPT in October 2012, U.S. Special Operations Command-Central, MacDill, AFB, 25 January 2011.

SOF community there is disparity with terms describing operational approaches in a steady-state environment. If such misunderstandings exist within DoD, expecting others within the IA to understand or support with any consistency complicates collaboration efforts. Common lexicon is an important issue that cannot be understated in terms of its impact on unity of effort where DoD terminology does not resonate with DoS, especially when DoS has primacy.

Foundational Activities	Core Operations & Activities required of SOF in Steady-State Environments	Core Operations & Activities SOF must be prepared to conduct in Steady-State Environments
Operations	• Counterinsurgency (COIN) • Counterterrorism (CT) • Foreign Internal Defense (FID) • Stability	• Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD) • Support to Major Combat Operations (MCO) • Unconventional Warfare (UW)
Activities	• Civil Affairs Operations (CAO) • Preparation of the Environment (PE) • Military Information Support Operations (MISO) • Special Reconnaissance (SR) • Security Force Assistance (SFA)	• Direct Action (DA) • Hostage Rescue and Recovery (HRR) • Interdiction and Offensive Counter WMD Operations • SOF Combat Support (CS) • SOF Combat Service Support (CSS)

Figure 4. SOF Missions Applicable to Steady-State Environment (After: Global Scout 2011 LOE 2.)[43]

There has been renewed emphasis on characterizing the role of SOF in steady-state environments. Achieving near and long-term national security objectives require the direct and indirect approaches to theater campaigns to be successful. The role of SOF in a steady-state environment will increasingly be preventative in nature, such as training, equipping, and building partner capacity, and these pre-emptive actions are becoming a foundation for operational planning at the regional level.[44] SOF will continue to operate in small, agile, and flexible elements tailored to the activity and the environment. Indirect efforts include security force assistance (SFA) as a main component, focusing on

43 USSOCOM, "Global Scout 2011".

44 Jacquelyn K. Davis, Statement to House of Representatives Armed Service Committee, *Statement for the Record on U.S. SOCOM and SOF Futures Offered by Dr. Jacquelyn K. Davis before the U.S. Congress House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities*, Hearing, July 11, 2012, 1.

working by, through, and with partner forces. Additionally, SOF activities can also range from covert to clandestine, to intelligence gathering, and pre-crisis surveys and assessments. A recent SOCOM sponsored exercise concluded that SOF's core operations contain the full range of SOF activities in a steady-state environment (see Figure 4).[45]

As the GSN has established recommended changes to optimize the regional level of SOF, it is critical that our work defines and examines the steady-state environment. Over the past decade, SOF has refined and understands its military roles and activities in environments where DoD is in charge. However, the steady-state environment will fall short of major conflict and DoD will play a supporting role. Understanding the steady-state environment will contribute to an integrated approach to working through other USG agencies and host nations to accomplish theater objectives.

B. REGIONAL MECHANISMS AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS CAMPAIGNS

Due to mission requirements, TSOCs have created and implemented additional doctrinal and non-doctrinal structures and mechanisms at the regional level to plan and coordinate with partner nations, country teams, and to provide C2 over its units. As previously mentioned, there is a gap in U.S. directive authority to synchronize national security efforts. SOCOM is a global functional command, and there are six regional TSOC's. With the unique capabilities of SOF, therefore, the regional level of SOF has the ability to help bridge this "means" gap that has been problematic for the current IA structure.[46]

To expand on the GSN concept, SOF can assist in bringing IA stakeholders together by ensuring its SOF supporting plans are synchronized with the country team's plans. This section discusses how SOF achieves effects in the steady-state by framing activities by what Army SOF doctrine calls regional mechanisms.[47] Lastly, this section discusses distributed operations and enduring engagements as two critical characteristics of SOF campaign plans.

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45 USSOCOM, "Global Scout 2011", 7.

46 Davis, *SOF Futures,* 5.

47 Army, *Special Operations,* 8.

1. Regional Mechanisms

Army SOF doctrine describes the regional mechanisms of assessment, shaping, active deterrence, influence, and disruption, as means to frame complex problems and achieve operational and strategic effects in a steady-state environment: "Regional mechanisms are the primary methods through which friendly forces affect indigenous populations, host nations, or the enemy to establish the conditions needed to safeguard our interests and those of our allies."[48] The application of regional mechanisms is not viewed as military tasks but rather operational guides for commanders and planners to achieve theater campaign objectives. Regional SOF organizations can help to reduce confusion by nesting their SOF supporting plans to the GCC's Theater Campaign Plan (TSP), and in turn by nesting the SOF supporting plan to the Embassy Country work plans and Ambassadors' MSRP. By tying SOF options and objectives to the GCC as well as to DoS country team and regional level resourcing strategies, SOF can help provide clarity to assist DoS and DoD in providing viable options to foreign policy objectives (see Figure 3).[49]

2. SOF Campaign Planning

According to Joint Publication (JP) *3–05, Special Operations*, the TSOC is the primary theater SOF organization capable of performing broad "missions uniquely suited to SOF capabilities."[50] But the role of TSOC's has changed as U.S. national policy and military strategy has changed. TSOC's are not just planning for how to employ SOF in major combat operations; they are ideally planning, coordinating, and employing SOF in regional campaigns across multiple missions in areas where the Department of State is the lead, under mainly Title 22 authorities.

SOF's theater campaign plans must include integrated synchronized operational approaches to address global national security concerns. These campaign plans ideally

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48 Ibid.

49 SOCCE HOA CDR, Email to author about SOF interagency processes at the regional/tactical level, February 13, 2012.

50 Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-05 Special Operations*, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C., April 2011, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_05.pdf, accessed 16 July, 2012, accessed November 2012, III-4.

include multi-year requirements for authorities, funding, and forces. ADP 3–05 states "Missions executed by Army special operations forces may be [either] limited in duration or long-term campaigns with multiple lines of operations."[51] But with the emphasis on better interagency collaboration through SOF campaign planning, increased attention should be paid to on-going activities that help shape the steady-state, which has been described as a deliberate campaign in its own right. SOF supporting plans in a steady-state environment encompass broad range of Title 10 and 22 activities.

Because SOF activities will include building host nation security capacity, the indirect approach therefore requires increased IA integration and very deliberate planning and activities to shape environments before a crisis occurs. Within this context it becomes apparent that the indirect approach requires a SOF campaign plan. In essence, operating in a steady-state environment is meant to be a long duration, synchronized effort with other USG agencies—it is done well only through extensive and consistent coordination.

3. Enduring Engagements and Distributed Operations

Within the steady-state environment, regional SOF primarily accomplishes theater campaigns and engagements through two mechanisms: enduring engagement and distributed operations.[52] Traditionally, SOF has executed events such as Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET), Partnership Development Programs (PDP), Bi-Lateral Training (BILAT) events that support the GCC's Theater Security Cooperation programs (TSC). Although many of these engagement events have strategic effects, they are best described as episodic, falling short of linking effects to a higher theater campaign plans or national strategy.[53] Enduring engagements facilitates forward based SOF to develop long term and lasting relationships with host nation partners and populations. Additionally, enduring engagements is one way that TSOCs sustain forward presence.[54] "Enduring engagements in the geographic theaters is necessary to demonstrate U.S. resolve, establish legitimacy, build lasting relationships, and address long-term

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51 Army, *Special Operations*, 1.

52 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Concept of Operations", 7.

53 Pilewski et al., *SOF Campaigns*, 8.

54 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Concept of Operations", 8.

challenges."[55] Further, national strategic guidance calls for innovative solutions to building partner capacity and maintaining an enduring presence, and emphasizing non-military and military-to-military approaches to reduce instability.[56] This emphasis speaks to the capabilities of SOF's indirect approaches to operating across the interagency, in austere environments with a limited presence, by working through partner forces to achieve national security objectives.

The second characterization of regional SOF activities is distributed operations. "Distributed operations emphasize the employment of small, discrete teams in countries where a large U.S. military presence might be unacceptable or inappropriate."[57] There are a number of aspects to distributed operations that enable the TSOC's to accomplish integrated long-term regional security objectives. While conducting distributed operations, SOF can serve a synchronization function by integrating within other USG and partner nation entities in a country or region.[58] Distributed operations allow the TSOC's to customize and position forward Command and Control (C2) or Special Forces liaison elements at strategic locations linking key stakeholders within the host nation and other USG entities.[59] "Through this network of relationships, SOF can provide a hedge against strategic surprise by identifying and working preemptively to address problems before they become conflicts."[60]

To expand on the GSN concept in support of the regional level of SOF, it was important to highlight in this section the key characteristics of the TSOC's that are critical to accomplishing theater strategic objectives in a steady-state environment. This section addressed regional mechanism, campaign planning, and distributed and enduring engagements as key aspects or characteristics of the regional level of SOF that makes the TSOC's the force of choice in accomplishing strategic objectives.

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55 Ibid.

56 Panetta, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*.

57 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Concept of Operations", 7.

58 Ibid.

59 SOCCENT, "TSOC DC2 DCR Overview".

60 McRaven, *Posture Statement*, 6.

C. AFRICA AS A COMPLEX, STEADY-STATE ENVIRONMENT

Africa has become a more strategically important region for U.S. national security. Recent White House officials have stated that North and Central Africa have become a top U.S. concern regarding terrorist threats to national security, with terrorist groups like Boko Haram and al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) becoming better funded and more capable in the past few years.[61] Importantly, the continent is characterized by the full-spectrum of peace, conflict, instability, and ungoverned spaces; from permissible to semi-permissible to denied areas. In part because of these reasons, SOCAFRICA was chosen as the case study for the thesis. Therefore, this section will briefly cover Africa to illustrate it as a complex, steady-state environment. This section will provide a brief overview of recent U.S. interest in the region and describe U.S. military activities in Africa, as well as difficulties in coordinating SFA efforts.

Africa is a continent with the full range of chronic natural and man-made problems; extreme poverty, corruption, failing states, armed conflicts, humanitarian crises, and disease.[62] It would be hard to overstate the degree to which these problems exist across the region. The threats from terrorist groups operating and collaborating in Africa are considered the main threats to U.S. security and the African sub-regions. In 2010, the AFRICOM Commander testified that the threat of terror groups on the continent is linked to regional conflicts and instability, and the DoS sees failed states as "acute risks" to national security.[63] The AFRICOM commander, General Ham, has cited serious concerns over indications that terrorists groups in Africa are seeking to coordinate their efforts.[64] Within the past 18 months, significant events have occurred in Africa which have an effect on U.S. interests. For example, the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime

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61 David Lerman, "North Africa is Central Focus in Terror War, U.S. Says," Bloomberg.com, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-07-31/north-africa-is-central-focus-in-terror-war-u-s-says.html accessed August 6, 2012.

62 Lauren Ploch, U.S. Congressional Research Service, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa", Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL34003.pdf, July 22, 2011.

63 Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests", 18.

64 "Ham Discusses African Security Issues at ACSS", transcript from Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Senior Leaders Seminar, http://allafrica.com/stories/201206271176.html, June 26, 2012, Accessed on 28 October, 2012.

in Libya, and regimes in Tunisia and Egypt; AQIM gaining control of northern Mali this past spring—an area the size of France; a hostage rescue in Somalia by U.S. forces; and attacks on western diplomatic locations in Tunisia, Sudan, Egypt, and Libya.

U.S. strategy to counter the threats posed by transnational terrorism and ungoverned spaces in Africa is not solely focused on direct methods. In fact, it emphasizes enabling African countries to counter those threats. The June 2011 National Strategy for Counterterrorism states that counterterrorism (CT) efforts "must draw on and be closely integrated with the broader U.S. regional strategy especially since the long-term eradication of AQIM will not be addressed by traditional CT tools alone. Long-term U.S. capacity building initiatives support many of the frontline and secondary states likely to confront AQIM."[65]

For these reasons, the military's role in Africa is necessarily growing. The need for military assistance and security cooperation activities—aimed at increasing African states' abilities to provide security and stability themselves—to help achieve U.S. national security interests, has become even more important.[66] This is especially true given the sensitivity to and potentially destabilizing effects of U.S. military presence in parts of Africa. Africa can be considered a Title 22 environment, and DoD understands the importance of its *supporting* role there:

> . . . while AFRICOM has Title 10 authorities to conduct traditional military activities and operations, the activities that are most important to the department [DoD] in Africa center around building institutional and operational security capacity and that most of the authorities and funding for these activities belong to State Department programs under Title 22 authorities.[67]

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65 President Barack Obama, "National Strategy for Counterterrorism," White House, Washington, D.C., http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/counterterrorism_strategy.pdf, accessed 10 Sep, 2012, 16.

66 Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests", 19.

67 United States Government Accountability Office, *Improved Planning, Training, and Interagency Collaboration could Strengthen DOD's Efforts in Africa*, Report to the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives, U.S. Govt. Accountability Office, Washington, D.C.,10-794, July 2010, http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo9586, accessed on 9 August, 2012, 46.

AFRICOM's main operations in Africa are its efforts in East Africa under the Combined Joint Task Force- Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), and in Northwest Africa with Operation Enduring Freedom-Trans Sahara (OEF-TS), the U.S. military's supporting effort to the Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP) and the USG third priority in counterterrorism efforts.[68] Both operations prioritize their efforts on increasing partner capabilities and fostering interoperability among nations to stabilize the regions. Further, they both emphasize the supporting role of the military, and the indirect approach to AFRICOM activities.[69]

Traditionally, U.S. foreign military security assistance programs have been led by the State Department, and until the past decade there has been little interest within DoD, aside from SOF, for training foreign forces, as it was regarded neither as a military mission nor as an activity of more than marginal value.[70] But recent national security strategies call for increased capacity to train foreign forces. This unified effort to build partner capacity is called Security Force Assistance:

> SFA is directly linked to counterterrorism strategy and is key to engaging underdeveloped and undergoverned nations (often referred to as "weak or fragile states") in a preventive national security strategy. Regional combatant commanders apply this preventive strategy through authorities provided in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The SFA authorizations in the NDAA are often criticized as being disjointed and cumbersome, creating significant challenges to effective SFA employment.[71]

But there is not an overarching plan for how the U.S. should carry out SFA or integrate efforts. A common criticism among regional IA efforts in Africa revolves around resourcing and funding issues. As the U.S. has begun to view this assistance as vital to national security, the legacy procedures for approval and implementation were

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68 USAFRICOM, "Operation Enduring Freedom Trans Sahara," http://www.africom.mil/oef-ts.asp, accessed on November 5, 2012.

69 Ibid.

70 Nina M. Serafino, "Security Assistance Reform: Section 1206 Background and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22855.pdf, accessed 3 October, 2012, 3.

71 Ibid, summary.

seen as too slow to adequately deal with emerging threats.[72] SFA is now a core military task, and in 2008 SOCOM became the DoD proponent for synchronizing SFA activities. SOCOM insists that one of the most important features needed to prevent threats "left of the line" is flexible funding and authorities which allow SOF to gain access and awareness in areas where crisis has not yet occurred.

> Given that a large part of AFRICOM's mandate is to build indigenous capacity of African defense forces, the ease with which the command can conduct security cooperation programs will be a key to its success. DoD officials suggest that inefficiencies exist in authorities through which funding is provided for the U.S. Military's security cooperation activities.[73]

The range of dynamic issues and broad instability in Africa, the primacy of the DoS there in carrying out foreign policy, and the growing U.S. strategic interest in the region make Africa a good example of a complex, steady-state environment. Current U.S. military activities in Africa highlight DoD's supporting role in a steady-state environment, with success dependent on effective IA synchronization. But deficiencies in the IA process have helped lead to the so-called "militarization" of foreign policy as the military takes on more missions which were not historically part of its core responsibilities.[74] The next chapter will analyze SOCAFRICA, demonstrating the unique role of SOF at the regional level, but also arguing that the TSOC is not optimized to best support GCC objectives.

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72 Ibid, 3.

73 Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests", 28.

74 Ibid.

IV. ANALYSIS OF SOCAFRICA AND SOCOM NCR

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will conduct an analysis of two relatively new organizations within the SOF enterprise; SOCAFRICA, and the SOCOM NCR. It will analyze the organizational shortfalls of regional SOF through the lens of SOCAFRICA, and will illustrate how the GSN can improve these shortfalls, including SOF synchronization. Importantly, TSOC's will be better able to operationalize SOF campaign plans, and they will receive top-down advocacy so that SOF priorities are not lost when their plans go upward. The chapter will discuss SOCAFRICA's area of operations (AO), its roles and mission, strategic framework and operational approach as it relates to indirect operations.

SOCAFRICA was chosen because it is the newest TSOC, established in 2008, and as a sub-unified command of AFRICOM, was established as part of a whole-of-government focused effort at achieving national security efforts in Africa. It was meant to be different from traditional joint headquarters, and envisioned that subordinate units would be operating under Title 22 primacy, working by, with, and through African partners.[75] SOCOM NCR was chosen because it is a primary outgrowth of the SOCOM Interagency Task Force (IATF), and the authors wanted to examine what, if any, relationship SOCOM had with the TSOC's in terms of assisting with synchronization of SOF plans at the regional level.

B. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AFRICA

> Outside a combat theater, however, SOF tend to be the lead military force, with conventional forces often providing logistics and other important support.[76]
>
> Michele Malvesti. *To Serve the Nation: U.S. Special Operations in an Era of Persistent Conflict.*

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75 Jeff McKaughan, "PARTNERSHIP BUILDER: Furthering International Relations with the Newest Special Operations Command," *SOTECH* 6, no. 6 August 2008. http://www.special-operations-technology.com/sotech-archives/58-sotech-2008-volume-6-issue-6/438-qaa-brigadier-general-patrick-m-higgins.html, accessed 19 Nov, 2012.

76 Malvesti, "To Serve the Nation", 23.

1. Area of Operations and SOCAFRICA Formation

Africa's strategic importance has grown for the U.S., and the continent portrays the complex environment in which the U.S. will continue to address national security challenges. However, TSOC's do not have adequate capabilities, capacity, or authorities to maximize the use of SOF at the regional level. SOCAFRICA is not optimized to fulfill its role because of several issues. Specifically, SOCAFRICA has challenges with manning; lack of assigned forces; funding processes and expeditionary logistics; Distributed command and control (DC2); and synchronization. This reduces overall effectiveness of GCC and USG efforts, and SOCOM and SOCAFRICA are taking steps to address these shortfalls. This chapter will examine SOCAFRICA's roles, current structure and organizational shortfalls, and will illustrate how the GSN proposal can make improvements to SOCAFRICA.

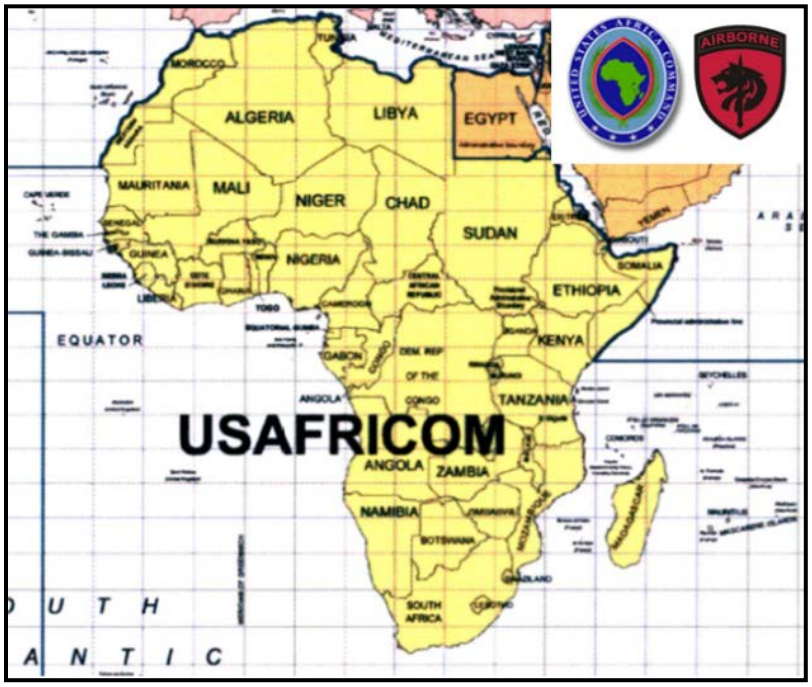

Figure 5. AFRICOM/ SOCAFRICA Area of Responsibility (AOR) (From: UCP 2011.)[77]

77 Department of Defense, "Unified Command Plan", http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2009/0109_unifiedcommand/, accessed November, 2012.

SOCAFRICA's area of responsibility includes 54 countries in Africa, excluding Egypt. The command is routinely engaged in 27 African countries working by, with, and through host nation counterparts to increase their capacity and provide them with assistance. The objective of these engagements is an Africa which is self-sustaining in a stable, secure environment that is unwelcoming of violent extremist groups and their ideas.[78] When AFRICOM was stood up in 2008, it was designed as a test case to seek more USG interagency collaboration in making their theater plans, and carrying out its mission.[79] In fact, USAFRICOM was touted as being the closest thing to an Interagency Unified Command, with numerous IA personnel working at the command. Even as AFRICOM has tried to emphasize the IA focus of its command, a GAO report from 2010 states that AFRICOM has not fully engaged IA partners in planning activities and could better integrate its IA efforts.[80]

2. Roles and Mission

SOCAFRICA's mission states that it "leads, plans, coordinates, supports, and as directed executes the full spectrum of Special Operations in the USAFRICOM area of responsibility as part of an integrated strategy to combat terrorism and advance USAFRICOM's strategic objectives."[81] SOCAFRICA conducts the full-spectrum of Special Operations across a wide geographic area, with diverse social and political make-up. The primary way it does this is to enable partners to help neutralize transnational threats and disrupt support for their ideology.

The TSOC's as organizations have not been institutionalized and their role has changed since they were formed. Their mission requires that they advise, plan, execute, and C2 multiple SOF operations, actions, and activities (OAA) over entire continents. As the regional level SOF organization, TSOC's are key to attaining theater strategic

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78 SOCAFRICA, interview notes by Richard Woolshlager, SOCAFRICA, Kelley Barrack, Stuttgart, Germany, 24-28 Sep, 2012.

79 John H. Pendleton, Testimony before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives *National Security: Interagency Collaboration Practices and Challenges at DOD's Southern and Africa Commands*, U.S. GAO, Washington, D.C., July, 2010, http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA525458, accessed March 2012, 4.

80 U.S. GAO, *Improved Planning,Training. . .*, 29.

81 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

objectives in steady-state environments. But they have never had sufficient manning or resources, and are even more strained today by continuous operations in steady-state environments.

The following example illustrates how the GCC's have so many other priorities that there has been a sort of benign neglect in resourcing the TSOCs: In a recent meeting between members of SOCOM and staff from the various GCC's, someone from SOCOM asked the GCC representatives who was in charge of TSOC readiness. No one raised their hand.[82] As previously explained, the TSOC is a sub-unified command under COCOM and OPCON of the GCC. By trying to gain COCOM over the TSOC's to better support the GCC, "SOCOM is for the first time looking at what the TSOC is, should be, needs to be, and GCC's have not been able to do that;" and neither have the GCC's had the expertise to do it.[83]

The role of TSOC's has changed since they were codified in the mid-1980s, from a major focus as a regional warfighting and crisis-response headquarters for the SOF component, to an organization executing multiple long-term operations in a peacetime environment. The SOCAFRICA commander recently described North Africa as a model of the complex operating environment where flashpoints will be the norm within an overall "peaceful" environment. Since these complex environments are inherently unstable to begin with, it can be difficult to maintain an enduring presence due to political sensitivities where a small footprint is advantageous but the ability to move forces where they are needed will remain difficult.[84] This is made more difficult when there are few assigned or readily available forces for employment.

SOCAFRICA's core tasks are to protect U.S. lives and interests in Africa; Build partner nation counterterrorism (CT) capability and capacity; and to foster and support the development of regional security capabilities to combat regional threats and create security and stability.[85] It is focusing its efforts on the long-term aspects of theater

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82 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

85 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

security objectives and the preventive nature of SOF capabilities to extend its reach to enable partners to degrade terrorist safe haven and disrupt illicit networks. In this regard, the SOCAFRICA commander's guidance recognizes that to be successful, any effort in Africa must be part of a synchronized, IA approach through a sustained, enduring presence with partners and through understanding the environment.[86]

3. SOCAFRICA's Strategic Framework and Operational Overview

Although OEF-TS is a high priority in the counterterrorism effort, and potential for crises across Africa remains high, Africa and SOCAFRICA are economy of force efforts. This is not to suggest it should be different, but only acknowledging the environment and lack of major U.S. combat operations in Africa. Additionally, since Africa and its under-governed spaces are so vast, the TSOC understands that it cannot be everywhere at once, so it should be effectively positioned on the continent. This means that SOCAFRICA must be able to effectively plan, synchronize, and C2 multiple campaigns with very few assigned forces and resources—in a politically sensitive Title 22 environment.

These considerations add complexity because operating in this environment requires constant understanding of the operational picture across the continent. Over such a large and dynamic area, things are constantly changing, as starkly demonstrated throughout North and Central Africa over the past year and a half. It adds more difficulty because the approach to military operations in this environment is entirely different than what the military is currently organized to do. To operate effectively in the above conditions, SOCAFRICA's approach to operations means it needs the right tailored forces with enduring access in strategic places.[87]

SOCAFRICA has a strategic framework which will help guide its efforts over the next five years. It places the most emphasis on the need to work by, with, and through partner nations, allies, and the IA. In their framework, Figure 6, their operational activities, called lines of operations (LOO), are nested vertically with AFRICOM and

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86 SOCAFRICA, "SOCAFRICA Strategic Planning Guidance 2012", received by author 1 October, 2012, overall document classified Secret, SOCAFRICA, Stuttgart, Germany, 2012.

87 Ibid.

higher strategic guidance. Their LOO's are: to gain and maintain strategic access and placement; build and enable partner capacity; erode support for transnational terrorist organizations; disrupt violent extremist operational ability; and deny the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).[88]

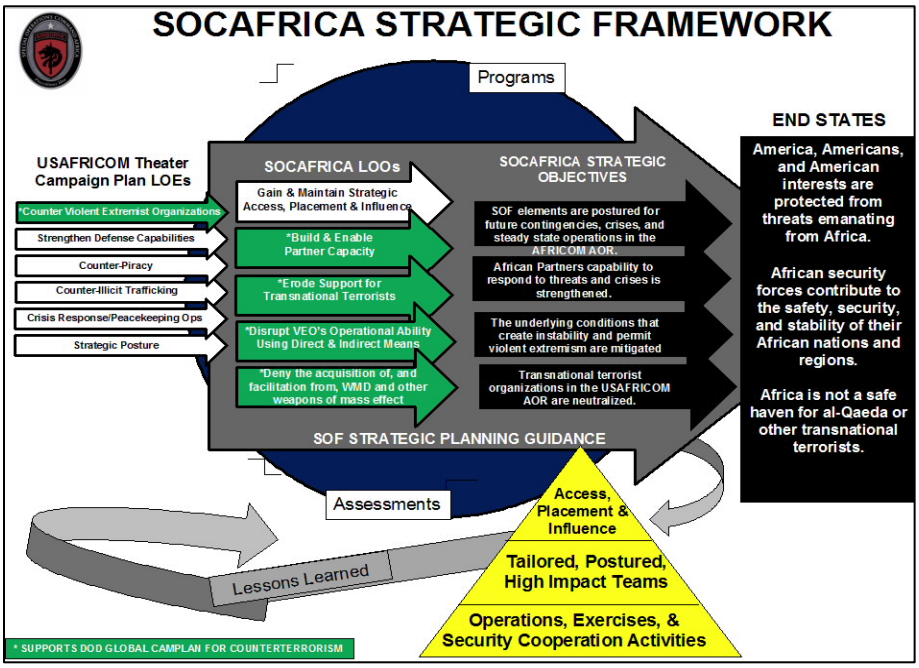

Figure 6. SOCAFRICA Strategic Framework. (From: SOCAFRICA J5.)[89]

The framework is meant to align activities horizontally by ensuring that all SOF operations, actions, and activities support its SOF strategic objectives (SSO). The SSO for SOCAFRICA are: SOF postured for future contingencies, crises, and steady-state activities; African partners' ability to respond to threats is improved; to mitigate underlying conditions for instability; and to neutralize transnational terrorists.[90]

Traditional TSOC operations were characterized by episodic engagements with host nation government forces, under a centralized TSOC C2 structure which provided guidance to forward units that executed operations. On the other hand, the complex environment in Africa requires a focus on sustained engagement via forward deployed

88 Ibid, 7.

89 Ibid, 7.

90 Ibid, 7.

U.S. SOF with partner forces to help identify and prevent conflict before it intensifies;[91] and requires a more mature distributed C2 structure with formal command authorities at lower levels.

In order to operationalize this into a SOF campaign, SOCAFRICA has emphasized that its lines of operation will focus on the indirect approach in "left of the line," steady-state environments. In Figure 7, SOCAFRICA's operational approach is anchored on the five tenets of regional focus against the most significant threats; work with willing and capable partners; focus on long term development of their capabilities; maintain access through enduring and episodic engagements; and synchronize efforts with USG organizations and partners.[92] These are the most important aspects when considering TSOC planning and operations because it emphasizes the importance of indirect, long-term approaches to achieving objectives.

Access in the above case does not mean solely access to an area, but it means working with the right partner, having the right permissions, or proximity to threats. Further, it means having SOF representation in the right places, for example in an embassy in a given country in order to enhance COM understanding of SOF capabilities or to synchronize efforts with partner nation military ministries. Access is enhanced through the following means: SOF representatives in an embassy, Distributed C2 elements for long-term operations, and Joint Planning and Advisory Teams (JPATs) to build partner capacity.

91 SOCCENT, "TSOC DC2 DCR Overview", 1.

92 SOCAFRICA, "Strategic Planning Guidance", 8.

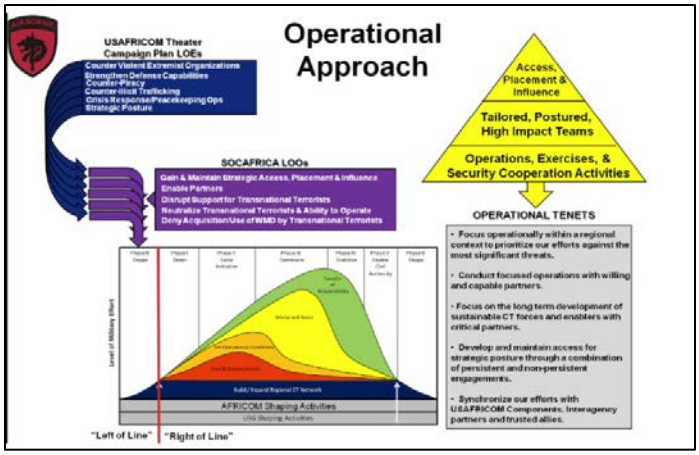

Figure 7. SOCAFRICA's Operational Approach with emphasis on Left of the Line activities. (From: SOCAFRICA J55.)[93]

The means by which SOCAFRICA conducts these activities is through programs and authorities, enabling activities, and funding mechanisms. Programs and authorities refer to both Title 10 and Title 22 programs like the NDAA sections 1206, 1207, and 1208; TSCTP, Peacekeeping operations (PKO), and counter-narcotics (CNT) authorities.[94] Enabling activities refer to various enduring or episodic engagements like JCET's, multi-national exercises, Civil Military Support Elements (CMSE), and JPATs. Through enduring engagement and an economy of force approach to extend their operational reach, the goal of SOCAFRICA is to increase interoperability of regional African coalitions.

In Africa, as opposed to Europe and Asia for example, there is no broad military alliance in which the U.S. is involved like NATO or ASEAN.[95] The African Union exists, but the military underpinnings and depth of U.S. military involvement is not there. The significant difference this represents with other regions cannot be understated. The military-to-military relationships have not had the basis by which to develop and mature.

93 Ibid, 8

94 Nina M. Serafino, "Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF) Summary and Issue Overview," Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., August 1, 2012, http://www.cq.com/pdf/crsreports-4138958, accessed October, 2012.

95 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

4. Organizational Shortfalls

The above section described SOCAFRICA's strategic and operational vision for how it will accomplish its mission. This section will discuss the shortfalls in manning, forces, resourcing, DC2, and synchronization which make accomplishing their mission more difficult. To accomplish and sustain its strategic vision and meet GCC and COM requirements over the long-term, SOCAFRICA will need additional authorities, capabilities, and resources.

a. Manning

Shortfalls in the numbers and training of personnel at the TSOC staff are the biggest challenge which bleeds over into the other shortfalls. It affects the ability to create synchronized SOF campaign plans, as well as its ability to provide effective C2 to distributed operations. Another effect is that there is general lack of SOF personnel or SOF expertise on the staff.[96] A fully trained staff—with the regional knowledge, planning skills, and experience to understand other USG agencies processes—is also required to carry out synchronized activities. "Man the staffs," was the most consistent refrain heard when interviewing multiple staff members at SOCAFRICA. Chronic and organizational staff shortages for SOCAFRICA has resulted in the TSOC not being able to "look past its nose"—and that perspective is exacerbated by the multiple crises which continue to erupt in Africa.[97]

In November 2011, SOCAFRICA asked AFRICOM and SOCOM to do a manpower study for the TSOC.[98] This study is done, as needed, periodically to examine the role and mission of the TSOC versus the current structure. The results helped to create the baseline figures in the October ROC drill. The baseline requirements identified by SOCOM and the TSOC's at the recent ROC drill indicates that the SOCAFRICA staff, and the other TSOC's too, require approximately double their current manning in order to fulfill their roles and mission.[99] SOCOM, understanding the importance of

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.

immediately augmenting personnel to the SOCAFRICA to demonstrate command emphasis on the subject, had committed to providing 30 additional personnel over the course of a few months as a temporary measure. These personnel will allow SOCAFRICA to "begin to look at planning operationally and strategically rather than only having the manpower to be reactive to each crisis."[100]

For example, the baseline TSOC manpower and functions figures discussed during the October ROC Drill indicate that most staff sections are severely undermanned according to the requirements the TSOC's have, as validated by the GCC's. The baseline figures do not yet account for mission specific aspects of each TSOC, which may change manning requirements slightly by function. Figure 8 is an example of the baseline numbers with staff functions. It shows that the largest TSOC J3 section currently has 68 personnel to SOCAFRICA's 47. Both of these numbers pale in comparison to the baseline number reached, indicating the minimum manning needed for the SOCAFRICA J3—92 personnel.[101] This approximate doubling of manning identified is consistent for the J2, J4, and J5 sections, with an almost tripling of manning required for the J6, Communications, section.

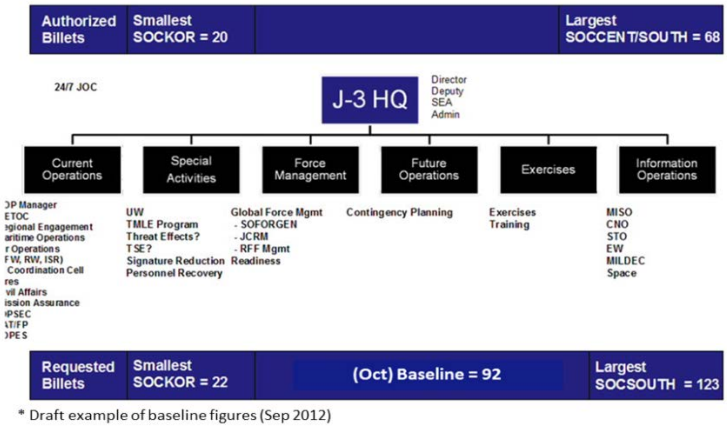

Figure 8. Example TSOC Baseline figures. (After: SOCOM EGSN OPT drafts, depicting staff functions and numbers with OCT baseline for a J3.)[102]

100 Ibid.

101 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012, 7.

102 Ibid.

There is a gap between the strategic and tactical levels of U.S. interagency planning and coordination. TSOC's do not have the process, or forces, nor culture or bench depth to do operational design in depth. They are not effectively planning at the operational level, and as a result SOF campaign plans remain incomplete or unsynchronized. Although SOCAFRICA has created planning guidance and frameworks for its sub-regional efforts, its SOF supporting plan to the AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan is incomplete. This supporting plan helps to inform how SOF will synchronize its effort in the regional and country work plans (See Figure 9).

SOCAFRICA is beginning to write the SOF supporting plan and its regional campaign plans, which it admits are critical to synchronization, but senior TSOC staff stated that simply put, "the manpower gap precluded our ability to do so."[103] The TSOC has not had enough depth to complete development of these plans. A member of SOCAFRICA stated that they have been so critically short personnel that even though the J5 section has tripled in the past year, more are needed to begin to operationalize guidance and long-term plans.[104]

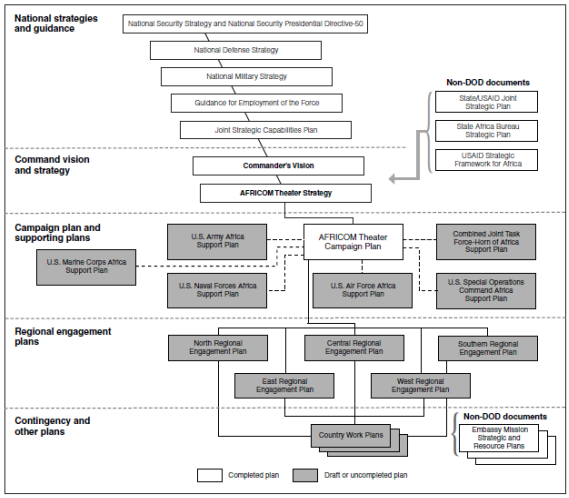

Figure 9. AFRICOM strategic guidance and plans (From: Pendleton's GAO Report, Jul 2010.)[105]

103 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

104 Ibid.

105 Pendleton, Testimony, *Interagency Collaboration Practices*, 7.

Staff members at SOCAFRICA described how the initial construct at the command was inadequate, partly due to a lack of validation of requirements for their manpower, which left the command understaffed from the beginning and affected their ability to be a learning organization.[106] Further, lack of sufficient trained personnel, either in operational level planning or in African regional training, has also reduced its ability to complete SOF campaigns plans, conduct outreach to USG and partner entities, or to provide adequate guidance to employed SOF forces.

b. Assigned Forces

Another challenge is that there are not readily available SOF on a consistent basis for SOCAFRICA, either assigned or allocated, to execute SOF tasks in support of AFRICOM objectives. In a steady-state environment, the lack of assigned or allocated forces directly and immediately results in degraded planning and synchronization. As one member of AFRICOM stated in a meeting, "most of our assigned forces are component HQ and staff."[107] As previously mentioned, SOCAFRICA has different means to conduct its OAA, like JCET's, JPAT or CMSE. These can be enduring or non-persistent engagement activities, tailored to maintain relationships and assist in capacity building. Additionally, SOCAFRICA coordinates an annual exercise called Flintlock which focuses on interoperability among West African nations, the U.S., and allied SOF.

Currently, SOCAFRICA has a small unit assigned to it—the Naval Special Warfare Unit-10 (NSWU-10), located in Stuttgart.[108] Although having NSWU-10 forward based increases the TSOC's flexibility for rapid response, this limited capacity is not enough for the immense engagement efforts and crisis response capability needed in Africa. Further, there are not enough forces currently allocated to meet the GCC's requests for SOF, reducing enduring engagement efforts. Due to lack of assigned forces, episodic engagements are the norm at this time. Additionally, without forces it is

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106 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

107 Ibid.

108 Bryan Purtell, MAJ, "NSWU-10 Commissioning Provides SOCAFRICA Operational Flexibility on the African Continent", SOCAFRICA Public Affairs, http://www.africom.mil/printStory.asp?art=65042012, accessed November 2012.

hard for SOCAFRICA to do more than make plans with notional forces and be reactive to crises—its options are immediately limited.[109] The feasibility of courses of action, or efforts at long-term planning, are immediately degraded without predictable allocation of forces, meaning synchronization with USG and other partners is made more difficult.[110] For example, in many cases, multiple JCET's over a period of time are used for build partner capacity (BPC) activities in a series of episodic engagements, rather than a sustained effort with forces allocated to those efforts, over a multi-year SOF campaign plan. Since by law the JCET's must result in U.S. SOF gaining the most training value, the BPC activities are a residual result of the JCET.[111] Admittedly, this lack of available platforms is in part due to the lack of a comprehensive SFA campaign plan across the USG.

The SOCOM GSN intends that more SOF units eventually be forward based, on an either rotational or permanent basis. Forward based in this case does not mean permanently located on the African continent, rather forward located somewhere in Europe, for example, where they would be readily available for employment by the GCC.

c. Resourcing - Expeditionary Logistics and Funding Streams

In a Title 22 environment, without coordinated planning between DoD and DoS, the military spends considerable time trying to match proposed activities to specific criteria in order to use certain funds. A major weakness in SOCAFRICA's ability to develop and sustain enduring engagements is the current mechanism for logistics support, notably U.S. military expeditionary contracting, which was described as too rigid and slow.[112] SOCAFRICA members described the expeditionary and SOF unique contracting as a critical aspect to successful distributed operations, but that logistics support was unresponsive to, and inappropriate for, the operational environment.

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109 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

110 Ibid.

111 William C. Story Jr., "Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) and Human Rights: Background and Issues for Congress". Congressional Research Service, Washington, D.C., 1999. http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl30034.pdf, accessed November 20, 2012.

112 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012.

For example, the SOCAFRICA commander recently relayed a story where U.S. SOF was operating with partner forces in Africa and an initial base was set up. It took 120 days for contracting to catch up but due to contracting requirements, they had to level the existing base and build a standard contracted U.S. base camp. The GCC commander visited and said that the base stood out too much from the surrounding area, and asked for additional corrections—in effect making it look more like it originally did during initial setup. Cost overruns resulted, while contractors were paid regardless.[113]

An additional challenge is the complexity in funding streams. In a GAO report from 2010 AFRICOM officials stated they had a complex set of 15 different funding sources, with the associated legal constraints for each, affecting the ability to plan, resource, gain approval for, and execute partner capacity building activities in a timely manner.[114] Most funding programs are purpose built for specific functions, and also most rely on an annual cycle of funding approval. The result is loss of access, relationships, and degraded reliability, all of which ultimately impact achieving national security objectives. This complexity in gaining synchronization for responsive action makes it difficult for SOF to use enduring engagements as part of the indirect approach:

> AFRICOM's special operations command officials said that the lack of sustainable funding sources has created a short-term, unsustainable approach to the command's activities, describing their efforts as sporadic connections with African countries with which they should have enduring relationships.[115]

With shortfalls in its ability to combine operational effects with predictable resourcing and funding, SOCAFRICA has created what it calls a programs officer, which is distinct from but related to the J8 resourcing functions. This position is a staff officer with operational experience who ties the command's supporting activities and efforts by country and region, to funding requirements like a 1206 proposal.[116] A remaining challenge of this process is translating these capabilities and requirements into

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113 Ibid.

114 Thomas K. Livingston, "Building the Capacity of Partner States through Security Force Assistance," Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., May 2011, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R41817.pdf, accessed October, 2012, 52.

115 U.S. GAO, *Improved Planning, Training. . .*, 26.

116 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

how the intended effects support the goals of the Chiefs of Mission, in turn resulting in synchronization and permissions. This shortfall means the TSOC needs to develop a better way to ensure the CoM's understanding of and approval for how the TSOC can support their goals. This effort will need a robust and dedicated staffing effort in order to effectively submit and gain the appropriate funding authorities for operations and activities.

Successfully operating in Africa means that the logistics footprint, especially non-SOF support, is of paramount consideration. This may also mean looking at ways to use existing infrastructure like other allied bases to further reduce U.S footprint. Finally, conducting distributed operations focused on long-term effects requires a more accessible, flexible funding stream for SFA activities "left of the line."

d. Distributed C2

At the recent TSOC ROC Drill at SOCOM, the commander of U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) stated that command and control is the number one challenge for SOF, and this is due because of how it is organized.[117] Additionally, SOCAFRICA conducts its operations over a highly dispersed area—a continent—with a small staff, even smaller C2 elements, and sporadic force allocations. It lacks the ability to adequately conduct DC2 over its AO.

117 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012.

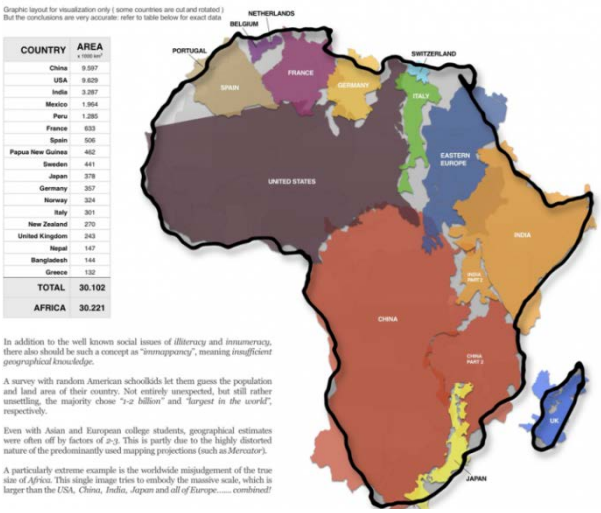

Figure 10. Tyranny of distance. The size of Africa in perspective. (From: Nathan Yau's "The True Size of Africa by Kai Krause.")[118]

At SOCAFRICA, the "tyranny of distance" refers to the vast distances in Africa which strain the ability to conduct effective C2, as well as the infrastructure necessary to conduct enduring engagements (Figure 10). There is little supporting infrastructure for even basic U.S. military functions, including safety functions like medical evacuation and personnel recovery means. SOCAFRICA has identified the need for physical access and limited infrastructure on the continent. These needs are driven by strategy, guidance, partner, and threat considerations, focusing on minimum presence for expeditionary forces, and flexibility through small, decentralized operating and support locations.[119]

The TSOC has determined that in order to adequately address security issues in Africa, it must have access to small nodes throughout the continent—described as lily pads—in order to effectively C2 its activities. There are three key elements to what constitutes force posture, and that is forces available, footprint, and agreements allowing access. The considerations determining these elements are the cost of the posture; operational considerations like DoD strategy and missions; political-military dynamics;

118 Nathan Yau, "The True Size of Africa by Kai Krause," http://flowingdata.com/2010/10/18/true-size-of-africa/, accessed Nov 6, 2012.

119 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

and host nation support.[120] Access, permissions, and supporting infrastructure are needed to support activities left of the line, allowing for proximity to partner forces and to threats. This in turn allows for more effective information sharing with partners, and provides more awareness to the U.S. The command has described these small nodes as varying levels of scalable support locations with little to no permanent presence, or non-enduring locations which can be quickly used if needed to support engagement or contingency activities.[121] The need to be correctly postured is crucial to mission success and to meeting theater objectives.

SOCAFRICA has several subordinate elements that provide C2 of its forces operating in Africa. One of these is the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Trans Sahara (JSOTF-TS). "A JSOTF is a joint task force (JTF) composed of SO units from more than one Service, formed to carry out a specific SO or prosecute SO in support of a theater campaign or other operations."[122] "A JSOTF staff is normally drawn from the TSOC staff or an existing O-6 level HQ from an existing SOF component with augmentation from other SOF or conventional units and/or personnel as appropriate."[123] JSOTF-TS is an organization which precedes SOCAFRICA, and was originally formed by SOCEUR to support OEF-TS when North Africa was in the EUCOM AOR. One of the problems with this organization is that it is not forward based in a position where it can effectively C2 those forces, since it is located in Germany. It has outgrown its role in Germany, and further, SOCAFRICA does not think that the doctrinal JSOTF is the optimum construct for a Title 22 environment.[124]

But small forces constantly rotating into a multitude of engagement activities across vast regions requires a C2 node proximate to dispersed forces in order to provide DC2. Further, those C2 nodes need the right command authorities and capacity to conduct C2 to meet the SOCAFRICA commander's intent. A non-doctrinal concept has

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120 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012.

121 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

122 Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-05 Special Operation*s, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C., 18 April, 2011, III-6.

123 Ibid.

124 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

emerged, called a Special Operations Command-Forward (SOCFWD), which has the ability to provide continuity of effort in key locations where SOF operate. These C2 nodes can allow the TSOC to integrate its SOF campaign plan at the sub-regional level among several country teams and host nations, and would relieve the current dependence on tactical units conducting policy-level engagements for the TSOC.[125] Finally, this empowered C2 node can provide the continuity needed to focus efforts on "left of the line," preventive activities.

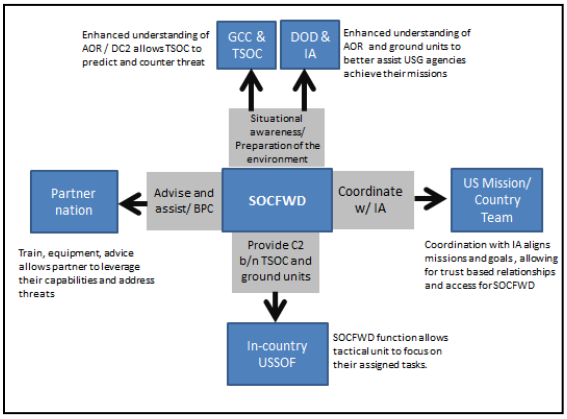

Figure 11. SOCFWD key functions. (From: SOCCENT's "TSOC DC2 DCR Overview.")[126]

A SOCFWD is a good example of how operational adaptation far outpaces doctrine—the concept was conceived around 2007 at SOCSOUTH to enhance distributed command and control and has been used at other TSOC's, even though it is not resourced as a doctrinal requirement.[127] A SOCFWD is not pre-defined or task focused like a JSOTF, but is mission-tailored and scalable (see Figure12). For example, an 06 could command a SOCFWD with just a few personnel, depending on the type of mission and the necessary interaction with USG and partner nation representatives, or a SOCFWD could be commanded by an 05 with several dozen or more personnel. With emphasis on their ability to engage proactively with other U.S. and host governments, focusing on the

125 SOCCENT, "SOCCENT SOC(FWD) Organizational Architecture DCR", brief to USSOCOM, MacDill AFB: Tampa FL, 2011, 3.

126 SOCCENT, "TSOC DC2 DCR Overview", 7.

127 Averett et al., "An Analysis of Special Operations", 87.

indirect approach, SOCFWD's would ideally be situated in key strategic locations with the ability to carry out SOF campaigns.

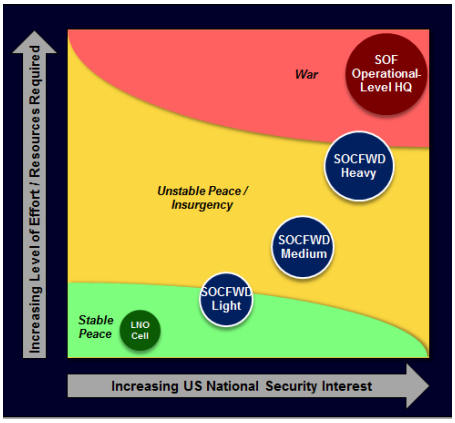

Figure 12. SOCFWD: scalable, tailorable. (From: SOCCENT's "TSOC DC2 DCR Overview.")[128]

SOCAFRICA envisions that the JSOTF-TS construct will eventually be replaced by one or more SOCFWDs which will allow the command to focus on long-term missions through a whole of government approach.[129] This non-doctrinal, small footprint approach to an operational level capability is being applied in other TSOC AOR's. With additional manning and access, SOCAFRICA intends to implement this DC2 concept within its region over the next five years.

e. Synchronization

SOCAFRICA plans, coordinates, and operates across a vast region among dozens of countries and country teams. Its ability to create understanding for how SOF will contribute to achieve effects, and then coordinate those efforts vertically and horizontally is a monumental undertaking. As the above sections have demonstrated, there is a cumulative effect to the lack of authorities, capabilities, and resourcing which amounts to misunderstanding of the TSOC's roles, and lack of support and approval for TSOC efforts. Ultimately, when plans go upward and outward, how does the TSOC prevent the SOF aspects from being lost?

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128 SOCCENT, "TSOC DC2 DCR Overview", 4.

129 SOCAFRICA, interview notes from SOCAFRICA, Sep 2012.

For SOCAFRICA, the interface for IA synchronization is mostly at the GCC level. But while AFRICOM is manned to conduct IA coordination, staff members there state that the intent of the IA construct within AFRICOM has not worked as well as intended.[130] SOF roles and responsibilities are not well understood among USG agencies at the operational-regional level, but neither does the TSOC staff always understand the roles and functions of USG or partner nation agencies, which can lead to difficulty in coordination and gaining support.[131]

There are several ways in which SOACAFRICA tries to synchronize its plans and activities, but admittedly it is limited in its scope and ability to do so. Since there are no regional USG organizations with directive authority across agencies, the closest being the country team, SOCAFRICA must attempt to maintain influence and support from individual country teams. SOCAFRICA has tried to do outreach via communities of interest—like an IA conference or a sub-regional conference with specific Country team deputies. In both cases there was a lack of interest by the DoS to attend, in part due to confusion with the TSOC role within the GCC as representative of DoD efforts.[132] Unfortunately too, rank absolutely matters, and SOCAFRICA is headed by a one star officer. That rank alone is far outweighed by 53 ambassadors, and the numerous general and flag officers at AFRICOM.

How would the GSN help improve synchronization for SOCAFRICA? It would do this in three ways. First, the additional manning with trained personnel will add depth to the command's ability to operationalize campaign plans while addressing sub-regional and country specific issues, in effect translating SOF's capabilities to the country work plans. Second, with 53 countries in the AO, it is difficult for the command to conduct adequate outreach to all of them. As the TSOC is on average engaged in 27 countries, even this is difficult to provide the Country teams with adequate understanding of SOF's capabilities. The top down advocacy that the SOCOM NCR can provide will help to gain DoS understanding and awareness of the TSOC's mutually supporting

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130 Ibid.

131 USSOCOM, "Global Scout 2011", 7.

132 SOCCE HOA CDR, Email to author. . . February 13, 2012.

capabilities. Finally, the prioritization of the TSOC's as a force of choice, and acknowledging that SOF has unique capabilities within the DoD "Defense" role of the 3D's, will elevate interest and participation in TSOC regional level communities of interest within the IA.

As demonstrated, a more robust manning effort to allow for SOF campaigning, distributed C2 nodes, and increased outreach can help with synchronization of efforts between the TSOC, USG, and partners. Better articulation of SOF capabilities and intent will increase understanding and support. The SOCOM NCR will serve an important role in helping to provide synchronization, or top-down advocacy, which could allow the TSOC to focus its IA efforts on the operational and tactical level of coordination.

C. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND- NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, USSOCOM identified a requirement to establish a collaboration mechanism and information exchange process to better support the ensuing global war on terrorism.[133] USSOCOM recognized the additional need for enduring engagement across the globe as a means to address these threats, and it further understood the importance for synchronization among U.S. Government organizations. As result, SOCOM established the IATF and Special Operations Support Teams (SOST).

While the IATF remained at SOCOM Headquarters at MacDill AFB, the Special Operations Support Teams would filter out to more than 25 government agencies predominately situated in the NCR.[134] The function of the SOST was to provide USSOCOM representatives the ability to communicate with and access to key stakeholders within other USG agencies to provide necessary information for timely

133 USSOCOM IATF, "Interagency Task Force: Thinking Ahead, Pushing Forward", MacDill, AFB: USSOCOM, 2010, 3.

134 Ibid.

action.[135] The stated purpose or mission of SOCOM's IATF was primarily counterterrorist focused and concentrated on the direct approach line of effort.[136]

Beyond the traditional methods of disrupting enemies by direct operational approaches, SOCOM determined that a broader approach to address the global complex environment would require integrated solutions spanning across all instruments of national power. SOCOM's intent is to improve the synchronization of effort across the broader spectrum of U.S. Government agencies to facilitate both direct and indirect approaches. In concert with other elements within the USG, "the indirect approach will be critical in the fight to deter, disrupt, and deny sanctuary to our enemies."[137]

After recognizing that the current SOCOM IATF construct was not effectively suited to address long-term synchronized planning and coordination, the SOCOM staff reassessed their IA processes. The assessment identified a gap occurring between the strategic policy levels and the executing components in the field. SOCOM NCR was therefore the evolution of the IATF construct. SOCOM NCR will be the command's "focal point" within the interagency to help coordinate and synchronize SOF operations with IA and multinational efforts, emphasizing the indirect approach.[138] Additionally, SOCOM NCR will organize around functional lines and will be regionally focused to better support the priorities of the Geographic Combatant Command and the TSOC's campaign plans.[139] The SOCOM NCR will synchronize theater operational and tactical tasks to national strategic goals through strategy and plans. This effort will promote unity of effort linking the theater operational and tactical plans to national strategic objectives increasing the overall operational effects.[140]

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135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 McRaven, *Posture Statement*, 7.

138 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Building the Global SOF Network: Establishment of a USSOCOM Coordination Element in the National Capital Region (Base Order)" MacDill, AFB: Special Operations Command, March 2012, 2.

139 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Executive Summary: Establishment of a USSOCOM Coordination Element in the National Capital Region (Base Order)", MacDill, AFB: Special Operations Command, 2012.

140 Ibid.

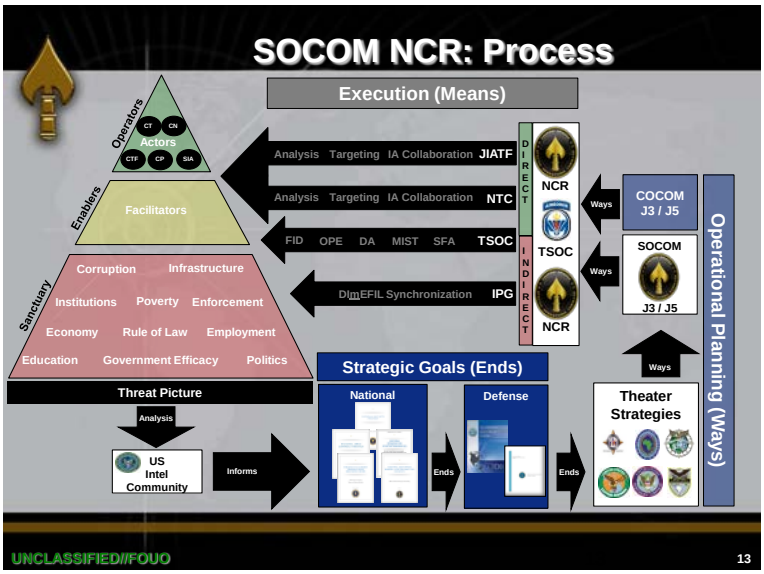

Figure 13. SOCOM NCR IA process in support of the TSOC. (From: SOCOM EGSN OPT.)[141]

SOCOM NCR will consolidate and organize around six functional lines that ultimately enable effective interagency collaboration and planning in support of the GCC's and the regional level of SOF.[142] The Strategic Integration Division (SID) has the primary function to develop collaboration strategies focusing on the indirect lines of effort at the operational and strategic level. The Interagency Senior Advisory Group (ISAG) will have a primary function of linking senior IA personnel with SOCOM NCR leadership. The SOST will remain spread throughout the IA performing day-to-day liaison and coordination support. Connecting with Department of Justice and other Federal law enforcement agencies, the Narcotics and Transnational Crime Support Center (NTC) will support a law enforcement line of effort and planning. The remaining divisions, the Irregular Warfare Support Team (IWST), and Mission Support Group (MSG), perform a supporting role of technical, administration, rapid equipment testing and procurement, and technical or policy requirements.[143]

What does USSOCOM NCR mean for the Geographic Combatant Commanders and the Theater Special Operations Commands? First, it will synchronize theater

141 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Annex C to Building the Global SOF Network. . ."

142 CAPT Phillips and EGSN OPT, "USSOCOM National Capital Region (SOCOM NCR)", 6.

143 Ibid, 6.

operational and tactical tasks to national strategic goals through strategy and plans. Figure 13 above illustrates SOCOM NCR's interagency process working within a mechanism that integrates national strategic guidance with theater strategies. Ultimately, this mechanism is not merely a de-confliction apparatus, but one that works in concert with the GCC's to provide senior decision-makers and other senior government officials with SOF employment options.[144] These SOF options are then transformed into authorities and funding to execute theater SOF plans and contingencies. Finally, the SOCOM NCR will primarily bridge the gap between the strategic level and tactical level. It will have the capacity to assist TSOC's and GCC's in coordinating long duration campaign plans in support of regional and country objectives.[145]

144 Ibid.

145 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Building the Global SOF Network: Establishment", 2.

V. TSOC'S – THE FORCE OF CHOICE

> In order for the TSOC to be serious as a force of choice for the GCC, we need to do rigorous internal analysis to determine structure and capabilities in detailed numbers . . . to ensure transparency, consistency, standardization, and compatibility.[146]
>
> SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline—OCT 2012

A. IMPLICATIONS TO IMPROVING TSOC'S

As we have shown through analysis, TSOC's have been sub-optimally manned, resourced, and equipped over the past decade. The recent attack on the U.S. consulate in Libya further highlights the shortcomings in regional level USG coordination as well as the lack of available forces to respond quickly to crises—demonstrating the that improvements at the regional level are required.[147] Through the GSN concept, SOCOM has established a road map to optimize Theater Special Operations Commands. However, the GSN alone is not capable of implementing the necessary changes; it will require commitment and continued support from the individual services, the GCC's, and from Congress.

The following implications will need to be addressed in order to achieve the requirements described by the GSN: Updated command relationships; Force management required for TSOC expanded capabilities; Doctrinal updates which institutionalize the requirements for resourcing; Training and education of the force; Forward posture of SOF; and Implications for improved interagency synchronization. It is too early to determine all of the implications for optimizing TSOC's. Although this section does not address all of the implications for full implementation of the GSN, the intent of addressing those listed in this chapter is to stimulate further discussion and encourage additional research.

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146 "SOCOM ROC Drill Oct 2012, Authors' Notes," 3.

147 Robert Siegel, "General: CIA Responded Quickly to Benghazi Attack", Transcript to interview on *All Things Considered*, by National Public Radio, Washington, D.C., November 2, 2012, http://m.npr.org/news/World/164207549, accessed 15 November, 2012.

Manning has consistently shown to be the biggest chronic shortfall in reducing TSOC effectiveness. To underscore the importance and complexity of the implications of manning, SOCOM has established a Global Force Management (GFM) element headed by a two star General to determine and oversee changes needed for training, education, and manning of the force in general.[148] This section addresses three distinct implications that are characterized under Personnel Management. These include proper manning, talent to task, and career incentives. The first, shortfalls in the number of personnel assigned to the TSOC staff, affects among many other things the ability to create synchronized SOF campaign plans and DC2. Proper manning not only includes numbers, but placing the right person in the right job. With the concept of distributed C2 as a key piece of successful enduring engagement and more effective regional TSOC's, in addition to the acknowledged need to get the right trained personnel to the TSOC's, the question of how those personnel will fit into the current personnel and billeting management system must be addressed. To address personnel management in SOF, the GFM will establish priorities to address how these jobs are looked at with regard to career management. This will require service modifications.[149]

The second aspect is tracking individuals that possess the right skills for the right position in what is referred to as "talent management." Under current officer personnel management, the seemingly singular focused "command track" mindset within the Army and SOF community provides limited options to many of the mid-level field grade officers. As a result, SOF officers can become disenfranchised by a single tracked system and ultimately go on to pursue other career options. In early 2012, the human resources management organization responsible for Army Special Forces officers said that it was 180 percent over strength on Majors. But it is clear from this thesis that there are many positions that will need to be filled, in most cases once they are codified. During a recent congressional testimony, Linda Robinson states, "Top flight talent, including the best planners and a variety of expert enablers, are needed to craft the SOF campaigns and

148 "SOCOM ROC Drill Oct 2012, Authors' Notes."

149 Ibid.

interact with the broader GCC staff and country teams in the region."[150] She goes on to state, "TSOCs need to be the place where top staff go rather than be seen as a career-ending assignment."[151]

In order to truly capitalize on officer management, SOF must provide incentives and alternative career paths that provide officers promotion opportunities in addition to "command." This type of change would involve a departure from service centric priorities for personnel management and career paths, which currently do not reflect the requirements for SOF specific position in support of GSN. For example, commanding a recruiting battalion, a current priority for Army SF officers, is not the best use of available personnel. Additionally, expanding the pool of senior field grade officers for availability in the coming years is an important but challenging requirement. U.S. Army SOF management will require a different approach that provides other avenues for SOF officer to have greater opportunity for promotion to the 06 levels.

The next implication is the need for updated SOF joint doctrine, and for adequate planning processes within the IA. Doctrine codifies constructs currently in use, like a SOCFWD or an institutionalized TSOC construct, which helps drive requirements. Joint Publications do not address GSN concepts or describe TSOC's as Joint Task Force capable Headquarters.[152] Joint Doctrine requires updates to support staffing and planning for SOF Campaign plans. The second is a need for doctrine supporting steady-state distributed and enduring engagements. One aspect of the distributed operations is the concept of DC2. The current C2 mechanism for the TSOC's distributed C2 of SOF is a JSOTF or a series of JSOTF's. In doctrine, JSOTF's are manned out of TSOC organic resources, but in reality a series of on-going JMD fills is required, often by untrained, short-term personnel. The nature and limited mission scope of the JSOTF make it unsuitable for "left of the line," steady-state operations, which need a tailored, discreet, and enduring presence under a broad mission focus.[153] Doctrine fails to address the

150 *Testimony on Special Operations Forces.* 2nd Session of 112th Congress sess., 2012, 4.

151 Ibid.

152 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, *Concept of Operations for the Global Special Operations Forces Network* 14.

153 SOCCENT, *TSOC Distributed Command and Control (DC2) DCR Overview* 19.

concept of DC2 or institutionalize concepts like the SOCFWD in terms of its ability to provide scalable and enduring structures to support SOF in a steady-state environment. Current SOF doctrine, specifically JP 3–05 and 3–05.1, discusses SOF C2 structures and operations in environments where DoD is the lead agency. It does not consider operations and structure required for the steady-state environment.[154]

It would be difficult to overstate the importance of establishing common SOF lexicon across the IA. The degree to which this causes problems is immense. Not only does the lack of common lexicon cause confusion. Many of the terms that SOF and DoD use, for example, Phase 0, Campaigning, and pre-crisis activities—and the connotations of what they may imply—cause deep-seated apprehension among other USG agencies.[155] This is not merely a matter of organizational culture. This directly results in lack of support and reduced willingness to collaborate. The difference between how those terms are used and understood within DoD, and how they are perceived elsewhere, must be reduced. SOCOM and the TSOC's should develop official publications and conduct outreach, to ensure that SOF and its partners understand the specific terminology. This is especially needed to explain regionally specific terms differ which necessarily differ among TSOC's or from a standardized term.[156]

As a result of the implementation of the GSN, the Theater Special Operations Commands will eventually see an increase in manning. These commanders and staff personnel will require additional training with regional knowledge, planning skills, and experience to understand other USG agencies processes to synchronize and integrate efforts, to carry out indirect activities in steady-state environments. Currently, SOF does not have a reliable means to produce SOF campaign planners—the ability to plan, understand, and interact at the operational and theater strategic level.[157] This will require a change with Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) specific to SOF. In one

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154 USSOCOM, "JP 3-05 Special Operations," (April 2011, 2011). http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_05.pdf.

155 Author's notes from Video teleconference between with DoS personnel at NDU Center for Complex Operations. 22 Aug, 2012.

156 USSOCOM J7/9-F, *Global Scout 2011 Limited Objective Experiment 2 Final Report* 13.

157 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012.

example of how SOCOM is working to fix this, an agreement was recently reached between SOCOM and the Joint Staff that will allow for JPME 2 training to be conducted in-house at SOCOM. This will allow for more SOF specific joint training. The intent is to allow mid-grade field officers to receive this joint training prior to arriving at TSOC's, giving the critical planning and education required to work there.[158,159]

The allocation and availability of forces to the TSOC has several implications which will need to be addressed. The SOCOM Commander has stated that good order and discipline issues in theaters have put SOF credibility and professionalism at risk because SOF forces operating in theater do not have loyalty to the TSOC's.[160] This circumstance is due in large part because the TSOC's do not have a reliable way to influence the behavior of those forces, as most often the engagements are episodic in nature and the personnel within those elements are rated by their originating headquarters. By solidifying the apportionment of forces to TSOC's, this will create a habitual and more accountable relationship. Second, the basing of allocated forces, either on a rotational or permanent basis, will require further research. There are simply not enough SOF units in the TSOC portfolio. The GSN intent to push more SOF forward should alleviate this issue. But the political acceptability in the U.S. and for a given host country, for losing and gaining an American unit, respectively, could be a contentious process. Additionally, factors such as costs and long-term viability of basing locations will require further consideration.

Currently, IA collaboration occurs in some form at the tactical and strategic levels of the government. However, an IA synchronization gap exists at the regional level.[161] The future operating environment will require a synchronized approach. Although IA implications are not tied to the success of the GSN, it is inherent to the success of achieving national and theater security objectives across the globe. In this vein, a civilian led regional or sub-regional U.S. structure, with directive authority, could allow the

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158 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012.

159 Joint Forces Staff College, "Joint & Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) JPME II," National Defense University, http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu/schools_programs/jcws/default.asp, accessed 25 Oct, 2012.

160 SOCOM ROC Drill for TSOC Baseline, Oct 2012.

161 Peter Phillips and Charles Corcoran, "Harnessing America's Power. . .", 37.

National Security Council to focus on strategic level policy, and would provide a real integration mechanism at the regional level.[162] Organizational initiatives include a common IA planning process or IA handbooks that communicate best practices and formal processes.

B. THESIS CONCLUSION

The U.S. will continue, and most likely increase, its stability, security, and counterterrorism operations. Despite perceptions, U.S. Special Operations Forces do not just conduct activities that culminate with direct action. Recent USSOCOM commanders have made clear the emphasis on prioritizing indirect approaches. The long-term focus of SOF operations, the small, sustainable footprint of its forces, and the several unique capabilities it offers to African partners and to the country teams makes it a force of choice to support U.S. foreign policy objectives in Africa. However, TSOC's, and more broadly the regional level of U.S. foreign policy, have been neglected for too long. In 1996, the former SOCOM Commander, General Shelton, wrote that TSOC's have come of age since fixing the organizational and resourcing issues of the TSOC's.[163] He may have been correct when he wrote that back then the role of the TSOC was as an episodic engagement and crisis response—those issues therefore still need to be fixed. In fact, they have been exacerbated by chronic under resourcing and confusion of command relationships. Further, the complexity of the environment has made the stakes higher for U.S. security. A disconnected regional SOF headquarters has serious impacts on reduced U.S. synchronization. The GSN is a workable concept which provides greater capability and synchronization to the regional level of U.S. goals. The risk of not fully implementing the GSN will have negative impacts on U.S. ability to address threats preventively, and will degrade efforts at burden sharing among multinational partners. This would reduce the reliability and credibility of SOF with U.S. and foreign partners.[164]

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162 Ibid.

163 Henry Shelton, "Coming of Age: Theater Special Operations Commands," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Winter 1996-1997, http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA528704, accessed 25 November, 2012.

164 Expanding Global SOF Network OPT, "Concept of Operations", 16.

This thesis is about the regional level of SOF, the TSOC's, and how their organizational shortfalls need to be addressed in order to support theater objectives in increasingly complex, steady-state environments. Focusing on the regional level highlights a significant mismatch of USG decision-making authority within IA efforts—the regional focused GCC and the bilateral, country-focused embassies. The importance of this is that the future operational environment will continue to place great demand on SOF, while also depending on improved synchronization across the IA. Recent strategic guidance stresses the need for innovative, agile, and small footprint approaches to meeting these objectives. SOF has the unique skills and the organizations suited to conduct preventive activities in a steady-state environment. But for TSOC's there remain shortfalls in capabilities and resourcing which reduces the effectiveness of SOF's contribution to theater objectives. SOF is addressing how it needs to be postured as part of the Joint Force in 2020. The thesis addresses this topic through an analysis of SOCAFRICA and its role as the TSOC in the AFRICOM AOR, and through an examination of the SOCOM GSN concept as it seeks to improve TSOC effectiveness. In a steady-state environment, operations at the regional level are broadly characterized by three things; Department of State primacy; emphasis on the indirect approach to activities, focusing on working by, with, and through partner forces; and a security environment ranging from peace to unstable peace, to flash points of conflict. Finally, it highlights organizational shortfalls of SOCAFRICA which must be addressed to make SOF a reliable capability at the regional level, and the implications stemming from these changes which should be considered in order to allow these changes to succeed.

New authorities and capabilities are needed as well. Changing the UCP to give COCOM authority of the TSOC to SOCOM, with OPCON to the GCC will allow SOCOM to meet its global responsibilities to train, equip, and man SOF. By positioning more SOF forward it will increase the availability and responsiveness of SOF for GCC employment. Institutionalizing TSOC's will allow for proper manning, resourcing and will clarify SOF unity of command in theaters, giving TSOC's the depth of experienced manpower to conduct SOF campaigning, focusing on long-term activities left of the line. This is where they will achieve operational and strategic effects in support of GCC and broader USG objectives. The series of on-going SOCOM ROC drills is achieving a

baseline of TSOC capability requirements, validated by the GCC's, for improved manning, available forces, and responsive funding and logistics support. The validated requirements indicate a need to almost double the manpower at TSOCs.

SOCAFRICA is an excellent case for study as it is a new organization and because Africa demonstrates the complexity of steady-state environment. SOCAFRICA is demonstrative of TSOC shortfalls—the recent ROC drill indicates a need to approximately double to manning of each TSOC. The requirement for supporting DoD efforts in Title 22 environments will increase, not decrease. At the regional level, in Africa, U.S. objectives are focused on security and stability through building partner capacity, and these missions all rely on a more indirect approach to protect the U.S. and its interests. By studying SOCAFRICA, the thesis illustrated how chronic organizational shortfalls in manning, assigned forces, resourcing, ability to C2 distributed operations, and synchronization, has resulted in degraded SOF ability to support the GCC and Chiefs of Mission.

In order to implement changes to improve the TSOC's there are implications which require institutional recognition and support by organizations affected by the GSN, including SOF service components, other DoD organizations, and USG entities. Changes in policy and doctrine, personnel management, training and education, and organization will ensure that TSOCs have the resources to meet mission requirements in the 2020 environment. The changes listed in the thesis and in the GSN will not happen immediately, but over the next five to seven years. It will require concerted and dedicated effort to complete these changes. SOF must address its current shortfalls at the regional level, or it will be less able to plan and synchronize special operations efforts in theaters.[165] An improved TSOC will support national security objectives through synchronized efforts, forward forces, and small footprint approaches to activities, making them the regional force of choice for the GCC.

165 Ibid.

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