

AU/AIR FORCE FELLOW/NNN/2007

AIR FORCE FELLOW

AIR UNIVERSITY

COMMUNICATING WITH INTENT:  
DOD AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

by

Lindsey J. Borg, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

Advisor: Mr. Robert Potter

Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

April 2007

Distribution A: Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author(s) and do not reflect the official policy or position of the US government or the Department of Defense. In accordance with Air Force Instruction 51-303, it is not copyrighted, but is the property of the United States government.

## *Contents*

	<i>Page</i>
DISCLAIMER .....	II
ILLUSTRATIONS .....	V
PREFACE .....	VI
ABSTRACT .....	VIII
INTRODUCTION .....	1
The Concept of Strategic Communication .....	4
A Global Perspective .....	4
The Public Communication Component .....	7
WHY STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION? .....	12
Fixing the Deficiency .....	15
Threats and Opportunities .....	17
Strength in the US population .....	20
Operationalizing Information .....	20
DOD STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION CAPABILITIES .....	26
A Private Sector Approach .....	36
Possible Limiting Factors .....	38
Access .....	40
Training .....	41
Cultural Awareness .....	41
Existing Legislation .....	41
The Fog of National Strategies .....	43
COMMAND AND CONTROL OF INFORMATION RESOURCES .....	46
EXTERNAL INFLUENCES .....	50
New media .....	50
International Relations: Alliances, Coalitions and Key Partners .....	53
The Private Sector .....	55
The Free Press .....	57
OPERATIONAL FACTORS .....	59
Concept of Operations .....	60

Research.....	61
Planning.....	62
Execute.....	63
Assess.....	64
Interoperability.....	67
Standardization and Evaluation.....	68
Joint Training and Exercises.....	68
Operating with Coalitions, Allies and Strategic Partners.....	69
KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE.....	71
Unity of Effort and Purpose.....	71
Public Communication and Information Operations.....	72
External Coordination.....	75
The Interagency.....	75
The International Level.....	77
Strategic Communication in Network-Centric Warfare.....	77
CONCLUSIONS.....	79
GLOSSARY.....	81
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	82

## *Illustrations*

	<i>Page</i>
Figure 1 – DoD Strategic Communication Process - Lines of Operations	5
Figure 2 – DoD Strategic Communication Hierarchy	30
Figure 3 – DoD Strategic Communication Proposal Template	33
Figure 4 – DoD Strategic Communication Process Flow	34
Figure 5 – DoD Strategic Communication Concept of Operations	60
Figure 6 – DoD Strategic Communication Lines of Operation	66

## *Preface*

My own uncertainty about the development of Department of Defense strategic communication organizations and processes was the catalyst for this research paper. As a Public Affairs officer, I took note when strategic communication emerged as a priority area earlier this decade and wanted to know more about the intersection between it and existing career fields.

I found the need is profound for better coordination of our communication efforts. I also found there is much effort throughout DoD to meet these needs and to institute a culture change that values communication. Additionally, I found DoD is limited in the effects it can generate in the strategic information domain: the US government must improve its interagency system for coordinated communication if it is to fully realize the tremendous strengths of its diplomatic, information, military and economic instruments of power.

The goal of this paper to present of selection of opinions and views – taken from this snapshot in time – to help readers better understand DoD’s efforts regarding the public information component of strategic communication.

This paper is not a prescription of tactics to win tomorrow’s battles for the hearts and minds in the Global War on Terror. This paper explains the need for a more vigorous and operational approach to communication and public information, and concomitantly, the pressing need to better organize, train and equip our strategic communication

professionals to more effectively advance this capability for long-term, strategic positive effects. I purposefully focused this paper on the public communication component of strategic communication, but encourage others to take up the mantle for an in-depth look at other aspects of the mission area.

My sincere thanks to the many people who served as sounding boards, editors and sources for this paper. I especially appreciate the assistance of my Harvard University research advisor, Professor Anthony Oettinger, chairman of the Program for Information Resources Policy, for his guidance, ideas and investment of time in this project. Additionally, this paper benefited greatly from (and I grew tremendously through) the rich discussions with the other fellows and faculty at the Kennedy School of Government's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. I am tremendously grateful for the opportunity to serve as a National Defense Fellow at Harvard.

Others who were key to this project include Lt. Col. Greg Julian, Brig. Gen. Erwin Lessel, Brig. Gen. Michelle Johnson, Captain David Wray, Colonel David Lapan, Colonel John Buckley, Colonel Alan Bynum, Ms. Noele Nolta, Ms. Farah Pandith, Major Ronald Watrous, Major Patrick Ryder, Ms. Margaret MacDonald Mr. Tom Boyd, Mr. Michel Kelly, Mr. Matthew Borg, Mr. Robert Potter and Ms. Rebecca Wriggle. I am grateful to all these people for their cooperation, interest and willingness to help. Foremost, I am thankful for the enduring patience, support and understanding of my wife and sons, especially as I researched and wrote this paper.

If this paper clarifies for you DoD's strategic communication efforts and the needs for future success, I count this project a success.

*Abstract*

DoD's development of strategic communication processes, a supporting organizational structure and an institutional culture change began in earnest in 2006. The broad, operational view of communication presents many opportunities for DoD; it also presents many areas demanding attention if the department is to realize its aim of positive strategic effects in the information domain.

This paper examines DoD's development of strategic communication with a specific examination of the implications, opportunities and threats associated with the public information environment. This paper does not present a prescription for tactics to win near-term battles, but rather a review of current efforts to build strategic communication capacity and considerations that demand attention to advance this capability for long-term, strategic successes.

The main methodology used for this paper was personal interviews with people either engaged in DoD's development of strategic communication processes, or able to give perspective from another part of the US government. The paper also relies heavily on published information from the academic and open press environments.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

*“My life is my message.”*

— Mahatma Gandhi

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of major communist states soon after had many effects on the geopolitical landscape, global economics and national priorities. Democracy’s victory and its predicted peace dividend brought an afterglow made more intense by the economic boom of the 1990s. The United States, it seemed, could do no wrong.

Successful methods and institutions – Cold War icons – were considered to be unnecessary and retardants of modern advancement. The need to build trust and support for the US among other nations seemed passé. As a result, governmental reorganizations were undertaken that drastically reduced the US government’s ability to reach foreign audiences. One such change resulted in the Department of State (DoS) absorbing the United States Information Agency (USIA), the venerable information champion of the Cold War.<sup>1</sup> Globalization of the world’s economic landscape seemed to be vaulted to position as the most important means to build key – strategic – relationships.<sup>2</sup>

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were a startling awakening to a changed world – one in which the US felt misunderstood politically and socially by other nations, and ethnic and religious groups with which it had not maintained an open flow of

information. Communicating with key audiences in the US and abroad suddenly became a vital component of the nation's strategy as it launched a new long war: the Global War on Terror.

Parallels between the Cold War and the Global War on Terror are abundant. In both cases, effective communication stands out as the key component necessary to build public trust and support while simultaneously leveraging global influence and deterrence by the United States and its allies or strategic partners.

However, the Global War on Terror most certainly is not the Cold War. The information domain has changed dramatically since the early 1990s when the Cold War ended. Today's global information environment is characterized by continuous real-time information proliferation, 24-hour news cycles spurred on by advanced information and communication technologies. The modern information environment enables individuals, groups and often nations to report – and verify or refute – information of various authenticity and accuracy, rumor, supposition and in some cases, outright disinformation and offer either a supporting or countervailing opinion to the global, news-consuming market. The changes allow audiences in the US and throughout the world to receive real-time information from national leaders and military theaters of operations. The effect is simultaneous influence on domestic and international publics and their decision makers as they consume information – truthful and untruthful. This effect can translate into political pressure on national leaders and military commanders to change strategic goals, policies, guidance, objectives and procedures that affect military missions. As historian and author Max Boot observed regarding the modern information environment, “Our

actions don't only affect what we do in a theater, they also affect how we're perceived all over the world.”<sup>3</sup>

Global communication capabilities make news and information simultaneously available from the strategic to the tactical levels of military operations. New communication technologies and the expansion of international media alliances have affected the conduct of military operations to a degree equal to that of emerging weapons technologies.

For example, Operation IRAQI FREEDOM's (OIF) embedded reporter program placed roughly 700 journalists with military units from the outset of the operation. Those journalists employed a thickening web of communications infrastructure to deliver visuals, audio and first-hand insights to a worldwide audience. Reporters' access to the operation was as unimpeded as the release of their products; media delivered news from the operation without military sanitization or manipulation. This unfettered information flow gained credibility as the ground truth and is credited with reducing the potential for Iraqi misinformation that could have undermined public support.<sup>4</sup>

Just as the operating environment has changed from the Cold War era, so must the methods and tactics of communication and the organizational constructs that facilitate them. The Cold War focus was to contain communism while sustaining democracy. The communication techniques were focused on influencing the ideology of communist populations; the intended effect of the consistently repeated message was deterrence. However, the communication challenge in the Global War on Terror is to reach a massive, global audience – one that includes many members who are united in common

religious beliefs – to change the negative perceptions and beliefs regarding Western values.

Recognition of public communication’s importance is evident in the Department of Defense’s (DoD) current efforts to build strategic communication processes. The effort cannot come soon enough. The Defense Science Board’s 2004 review of DoD’s strategic communication capability states it is “in crisis.”<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review cited strategic communication as one of the five key areas that require DoD plans for focused development.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Concept of Strategic Communication**

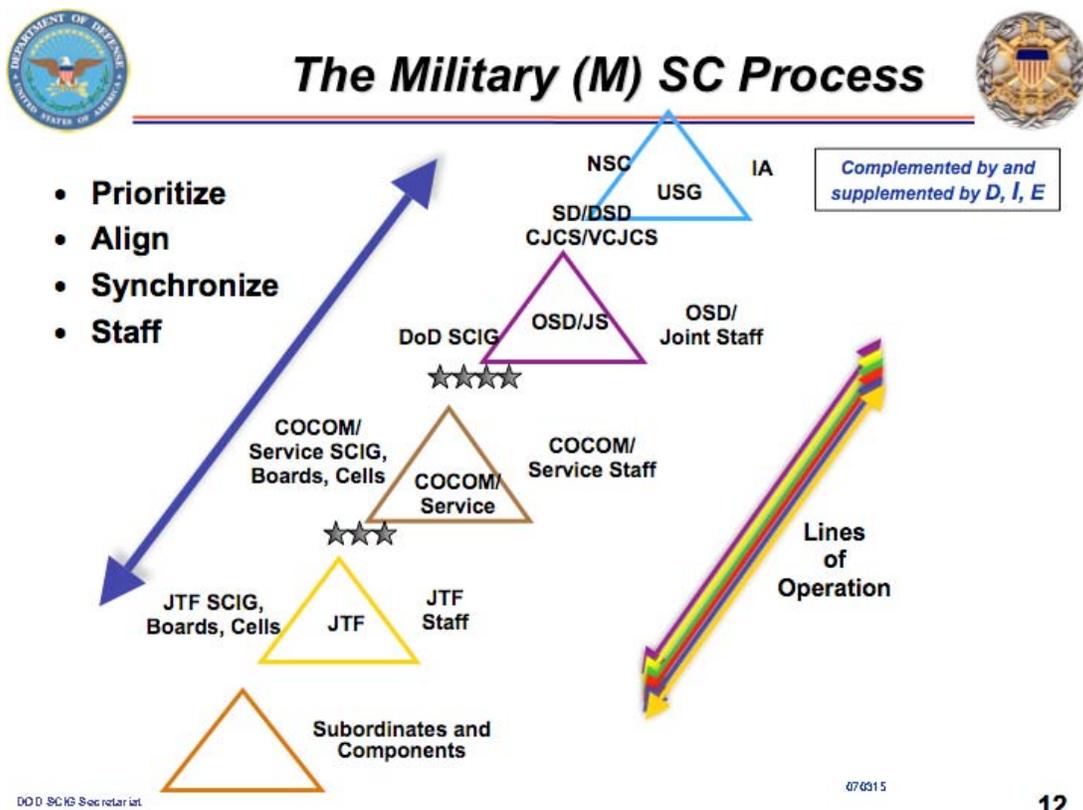
The question ‘what is strategic communication?’ can bring as many answers as the number of people asked the question. Differing perspectives of the concept are common among public relations professionals, marketing staffs, strategic planners and government agencies.

The DoD roadmap for strategic communication states it is “focused governmental processes and efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen or preserve conditions favorable to advance national interests and objectives through the use of coordinated information, themes, plans, programs and actions synchronized with other elements of national power.”<sup>7</sup>

### **A Global Perspective**

DoD’s perspective on strategic communication has evolved, however, to a much broader interpretation since the Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap was signed in September 2006. The broader, operational view of DoD’s desired strategic

communication process goes far beyond the basic communication construct of ‘sender – message – receiver’ to interpret every DoD action or statement as a form of communication. This new approach is to establish a strategic communication process in which all DoD strategy, planning and operational decisions are made.<sup>8</sup> Figure 1 depicts DoD’s integration of its varied lines of operation, or capabilities, through its strategic communication process.



**Figure 1 – DoD’s Strategic Communication Process<sup>9</sup>**

From the DoD perspective, including all departmental operations in the strategic communication process will help to ensure a consistent application of US government policy to actions and statements. The linkage of actions with statements in support of policy is vitally important because when statements and actions are not synchronized, or

are not consistent with policy, a ‘say-do gap’ is created that degrades efforts and adversely affects credibility of the military and, ultimately, the nation.<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, the intent of the US government’s efforts in strategic communication is to transcend the information instrument of national power by synchronizing and integrating efforts between all instruments of power: diplomatic, information, military and economic. There must be harmony between the instruments of power to realize their full potential and DoD’s current efforts in strategic communication are to provide a process to coordinate efforts to achieve desired effects.<sup>11</sup>

There is overlap of effort between US government departments and agencies to bring the instruments of power to bear for the nation. For instance, DoD is not simply confined to the military instrument of power; it also has roles – supporting and leading – within the diplomatic, information and economic realms. For example, the regional combatant commanders and their forces represent the US to international leaders and populations, supporting US diplomacy. Within the information domain, military presence exists from space-based satellites to interpersonal communication. Lastly, enforcement of blockades and some types of sanctions are examples of military support to the nation’s economic instrument of power.

The desired end state for those engaged in DoD’s work to build a strategic communication process is that it will help to integrate and synchronize the department’s efforts and prepare it to collaborate in the interagency and coalition strategic communication processes. The team charged with leading development of DoD’s strategic communication envisions a process that helps the US achieve desired strategic

effects, either independently or in cooperation with other inter-governmental organizations, nations and non-governmental organizations.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Public Communication Component**

This paper focuses on DoD's efforts in the public communication component of its strategic communication process development. Consideration is given to the capabilities, or information resources, DoD can draw upon for strategic communication, the developmental needs of those resources and what can reasonably be expected from them.

The DoD concept for strategic communication places a high priority on public information. The developing processes put information experts in the planning and decision-making cycles for operations to achieve desired effects.

Regardless of definition or perspective, the importance of effective public communication and relations – strategic communication – cannot be overstated. With proper prioritization and authority to integrate information planning and engagement into operations and other efforts, strategic communication can help build relationships with various publics – foreign and domestic – that improve the ability of the US to meet its national objectives. Delivery of public information may result in increased public support of policy initiatives, procurement efforts and operational objectives. The public may be internal to the organization, a supporter, a taxpayer, Congress, a foreign population or an adversary. Just as varied is the perspective of the audiences: the vested interest may come because the publics benefit from, or are harmed by, the behavior of DoD.<sup>13</sup>

Regardless of the nature of the public's association with an organization, the bedrock of public communication is the building of key partnerships based on relationships.<sup>14</sup>

This also is where the true value of DoD's Public Affairs (PA) capabilities resides since its people are charged with conducting the core of the department's public relations work.

However, to be effective, the people charged with executing the public communication component of DoD's strategic communication efforts must have the knowledge, skills and training necessary to allow them to understand the nuances of varied, global audiences. Investment must also be made to build understanding of new and emerging communication technologies, how different publics use them and what communication tactics should be employed for US success. Increasingly, conflict is in a population's cognitive space, making sheer military might a lesser priority for victory in the Information Age.<sup>15</sup> Use of the nation's hard power is inadequate as the sole – or even primary means – to address an insurgency. Instead, national decision makers must create a synergistic approach that emphasizes the country's soft power capabilities while drawing on complementary efforts of its hard power might if necessary.

To bring success in the modern operating environment, policy, diplomatic and military operations must include consideration of public information and integration of the efforts of the resources that deliver it. As the Defense Science Board states in its 2004 report, strategic communication will be less effective if managed separately since it cannot build support for policies viewed negatively by the audiences.<sup>16</sup> Simply put, consideration of communication and its effects must be integrated into operational planning, decision-making and execution cycles, not considered as an afterthought.

Such culture shifts are not easy to attain. To be successful, the change within DoD must have senior leaders' support illustrated by their involvement in communication efforts, their direction to make and fund organizational and process changes where

needed, and a commitment to continue the change beyond their tenure in the organization. Therefore, senior DoD leaders must institutionalize a culture that values and rewards persistent, authentic and open public communication. As it stands today, there is a distinct reticence to engage in the information battlespace. This approach severely marginalizes the nation's ability to effectively employ its information resources.

Leadership must also understand that specific, intended strategic communication effects may be difficult to attain and that unintended second and third order effects are possible, especially in the near term. Effective communication strategies will bring near-term results and successes, but patience, persistence and messages consistent with actions are requisite for communication's intended strategic effects. Many times, the outcomes of strategic efforts are beyond the horizon: the efforts are often generational in nature, with their results years in the future.

DoD may not have the patience for beyond-the-horizon strategic communication. Continuity of the effort may be difficult to achieve in an environment made fluid by leadership changes, frequent workforce turnover due to military reassignments, shifting national security priorities and varying budgets. When one adds administration change in the executive branch of government at least every eight years, typically resulting in shifts in strategic goals, policies and priorities, the challenge to long-term strategic communication efforts becomes clearly apparent.

Any attempts at strategic communication require public information's integration into the command and control structure and the operational cycle to ensure information resources' activities are coordinated and in support of DoD strategy. Command and control integration would also provide a conduit between information resources and

senior leadership and other DoD capabilities, helping to ensure the informational instrument of power is considered in policy and strategy decisions, integrated into planning functions and directed in employment like other capabilities. The command and control focus must be on coordinating the information resources – the people and capabilities – and ensuring their interface with other operational capabilities. The focus must not be on control or management of the information. Attempts to control and perfect information are incompatible with DoD's Principles of Information<sup>17</sup>, and counterproductive in today's burgeoning information environment.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Clinton, William J., Presidential Decision Directive 68 – International Public Information. The White House, April 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Talbot, Strobe. "Globalization and Diplomacy: A Practitioner's Perspective." *Foreign Policy*, No. 108 (Autumn, 1997), 68-83.

<sup>3</sup> Boot, Max. 'War Made New: Technology, Warfare and the Course of History 1500-Today.' 'On Point with Tom Ashbrook'. Broadcast by NPR's WBUR 30 October 2006. (available online: [http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061030\\_b\\_main.asp](http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061030_b_main.asp)). Accessed 15 November 2006.

<sup>4</sup> US Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication. September 2004. and Author participation on CJCS/PA Operation IRAQI FREEDOM planning team. September 2003.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication. September 2004.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report. 6 February 2006, 13

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap, 25 September 2006., 3

<sup>8</sup> Julian, Lt. Colonel Gregory. Telephone interview with the author. 27 March 2007.

<sup>9</sup> US Department of Defense. Strategic Communication Concept of Operations Briefing. 15 March 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Grunig, James E. "After 50 Years: The Value and Values of Public Relations." Speech to The Institute for Public Relations, New York, NY. 9 November 2006.

## Notes

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Scales, Robert H. "Clausewitz and World War IV." *Armed Forces Journal*. July 2006. (Available online at <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/07/1866019/>). Accessed 6 April 2007.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication. September 2004.

<sup>17</sup> US Department of Defense. DOD Directive 5122.5: DOD Principles of Information. n.d.

## Chapter 2

### Why Strategic Communication?

*“More than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. We are in a media battle, a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma (community of Muslims).”*

— Ayman al-Zawahiri, al-Qaeda deputy

By many accounts, the US is losing the information battle of the Global War on Terror.

The US government’s public communication deficit goes beyond the current struggle, however. Numerous people have publicly cited America’s inability to effectively tell its story – at home and abroad.

Independent surveys of various countries’ populations show a declining opinion of the US. Residents in twelve of the 15 countries polled for The Pew Global Attitudes Project’s 2006 survey opine a significant decline regarding confidence in, and support for, America. The decline was marked when compared against results from the project’s first survey in 2000, plunging by more than 50 percent in some populations.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, the 2007 BBC World Service Poll of 26,000 adults in 25 countries showed a 49 percent disapproval rating of the US’s influence in the world.<sup>2</sup>

The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review cited the military’s lack of organizational structure, training, equipment and specialized skills needed to effectively analyze, plan,

coordinate and integrate the capabilities necessary to successfully promote America's interests.<sup>3</sup>

Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld graded the United States' efforts as "D or D+" in the "battle of ideas" waged as a part of the Global War on Terror.<sup>4</sup>

Although Secretary Rumsfeld's assessment was not focused solely on the military's efforts to communicate effectively, he amplified his point with recognition of the military's counterproductive tendency to give low priority to engagement with the public through the media.

During the Cold War, it often was acceptable for a government agency or senior leader to avoid interaction with public groups or the media in the name of national security. However, the world has changed; the demand and appetite for information has grown dramatically. Success within the information domain in the Global War on Terror – and most likely every future conflict – demands engaged leaders who clearly articulate the country's vision and goals. Failure to engage is to allow others to solely frame the issue from their point of view. Lack of engagement cedes the crucial information domain to current and potential future adversaries while forgoing the advantages of building relations through communication with Americans, their allies and key partners.

The modern environment in which DoD's information resources operate is global in nature. The Global Information Environment (GIE) includes all individuals, organizations or systems that collect, process and distribute information. A significant subsystem of the GIE is the public information environment – the realm in which public communication operations occur. The public information environment includes all individuals, organizations or systems that collect, process and disseminate information

for public consumption. It is comprised of many sub-systems ranging from interpersonal communication to international public information and mass media.<sup>5</sup>

The public information environment is a key battleground in the modern information environment. Some military leaders have labeled the current operating conditions as Fourth Generation Warfare, a term that refers to an enemy that operates in a virtual realm and uses mass media cleverly, effectively making the media the terrain.<sup>6</sup>

Personal electronic devices such as cell phones, digital cameras, video recorders and various kinds of computers have created a new intersection between the individual and the mass media. The public can no longer be viewed as passive information consumers: the public now more than ever is actively contributing to the information environment via World Wide Web sites, blogs and text messaging to name only a few.

The new technologies also give individuals, groups and, in some regard, nations enormous capability to organize and influence various audiences. In April 2006, Nepal's King Gyanendra ordered cell phone service cut after protesters used text messages to help assemble street protests by tens of thousands of democracy advocates. When Philippines President Joseph Estrada was forced from office in 2001, he called the uprising against him a "coup de text" because his detractors used cell phone networks to text message organizational instructions for protests.<sup>7</sup>

Likewise, the public media, citizens and international organizations can directly affect the success or failure of military operations through their influential effect on US, allied and adversary public support. Despite their effects on operations, the editorial proclivity of these public information elements are protected and guaranteed by the US Constitution and therefore restricted from US government control.

## **Fixing the Deficiency**

Current efforts by DoD to correct the perceived deficiency in communication effectiveness include formation of a Strategic Communication Secretariat and an overarching Strategic Communication Integration Group (SCIG).<sup>8</sup> A new organization, the Office of Joint Communication, leads the efforts to build and institute DoD's new strategic communication process and culture.

Similarly, each US military service has embarked on its own development of a strategic communication capability through process development or organizational change. All but one service, the Air Force, currently relies on its PA office to lead the strategic communication development effort. The Air Force created a Strategic Communication directorate in 2005 to lead the service's efforts in the area. Initially, there was a distinct tie to the PA directorate with the majority of the strategic communication directorate's capability being drawn from the Headquarters Air Force PA staff. In the initial organizational structure, the director of Air Force PA served as the deputy director of strategic communication.<sup>9</sup> However, the Air Force elected to separate the two organizations in April 2007. While the Strategic Communication directorate will continue to coordinate communication functions across the Air Staff, it no longer is organizationally intertwined with Air Force PA. The distinct organization will add a senior civilian as its deputy to replace the Air Force PA, dual-hatted director who previously served in that capacity.<sup>10</sup>

However, PA is not the only public communication capability that is key to strategic communication success. Other information resources are vital – their actions and products are critical – to organizational success in strategic communication efforts.

Among these information resources are photo and visual production, military bands, intelligence, historians, legislative liaison, recruiting, international affairs and, at the very foundation, each person in DoD.

An exclusive focus on PA for development of strategic communication capability presents a very real risk. While PA is quite correctly placed at the nucleus of strategic communication because of its pre-existing, well-developed training programs, public credibility, increasing operational integration and well-established focuses on internal information, community and media relations, the capability has sometimes disappointed commanders or leaders who desired a specific effect from the public communication effort. Often these disappointments are linked to a lack of cooperation between the career fields conducting public communication as well as restrictions of access to the operational strategy development, planning and execution phases.

The lack of cooperation and integration can have undesirable effects that reach beyond disappointed leadership. The perceived credibility of the information provider can be degraded by an insufficiency of pertinent information. Credibility is also severely compromised when actions don't align with statements regarding military operations. Not even the most carefully constructed messages, themes, and words will find success if the messenger lacks credibility with the audience.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, strategic communication development efforts must be on the enterprise level: every public information resource must be developed with a consideration of its strategic communication role. Simultaneously, a massive culture shift must occur to remove the tribal instincts of the varied information resources' managers – instincts that have them focused on funding and career-field-specific issues instead of on enhanced

coordination to achieve the enterprise communication goals. A culture shift also must occur within the leadership hierarchy of each service, DoD and the US government to value public communication, provide access to decision-making and planning efforts, to support efforts in this area with new training programs, and to clearly articulate the enterprise goals and objectives. Without such changes, current efforts to communicate strategically likely will fall flat.

DoD's current efforts represent positive steps forward to create a culture that understands strategic communication as a vital focal point for operational success. To achieve the vision, however, the department must develop individual public information resources – career fields or mission sets – like PA, Information Operations (IO) or Psychological Operations (PSYOP), legislative affairs, intelligence and military support to public diplomacy with a focus on their coordinated employment and supporting technologies. The strength of strategic communication will be its coordination of efforts, with careful consideration of public information in planning and decision making, to help achieve strategic objectives.<sup>12</sup>

Strategic communication is not the silver bullet, but it does present the possibility for a more tightly focused informational contribution to the strength of the other instruments of national power to achieve national strategies.<sup>13</sup>

## **Threats and Opportunities**

Modern conflicts include battles far beyond the physical battlespace. The information environment is quickly becoming the place of advantage for adversaries of the US and its allies, giving them asymmetric options for attacks. Terrorist organizations

are very effectively harnessing Western information technology, such as the Internet, to help them achieve their global ambitions.

Ironically, much of the technological strength depended upon by current US adversaries was created by DoD. The Internet was created in the 1970s by DoD to reduce its communications system's vulnerability to attack by the Soviets. This decentralized system is now key to terrorists' efforts to organize their operations and further their causes.<sup>14</sup>

As former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Richard Meyers observed, violent extremists "want to create fear. And when we're afraid, we don't make rational decisions."<sup>15</sup>

Several virtues of the Internet make it easier to generate the fear the terrorists seek. Characteristics such as ease of access, anonymity of posting, a potentially large audience and lack of regulations have allowed terrorists to reach millions of people with little risk of being detected and stopped. As Jenkins stated, through operating their own Web sites and online forums, terrorists have effectively created their own "terrorist news network."<sup>16</sup>

Not only are new technologies used to carry terrorists' messages to the global audience, they also are used to create a command and control system that is hidden in public by using Web sites and their images, Internet chat rooms and cell phone networks.<sup>17</sup>

Al-Qaeda has been called “the E-Bay of terrorism” because of its adept use of technology. It also has an organizational structure optimized for the information age – one that allows quick, nimble action.<sup>18</sup>

DoD also can leverage information systems for global collaboration, but work must be done to develop the specific tools to allow for shared awareness of elements in the public information domain. The military intelligence community recently launched a tool it calls Intellipedia to help its people share information and build awareness. The tool is based on the wiki technology, a Web-based application that allows users to contribute and edit content.<sup>19</sup>

A similar tool would be useful for the various information resources within the strategic communication community. However, the greatest value would be found in a tool that can bridge the individual disciplines and capabilities to allow for shared awareness. As an example, such a tool could allow historians to contribute issue-specific historical perspective while international affairs specialists enhanced the cultural insight provided by the intelligence community and even the DoS’s embassy-based country teams.

The focus on information sharing and collaboration is in line with another of DoD’s transformation efforts: development of network-centric warfare capability. Networked information resources would enhance strategic communication efforts to increase interaction between planning and execution functions.<sup>20</sup> The increased interaction presents the opportunity for faster, more agile information activities to provide the correct informational frame to inform and appropriately influence key audiences, or to counter an adversary’s misinformation or propaganda initiative.

The US Army understands the information war threat intimately, most recently from its time on the ground in battle-torn Iraq. The service's new doctrine on counterinsurgency focuses intently on communication, relationships and understanding other cultures, even to the point of downplaying traditional military intervention. The new doctrine calls for waging a political battle for 'hearts and minds' while exercising military restraint to avoid the result of driving civilians to the terrorists' cause. The document also notes the essential need for the organization to be flexible and adaptive and calls on its leaders to be well informed, culturally astute and agile.<sup>21</sup>

### **Strength in the US population**

The US is popularly known as the world's melting pot of ethnicities and cultures. For the purpose of strategic communication, the nation's population is seemingly an untapped capability despite the vast resource of cultural knowledge and language skills it offers.

The US Office of War Information successfully leveraged the US immigrant population during World War II to better understand the nation's enemies and to more effectively communicate with the populations in Japan and Germany. The US should now consider similar approaches to build its understanding of other populations and to improve its ability to communicate with them.

### **Operationalizing Information**

One can successfully argue public communication always has been a key element of military operations and that public information, like other military actions, always has had an effect on operational outcomes. The relationship between information and

operational success is strengthening in the post-Cold War era. Recent operations show a shift for the military's public information resources from outsiders merely providing information about operations to insiders who deliver truthful, timely and accurate information to help achieve desired results.

Clearly, more emphasis is now placed on the information's effects and the strategies to achieve them. This shift to effects-based planning for public information requires the modern military information professional to carefully consider the possible effects of singular and coordinated communication efforts and their ability to influence achievement of the commander's objectives and the overarching strategic goals. Additionally, while information resources like PA must recognize the inherent influential nature of information for those who receive their products, they must simultaneously guard a most precious commodity – the credibility earned as providers of truthful and accurate information to the media and public. Improper use of public information resources and capabilities to convey falsehoods may meet short-term needs but, in the long term, would degrade the capability for future operations and, therefore, is counter productive to achievement of strategic goals. While coordination between public information resources and others like military deception is vital in strategy development and planning, their separation in employment must be distinct.

Although some information resources, like PA and intelligence, photographers and audiovisual assets are more closely coordinated with other operational elements, many others – such as legislative liaison, military bands, historians and international affairs – are not. Development of strategic communication at the DoD level – the enterprise level – is focused on bringing together all information resources to coordinate their efforts for

communication via many channels to reach the intended audience.<sup>22</sup> The enterprise approach to strategic communication, with its collaboration of disparate information resources' efforts, presents a substantial opportunity for DoD to more effectively operate in the modern information environment.

The current efforts to link DoD's information resources and initiatives to support strategic goals also creates an opportunity to create a more complete operational picture and battlespace awareness for commanders and leaders in an effects-based operations environment. As shared awareness increases among DoD's information resources, greater collaboration can occur, in turn, benefiting future communication and other operational capabilities.

For instance, international affairs and intelligence resources may provide enhanced cultural insight, allowing a public communication effort to more effectively reach an intended audience. Greater collaboration and interaction is possible today via existing DoD classified and unclassified information systems. One key, however, is to collapse the barriers between planners and executors to ensure shared awareness in near real time to enable strategic actions.<sup>23</sup>

Coordinating and harmonizing DoD's public communication efforts to deliver truthful, timely, accurate and credible information in the public information environment also decreases the information noise caused by the department's own efforts.<sup>24</sup> Too many 'tribal' voices, often presenting opposing messages aimed at achieving individual organizational goals or strategies, further clutter an already saturated information environment. A coherent approach – not cue cards but coordinated efforts by people informed of the enterprise strategy – is a more effective means to communicate.

For example, each military service and the Office of the Secretary of Defense has its own Web site with its own focus, conducts its own public communication strategies and directs its own spokespeople. In addition, DoD agencies, military contractors and the US government as a whole communicate in a wide variety of venues every day. Oftentimes, an overload of competing information leaves audiences to sort and determine what the organization believes is most important. The point is clear: too much information, especially when it doesn't support or decisively communicate enterprise strategy, can easily drown out the important public communication efforts that do support national and DoD enterprise strategy. This should not, however, be interpreted as justification for reducing the flow of information between the government and its populace. In fact, the opposite is true: public discourse and government transparency are vital to the success of democracies. However, to be effective, information from the various governmental sources must be consistent, authentic, persistent and aligned with kinetic and non-kinetic actions.

One possible reason for the cacophony of discordant messages – in addition to the sheer volume of information – is the lack of clear, articulate strategy from the national leadership. Without this, the leaders of each department, agency and office are left to decide what is important. When left to such a decision, in most cases the answer is to use the organization's communication efforts to advance its own interests.<sup>25</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Institute. "2006 Global Attitudes Poll." Washington, DC: 13 June 2006. (Available online at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=252>) Accessed 14 November 2006.

<sup>2</sup> The BBC World Service Poll. "World View of US Role Goes From Bad to Worse." London: 2006. (Available online at: [http://www.globescan.com/news\\_archives/bbcusop/?email=hbeasey@nps.edu](http://www.globescan.com/news_archives/bbcusop/?email=hbeasey@nps.edu)) Accessed 9 April 2007.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap, Washington, DC. 25 September 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Rumsfeld, Donald. Remarks at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 27 March 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Joint Publication 3-13, "Joint Doctrine for Information Operations," 13 February 2006., I-2.

<sup>6</sup> Martz, Ron. "Media New Front in War on Terrorism." *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 23 August 2006. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Jordan, Mary. "Going Mobile: Text Messages Guide Filipino Protesters." *The Washington Post*, A01. 25 August 2006.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap, Washington, DC. 25 September 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Lessel Jr., Brig. General Erwin. Telephone interview with the author. Secretary of the Air Force Office of Strategic Communication. 27 October 2006.

<sup>10</sup> US Air Force Office of Strategic Communication. "Way Ahead" briefing. April 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Corman, Steven R., Hess, Aaron., Justus, Z.S. "*Credibility in the Global War on Terrorism: Strategic Principles and Research Agenda.*" Arizona State University. 9 June 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Robinson, Linda. "The Propaganda War." *US News & World Report*, 29 May 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Weimann, Gabriel. "How Modern Terrorism Uses the Internet." Available online at <http://www.asiantribune.com/index.php?q=node/4627>. Accessed 21 February 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Winik, Lyric W. "Cycle of Hate." *Parade*. 22 October 2006., 12

<sup>16</sup> Jenkins, B.M. "World Becomes the Hostage of Media-Savvy Terrorists: Commentary" *USA Today*, 22 August 2004. Available at <http://www.rand.org/>

<sup>17</sup> Winik, Lyric W. "Cycle of Hate." *Parade*. 22 October 2006., 12

<sup>18</sup> Boot, Max. 'War Made New: Technology, Warfare and the Course of History 1500-Today.' 'On Point with Tom Ashbrook'. Broadcast by NPR's WBUR 30 October 2006. (available online: [http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061030\\_b\\_main.asp](http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061030_b_main.asp)) Accessed 15 November 2006.

<sup>19</sup> Kaplan, David E. *US News & World Report*. "Wikis and Blogs, Oh My!" 30 October 2006. (Available online at <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/061030/30wikis.htm>). Accessed 9 April 2007.

## Notes

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24 “Counterinsurgency.” June 2006

<sup>22</sup> Julian, Lt. Colonel Gregory. Interview with author. Office of the Secretary of Defense, The Pentagon, 7 December 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Alberts, David. Interview with the author. Office of the Secretary of Defense Chief Information Officer. The Pentagon. 8 December 2006.

<sup>24</sup> Lessel Jr., Brig. General Erwin. Telephone interview with the author. Secretary of the Air Force Office of Strategic Communication. 27 October 2006.

<sup>25</sup> Bynum, Colonel Alan. Interview with the author. Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategic Command Liaison Office, The Pentagon. 7 December 2006.

## Chapter 3

### DoD Strategic Communication Capabilities

*“Information is the currency of democracy.”*

— Thomas Jefferson

DoD must make sweeping cultural changes, develop key career fields and take a long-term approach to results if it is to realize the potential of strategic communication. Strong examples exist of DoD’s information resources current capabilities. However, they must be fully understood, further developed and leveraged for operational engagement.

Strategic communication efforts may have many implications on domestic and international relations. For instance, the PA career field aspires to deliver five crucial, synergistic capabilities to commanders across the full spectrum of military operations: trusted counsel; public trust and support; morale and readiness of the force; global influence and deterrence; and strategic communication planning.<sup>1</sup>

The trusted counsel to leaders capability reflects public affairs operations’ ability to provide commanders and other leaders candid, timely and accurate counsel and guidance concerning the effects of the public information environment on the ability to meet mission objectives. This capability includes providing predictive awareness of the global public information environment through observation, analysis and interpretation of

domestic and international media reporting, public opinion trends, lessons learned from the past and preparing leaders to engage the public information environment. This counsel helps commanders make well-informed decisions regarding the public information environment's effect on missions and to forecast possible results.<sup>2</sup>

The public trust and support capability addresses public affairs operations' role in preparing the nation for conflict and war by building and sustaining public trust and understanding of military contributions to national security through open, honest dialogue.<sup>3</sup>

Military theorist Carl von Clausewitz believed public support so important that he included it in his famous trinity of warfare: the people, the army and the government.<sup>4</sup> History provides many examples of the effect of public opinion on military operations. Shifting public opinion shaped by overwhelmingly negative news reporting during the Vietnam War was a major factor in the erosion of public support for US involvement in that conflict. The decline of public support directly affected US political and military decisions and diplomatic efforts.

Similarly, Operation DESERT STORM and OIF, which featured operational footage and live updates from the theater of operations, show public information is a vital component of modern warfare – vital in articulating the nation's objectives, highlighting its overwhelming military capability, and telling the operational story. Effective public communication that educates and influences the public debate regarding military operations is requisite to sustaining the will of the people to remain engaged in specific offensive operations. The effectiveness of the public communication mission is

improved when the information is gained at the operational source and synchronized with other information operations.

The internal communication component of strategic communication also is vital to success. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are more effective when they know their roles in the mission and understand the policies, programs and operations that affect them and their families. These communication efforts also help to counter misinformation and propaganda directed at US and coalition forces and populations.<sup>5</sup> Effective internal information also raises awareness among individuals that their actions will help to determine if the operation is a success or failure. A vivid example of this point is the tremendous damage done to America's prestige, its global image and OIF efforts by the handful of soldiers who perpetrated abuses against Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib.<sup>6</sup>

Comprehensive planning is the cornerstone of all PA capabilities and tasks. Planning enables all other public affairs capabilities and is essential to achieve strategic communication effects. Within this planning cycle public affairs operators examine all aspects of the information environment to develop effects-based strategies aimed to achieve a predetermined strategic effect.

Any reception of information affects the receiver's view on a specific topic. Participants in a public tour of a military base leave with a distinct impression of that service, the visited installation and its people. Information consumed in war combines to affect the consumers' opinion about the conflict and the US role in it. Modern information transfer, characterized by split-second delivery of data and images, demands DoD's public information resources are cognizant of their potential to influence – intentionally or not. Processes and products must be considered for their possible effect

on the audiences that will consume them. Thorough research and planning is necessary to increase the possibility of accurately predicting effects in the information environment. It is reckless and irresponsible to ignore information's possible influential nature and the effects it may create in the modern information environment. At the same time, public information operators must realize operational actions will always have a larger effect than words. This is well understood by DoD's Joint Communication Office staff, which sees strategic communication as 80 percent actions and 20 percent messages or communication.<sup>7</sup>

Successful employment of each of these informational capabilities requires resources beyond a single career field. While DoD's concept of strategic communication includes public information resources of PA, public diplomacy and military IO as its core capabilities, it currently does not extend to other specialties like intelligence, international affairs or legislative affairs.<sup>8</sup>

DoD uses an organizational hierarchy, as shown in Figure 2, to establish strategic communication priorities and determine which resources and capabilities should be used to achieve the desired effects.



# Strategic Communication Approval Process



<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; background-color: #f4a460; padding: 5px;"> <span>Submit</span> <span>Staff</span> <span>Comment</span> <span>Review</span> <span>Recommend</span> <span>Approve</span> </div>					
DoD Organizations	SCIG Secretariat	SC Directors Group	SCIG EXCOM	SCIG	DEPSECDEF
	O-5/O-6 Permanent Representatives	☆☆☆☆ Strategic Communication Directors	☆☆☆☆ Principals	☆☆☆☆ Flag Principals of appropriate service reps	
CENTCOM EUCOM JFCOM NORTHCOM PACOM SOUTHCOM SOCOM STRATCOM TRANSCOM Army Navy Air Force Marine Corps Joint Staff OSD Others	ASD(PA) USD(P) USD(P&R) USD(AT&L) ASD(LA) USD(I) SOCOM J3 x 2 J4 J5 x 2 J6 J8 JS DOM	CENTCOM EUCOM JFCOM NORTHCOM PACOM SOUTHCOM SOCOM STRATCOM TRANSCOM Army Navy Air Force Marine Corps Joint Staff OSD	ASD(PA) ASD(LA) PDUSD(P) DJS JS DOC	Senior reps from OSD Joint Staff Services SOCOM JFCOM STRATCOM Other organizations as appropriate	
			<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0f0ff;"> <p><b>SCPGs</b> Composed of A/Os from SCIGs (tailored to individual topics)</p> </div>		

21

**Figure 2 – DoD’s Strategic Communication Hierarchy<sup>9</sup>**

The Joint Staff Strategic Communication Secretariat is a multi-disciplinary staff of 13 people with an additional 21 people associated as liaison officers to lend subject-matter expertise for specific projects. The secretariat is the day-to-day champion of the strategic communication process and public information’s use and consideration within the department.

The DoD Strategic Communication Directors Group is comprised of general officers who direct strategic communication in various DoD organizations. This group’s members represent each combatant command, military service, the Joint Staff, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Support to Public Diplomacy (DASD/SPD) and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Joint Communication (DASD/JC). The directors group meets weekly to review SCIG activities and make recommendations to

the SCIG EXCOM. The directors are representatives of their organization's senior leadership and are able to accept and act on tasks, recommend issues, topics or priorities for SCIG action.

The EXCOM reviews SCIG recommendations and provides oversight and guidance to the Strategic Communication Secretariat director. Members of the executive committee, in addition to the director of Strategic Communication for the Joint Staff, are the assistant secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, the assistant secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs, the principal deputy under secretary of Defense for Policy and the director of the Joint Staff.<sup>10</sup>

The DoD Strategic Communication Integration Group (SCIG) is the top-level committee comprised of senior representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, each of the military departments, US Special Operations Command, US Joint Forces Command and US Strategic Command. The SCIG is the last to review and approve the strategic communication proposals and products for decision by the Deputy Secretary of Defense. The SCIG also may develop its own priorities and ideas to be developed by the SCIG Secretariat.

Two other entities round out DoD's strategic communication infrastructure and play supporting roles. First, the Strategic Communication Planning Group (SGPG) made up of action officers who represent SCIGs created for specific issues or topics and the priorities approved by the Deputy Secretary of Defense. Second, the Strategic Communication Working Group (SCWG) serves as a working-level means for information sharing between various entities.

In addition, interagency consideration – if not coordination – is built into the construct with the SCIG possessing the authority to invite other departments or agencies to its meetings when useful.<sup>11</sup>

The hierarchical organizational structure of DoD's strategic communication organization – the Strategic Communication Secretariat as the foundation and executing mechanism, with input and collaboration with the Directors Group and the EXCOM, and ultimately, the SCIG – is designed to more fully deliver the strength of the department's informational capability through tighter synchronization of DoD information resources and their efforts.<sup>12</sup> The vision is for the structure and its processes to ultimately deliver more diverse options, strategic-level communication proposals and priorities to the Deputy Secretary of Defense by presenting a more diverse capability set to create desired effects.<sup>13</sup> Figure 3 shows the planning template used by DoD's strategic communication process to provide the Deputy Secretary of Defense with the pertinent information regarding a proposed strategic communication priority. As of April 2007, three priorities were approved through this process.<sup>14</sup>



# SC Plan Template Definitions



The Strategic Communication Plan Template (SCPT) provides a means to submit a staffed proposal for the DoD SCIG Executive Committee (EXCOM) to review and forward, as appropriate, to DEPSECDEF for approval. Once approved, it serves as a guide for development of a fully integrated SC Plan, including identification of roles and responsibilities for all relevant Department components. DoD organizations can submit SCPTs through their SC Directors to the SCIG Secretariat for consideration by the SCIG EXCOM.

**Narrative Description/Strategic Context**  
*Frames the issue in the broadest terms by describing the background and situation applicable to the issue and desired goal(s).*

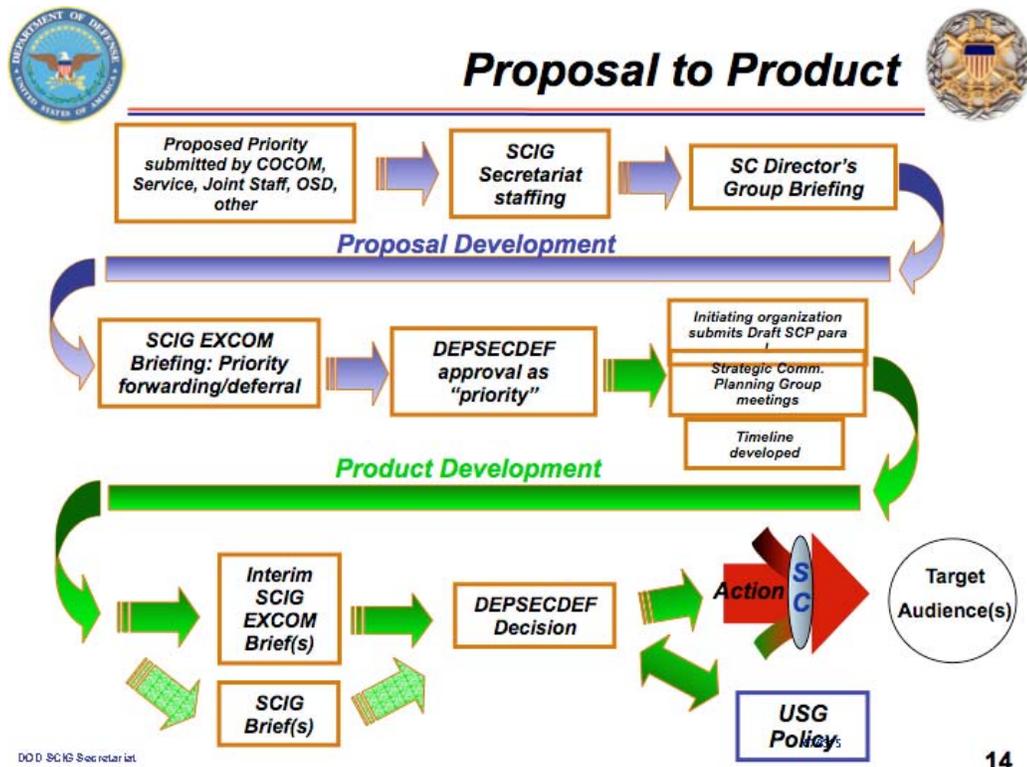
<p><b><u>Goal(s)</u></b> <i>What the strategic plan is attempting to achieve</i></p>	<p><b><u>Lines of Operations (Leads)</u></b> <i>Logical lines that connect actions related in time and function. In order to be actionable for SC purposes, these lines should correlate to an area of expertise and a lead. May be further broken down as appropriate.</i></p>
<p><b><u>Obstacles and Constraints</u></b> <i>Obstacle – Something you can improve on Constraint – Something you cannot change</i></p>	<p><b><u>Key Assumptions</u></b> <i>Factors that are thought to be true and form the basis for the plan</i></p>
<p><b><u>Primary Audiences</u></b> <i>Target groups/organizations that are the focus of actions and words designed to achieve the goal</i></p>	<p><b><u>Assessment Methodology</u></b> <i>Key measures of progress toward identified goal</i></p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Proceed as written   <input type="checkbox"/> Proceed IAW guidance   <input type="checkbox"/> Adjust</p>	

DoD SCIG Secretariat

15

Figure 3 - DoD Strategic Communication Planning Template<sup>15</sup>

Figure 4 depicts DoD’s strategic communication process flow with delivery of an approved priority to be supported by combatant commands, services or other DoD entities.



14

**Figure 4 - DoD Strategic Communication Process Flow<sup>16</sup>**

Below DoD's organization for strategic communication, there is debate among the military services regarding how best to provide the necessary teaming of information resources for strategic communication. The Army, Navy and Marine Corps are pursuing strategic communication as a process versus an organization and have charged their PA staffs with strategic communication planning and execution. The focus on process over organization requires senior leader emphasis to ensure the existing public affairs capability is resourced for its expanded role and that it is recognized by the other staff agencies as the authoritative public information expert to coordinate actions to achieve the organization's strategic aims. Without senior leader support and emphasis, the public information operations have little potential in charting new ground in communication strategies.

Alternatively, like DoD, the Air Force focused its efforts on the organizational approach to ensure a strategic communication process is firmly implanted in the service. The Air Force Office of Strategic Communication was created in 2005 under the secretary of the Air Force, and provided authorization for a two-star general to lead it. In fact, the DoD structure is largely based on the Air Force model that predates it by nearly a year.<sup>17</sup> The office is charged with helping to ensure collaboration between the various information resources and other capabilities, and championing the public information domain in senior leader meetings.

Regardless of leadership's approach to develop strategic communication processes and culture – organizational or process – the services have largely adopted DoD's hierarchical organizational system for vetting strategic communication priorities. Each military service has established a strategic communication integration group to identify issues, operations, policy and plans that may have implications on strategic communication and recommend courses of action to the service's chief.

Although DoD's current strategic communication organization structure allows for identification and development of ideas, and vetting of strategies, it lacks the means to quickly adjust the communication effort once it is assigned for execution by a functional area, military service or combatant command. The strategic communication structure remains the same regardless of peacetime or war operations. The only differentiation occurs in the case of a major crisis that would require the strategic communication community to reorient from long-term objectives to more near-term efforts.<sup>18</sup>

## **A Private Sector Approach**

Excellent examples of strategic communication success can be found in the private sector. For one, the diversified insurance and financial company USAA provides an enterprise approach for its information efforts.

USAA leadership believes effective communication is a key part of enterprise success and has built a culture of information engagement expectancy for its senior leaders. The company's cultural shift began with a mandate from its senior leadership – a mandate that included direction for active communication with its employees, current and prospective members, the financial community and civic groups.

Every informational effort is evaluated to ensure it supports at least one of the company's strategic goals. If none can be related to the effort, the project is not likely to get funding or other support for execution.

Similarly, all efforts by the company's entities communicate in support of the enterprise USAA success, not their individual bottom lines. In fact, department leaders are compensated based on enterprise success, not solely on the success of the area they lead. Enterprise success may at times come at the expense of one or more of the company's individual pieces.<sup>19</sup>

The company carefully evaluated its internal and external communication tools as it shifted to an enterprise approach. The communication evaluation revealed a blizzard of information for USAA employees, members and prospective clients. The company also found its various entities promoted their own interests above the USAA enterprise strategic goals leaving the information consumer to determine what was relevant and important.

One result of USAA's communication evaluation was a drastic reduction in the number of informational products and a complementary approach for those selected to continue. Now, USAA employees and customers receive information that highlights products while also emphasizing the company's cultural priorities to support its strategic goals. From the communication staff's perspective, the effort is to deliver clear, concise information to the right audience via the right channel at the right time.<sup>20</sup> For instance, the company's intranet provides personal and job-related information but also includes links to information that reinforces the values of the desired USAA culture.

In another example of diverse message channeling, the company's CEO holds town hall meetings several times each year to clearly and directly communicate the company's focus and priorities. Employees who are geographically separated from the presentation, or can't attend the live presentation, can watch it in employee lounges on the company's cable system. Future plans include streaming video of CEO and similar presentations to the employees' desktops.

To help build understanding of the company's primarily military membership base, the corporate headquarters features pictures, displays and graphics to help create and maintain a connection between the employees and the members who are primarily served over the telephone or the company's Web site.<sup>21</sup>

The streamlining actions helped the communication staff to improve corporate communication and improve the work environment for the company's employees. The efforts don't deliver deadpan, stale information to employees. The products are fresh and dynamic and, in the case of the intranet, allow tailoring so information pertinent to a particular USAA entity or region can be included.<sup>22</sup>

The company's communication plans link efforts to strategic goals and include reasonable measures for success, such as counting the number of accesses to information and stories on the company's intranet and Internet sites. Metrics for events are simple, too. For instance, the communication staff may rely only on a desired number of attendees to attend a scheduled special event or hear a presentation.<sup>23</sup>

Not all of these successes can be duplicated in DoD, however, without an enterprise effort to overcome the existing challenges. USAA enjoys technical reach to its locations and employees, allowing its intranet to be customized and focused while retaining the enterprise foundation of information. In contrast, DoD installations have their own intranet systems and information technology architectures, making a single, enterprise-wide theme more difficult to achieve. Also, the possibility of providing an enterprise-wide interface for DoD users is further reduced by the current placement of key topical functions like pay and finances, personnel or human resources issues and medical care on separate information technology architectures. Under the current architecture, when a user clicks a link to a key function, like a site for pay issues, he or she is taken to another Web server, leaving behind the first site and the information placed there. The transition between servers severs the tie to coherent, consistent presentation of enterprise information to the employee.

### **Possible Limiting Factors**

The absence of an enterprise approach is a significant limiting factor to DoD's success in strategic communication. At face value, the services' interdependency of roles and missions makes it easy for them to support DoD's strategic mission goals: victory is a shared claim. However, at a deeper level, the services are in constant competition with

each other for limited budgetary authority, recruits and development of roles, missions and their associated weapons systems. To this end, the services must out communicate one another – successfully telling their stories to Congress, the American people and their own forces.

This contest for support isn't detrimental to effective DoD enterprise communication until a service puts its own sustainment interests before that of another service or even DoD's goals. It's not uncommon for DoD to be at odds with a service regarding its organize, train and equip priorities. The USAA model recognizes that enterprise success may often come at the expense of one or more of the company's sub-entities. In DoD, the possibility of enterprise success at the expense of one or more of the services presents itself during each of its bi-annual Program Objective Memorandum (POM) budgeting processes. However, the POM approach is far from the collaborative approach between entities for enterprise gain seen at USAA since competition between the services is the rule until the DoD budgeters make the final call on funding decisions.

Another limiting factor for DoD strategic communication may be the differing approaches the services have taken regarding the mission area – organizational versus processes vested in their PA offices, as discussed earlier.

While the differences in services' approaches may not be significant for day-to-day, service-specific operations and communication efforts, they may be meaningful in a joint-service deployment environment. While deployed in joint operations, each service will contribute information resources to the joint forces commander. Operations centers currently include IO capability and have PA support, but no doctrine or precise

operational direction exists for strategic communication in the deployed joint environment.<sup>24</sup>

Insufficient institutional guidance, specifically DoD directives for strategic communication and military support to public diplomacy, is significant since, without it, DoD has no foundation on which to precisely replicate its strategic communication process outside of the Pentagon. The lack of these foundational documents leaves joint forces commanders to determine if and how to consider and employ their public information resources for strategic communication. Joint doctrine that establishes best practices guidance for strategic communication will help to ensure commanders and their staffs aren't faced with reinventing the processes and organizational concepts for strategic communication in the fast-paced and information-saturated operational environment. If left to determine organizational structures and processes for themselves, chances are high the commander's time will be given to other, seemingly more pressing issues, and the strategic communication effort will go unrealized.

### **Access**

Access to all aspects of the strategy development, planning and execution phases is imperative for information experts expected to deliver effects through strategic communication. To this end, DoD should direct the services to ensure the career fields in the strategic communication community take the appropriate steps to secure appropriate security clearances for their people. Without the appropriate security clearances, information experts will be kept out of the discussions and unable to fully deliver their expertise during operations' strategy development, planning and execution phases.

## **Training**

An additional possible limiting factor for strategic communication success may be found in the training investment made in DoD's information resources career fields. The training system is a critical step behind DoD's and the services' efforts to create a strategic communication focus. For example, each service's PA operators are trained at the joint Defense Information School (DINFOS). Although plans exist to add courses and specific training to the curriculum, to date, strategic communication is only a discussion point – no focused training is yet included to prepare the new PA operators to think and plan strategically about the information they provide.<sup>25</sup>

## **Cultural Awareness**

DoD also must develop its information resources with enhanced foreign culture awareness and language proficiency. Greater collaboration and information sharing between DoD's resources such as international affairs, intelligence and PA may pay significant dividends in overcoming the existing knowledge and skill shortfalls in some career fields. Similarly, on the interagency level, collaborative efforts with the Department of State should be developed to leverage that department's broad base of cultural insight for greater shared awareness across the US government.

## **Existing Legislation**

Existing US legislation may also be a limiting factor for strategic communication efforts in the modern global information environment. The Smith-Mundt Act of 1948, codified as the US Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (Public Law 402), funded US global propaganda outreach using modern communication technologies,

namely radio and television, while also prohibiting distribution of the information to the US domestic audience.

The Smith-Mundt Act remains in effect today, but information containment is much more difficult now than it was in 1948. Audiences could be more precisely targeted, even via broadcast technologies, in the early Cold War era. Now, however, the information environment is truly global in nature. Information disseminated in one part of the world can be available within seconds for consumption by audiences on another continent.

While DoD and the services consider strategic communication's public information resources to be centered more on stronger informational efforts and better consideration of information's effects than on delivery of propaganda to foreign audiences, the Smith-Mundt Act remains in effect and must be considered when information is entered into the public information environment.

### **Budget Authority**

Funding is another potential major limiting factor for strategic communication development. DoD's strategic communication effort in Fiscal Year 2007 was granted \$3 million by special appropriation and current programmed funding is sustained at \$3 million per year for Fiscal Years 2008-2013. The funds will be used primarily for contracted services to create a process management team that will help to implement the culture change deemed necessary to permanently place the strategic communication process throughout DoD.<sup>26</sup>

The Air Force enjoys a slightly larger funding stream for its Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008 strategic communication efforts. The service allocated \$5 million to its new

strategic communication directorate. However, funding for future years is uncertain without demonstrated successes.<sup>27</sup>

The department's colleagues in the Navy, Marine Corps and Army – have not yet dedicated funds specifically for strategic communication development. Instead, the services elected to have their PA operations lead the process development and bear any associated expenses.

A lack of funding – or of enterprise dedication to sustained funding – may indicate leaders hold a short-term view of strategic communication, one in which near-term successes are expected. However, to deliver success, the DoD information resources expected to deliver strategic communication must be adequately resourced to equip for research, planning, execution and assessment functions.

### **The Fog of National Strategies**

Lastly, and perhaps most significantly, DoD strategic communication may be limited in its success by insufficient clarity in the US government's strategic goals. It's difficult to effectively support the strategic goals of the overall enterprise – the US government – if they are not clearly articulated by the executive branch. With the absence of an interagency coordination tool for communication at the National Security Council (NSC) level, confusion can occur between governmental departments as they attempt to determine what the goals are and how to best support them. In this situation, public statements may conflict with the public communication from other government departments that interpreted the goal or strategic aim differently when viewed through their own departmental lenses.<sup>28</sup>

Strategic clarity may be further obscured by the guaranteed change of US presidential administrations every four or eight years. Each president makes adjustments to the nation's strategic aims and adjusts its priorities – changes that may make it difficult to sustain strategic communication targeted for effects beyond the horizon of time.

The effect of this confusion regarding national strategy can be manifested in contradictory messages from US government entities resulting in confused audiences. The contradiction in messages greatly reduces the strength of the communication effectiveness and adds to the blizzard of information the audiences face.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-61, “Joint Doctrine for Public Affairs,” 9 May 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Clausewitz, Carl von. “*On War*,” trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J.: 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Pew Research Institute. “2006 Global Attitudes Poll.” Washington, DC: 13 June 2006. (Available online at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=252>) Accessed 14 November 2006., 4

<sup>7</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Interview with the author. 27 March 2007.

<sup>8</sup> US Department of Defense. “DoD Strategic Communication Integration Group Charter.” 20 September 2006.

<sup>9</sup> US Department of Defense. Strategic Communication Concept of Operations Briefing. 15 March 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum. “Department of Defense Strategic Communication Integration Group.” 31 January 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Interview with the author. 7 December 2006.

<sup>13</sup> US Department of Defense. “DoD Strategic Communication Integration Group Charter.” Washington, DC. 20 September 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Telephone interview with the author. 27 March 2007.

<sup>15</sup> US Department of Defense. Strategic Communication Concept of Operations Briefing. 15 March 2007.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Interview with the author. 7 December 2006.

## Notes

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Kelly, Michael. USAA Corporate Communication presentation. San Antonio, Texas. 25 January 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Telephone interview with the author. 27 March 2007.

<sup>25</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Interview with the author. 7 December 2006.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Lessel, Brig. Gen. Ervin Jr. Telephone interview with the author. 27 October 2006.

<sup>28</sup> Bynum, Colonel Alan. Interview with the author. Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategic Command Liaison Office, The Pentagon. 7 December 2006.

## Chapter 4

### Command and Control of Information Resources

*“In traditional international conflicts, the side with the stronger military force tended to win. In today's information age, it is often the party with the stronger story that wins.”*

— Joseph S. Nye Jr.

Many could successfully argue that a command and control system for strategic communication is a misnomer – that strategic communication is not a capability to be commanded or controlled. The argument would follow that strategic communication is a cultural, enterprise-wide mindset with accompanying processes that put consideration of information and its effects in the decision-making, planning and execution processes for better, more effective communication of national priorities to varied audiences.

While this argument has validity, it lacks acknowledgement of the necessity for the people conducting the communication activities to be integrated with the operational command and control system, like other capabilities, in fourth generation warfare where information can be as much as weapon as bombs and bullets. Without a strong connection to the operational command and control structure – especially in the deployed environment -- information efforts will remain on the operational periphery. Integration of information considerations and awareness in the operational command and control structure will allow an information expert to be present in the important operational

cycles – from strategy development and planning to execution and assessment – and enable continuity in direction of strategic communication efforts.

The overarching need for a command and control structure for strategic communication is grounded in the coordination of DoD's information resources efforts. The desired communication effects and successes will be nearly impossible to achieve – and measure for effectiveness – without a mechanism to integrate, deconflict and coordinate the department's current and future information efforts. DoD and each service already has created a command and control system in the form of their SCIGs and upper-level executive boards or senior leadership oversight. There is a fine balance to be maintained, however: A top-heavy, cumbersome bureaucratic process makes for good flow charts but is not well suited for the fast-paced modern information environment. While the strategic goals and priorities delivered through the strategic communication process may serve as guideposts for the desired outcome, information tactics and communication strategies at the tactical and operational levels must be agile and creative.

In the deployed environment, the need for command and control integration is more pronounced. A possible solution is creation of an information proponent within the joint operations centers to provide the means to coordinate informational efforts and provide expertise in the planning and assessment cycles. It is imperative DoD provide guidance to combatant commands on how to integrate strategic communication in their command and control systems to ensure standardization between the commands. A lack of standardization could result in inconsistent execution in support of communication priorities and varying measures of effectiveness for the efforts.

From the interagency perspective, a coordinating body at the NSC level is advisable. Currently, the Department of State's undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs acts as the president's conduit for national communication efforts. Although the director of DoS's public diplomacy and public affairs chairs the Policy Coordinating Committee for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication, created April 8, 2006,<sup>1</sup> the person lacks tasking authority over other government departments or agencies, making it nearly impossible to authoritatively set course for a national strategic communication effort.<sup>2</sup> Further, the office's priority is the Department of State's public diplomacy mission, leaving little time available for coordination of other agencies' communication efforts.

Since strategic communication is about consistent application of US government policy to what its departments and agencies say and do, coordination of the efforts is imperative. Without this linkage between communication, actions and policy, a 'say – do gap' may be created, US efforts may be weakened, the desired effect may not be achieved and, as an ultimate result, the credibility of the DoD force and the nation can be degraded.<sup>3</sup>

Tight integration of information resources' actions in the operational command and control structure would deliver the added benefit of shared awareness and better collaboration between public communicators and other operators. This enhanced level of information, in turn, would help to build better battlespace awareness and a clearer operation environment picture for the commander.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> US Department of State. “National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication.” 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Pandith, Farah. Interview with the author. 8 December 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Julian, Lt Col Gregory. Interview with the author. 7 December 2006.

## Chapter 5

### External Influences

*“Americans today live in a media renaissance: Consumers have a breathtaking array of news and entertainment choices; individuals can turn themselves into news outlets on the Internet; cable and satellite television, along with satellite radio, supplement traditional broadcasting networks; and newspapers from around the world are available online.”*

— The Washington Post<sup>1</sup>

Strategic communication processes and organizations may be influenced by several factors beyond the control of DoD. These influences range from new media and their effects on the delivery of information in the public information environment, to international relations between the US and its allies or strategic partners. Some factors are clearly beyond the direct control of the US government, such as the free press and private-sector relationships with, and image projection to, foreign audiences.

#### **New media**

The growth of computer-generated information and content is largely responsible for a modern media category labeled as new media. The new media category describes digital information or content that only can be viewed or used with a computer of some form. Oftentimes, new media also bring the opportunity for a degree of interaction between the media and its consumer.

New media offer vast, new means to reach various audiences, from Web sites that offer images, video, text in the form of stories or online journals, known as blogs, audio and collaborative tools like wikis that allow the consumer to comment about the information or even help advance the story.

New media also present a challenge in reaching a broad cross-section of society. The personalized delivery nature of new media allows people to increasingly self-select their news sources while avoiding media outlets that may counter their opinions or ideologies.<sup>2</sup> When considered through the lens of strategic communication, the segmentation of societies by media delivery channels means some target audiences may be extremely difficult to reach. In many ways, success in reaching some target audiences will depend on the access granted to DoD messengers by the varied media outlets and, then, how the outlet frames the information.

New media offerings such as YouTube, a social networking Web site where users can post self-produced videos, are gaining popularity among US political candidates for their direct access to audiences.<sup>3</sup> Sites like YouTube allow the candidate to bypass the mass media's editorial process to directly convey a message to a mass audience.

While each of the military services has robust Web presences with multimedia features, the US Army has done the best job of embracing new media on its site ([www.army.com](http://www.army.com)) focused on external audiences. The service uses 'America's Army,' a free, interactive game available to be downloaded to a person's computer as a recruiting and public trust and support tool. The Web site also encourages interaction with visitors by offering comment links with most of the information presented. The comments form

an online discussion group with its comments appended to the original the information the Army offered.

Indeed, one of the aspects of many new media offerings is consumer collaboration. This technological phenomenon greatly expands the voice of a population, allowing anyone with basic computer equipment, or even simply a cellular telephone, to potentially reach a global audience with their views and opinions. The power of individuals to potentially reach multitudes in near real-time also brings tremendous capability to spread misinformation and falsely refute facts.

There is risk, however, in becoming overly enamored by the opportunities new media bring to communicators. For one, communicators must consider not only “How does it play in Peoria?” but also, “Can they receive it in Peoria?” While the answer to these questions may be positive for audiences in Peoria, Ill., some audiences may not have the necessary computer equipment or bandwidth access to take advantage of the new media offerings. Also, the nature of the GIE forces the follow-on questions of “How will it be perceived, not only in the target audience, but also by audiences around the world?”

A second risk in new media engagement is the cost required to build and maintain the technological infrastructure and expertise to support the organization as it grows its communication capability. Additionally, organizations must plan for frequent reinvestment to maintain or improve their systems and expertise as new media technologies are developed.

In the face of 30-percent reductions in its enlisted PA force, the Air Force elected in 2006 to end its no-cost contracts with commercial printing companies to produce its

bases' weekly newspaper production in favor of a Web-based approach. On the Web, the service decided, news and information will be more timely and dynamic and less manpower will be required to layout and design each week's edition. While employment of new media in this instance will reduce the Air Force's human resource cost for deliver of information, the move to online base and installation newspapers eliminates the opportunities to reach multiple readers through pass along between readers. Readers now must have intent to read – they and their families must seek out computers to access the online content since a copy won't be delivered to their homes or be available to be picked up in public places.

However, the problem in reaching this key, internal audience is likely deeper since Air Force surveys in 2004 overall showed base newspaper readership at 38 percent with only 7 percent of junior enlisted Airmen reading their base's newspaper.<sup>4</sup> Time will show if the Air Force's move to a solely electronic-based delivery medium puts the service's information where its audience wants to get its news and resolves the readership deficit.

### **International Relations: Alliances, Coalitions and Key Partners**

Alliances, coalition operations, military-to-military contact programs, humanitarian missions, academic exchanges and other relationship-building activities with key partner states are fundamentals of modern international relations. Their implications on DoD strategic communication efforts are important to consider.

First, partner nations in alliances, coalitions and strategic relationships can greatly aid DoD's efforts in strategic communication. Strategic goals for all partner nation-states may be more easily achieved through improved information sharing and more tightly

coordinated communication efforts. Statements by national leaders, policies and actions that support the US positions – or at least don't directly counter them – can be helpful reinforcements for DoD's efforts to reach international audiences.

Transnational relationships simultaneously can potentially create significant negative effects on DoD's strategic communication efforts. Although it is unreasonable to expect sovereign nations would ever agree on all issues of policy or strategic goals, it's not so unreasonable to believe they can cooperate on communication efforts for shared success.

An example of this cooperation occurred during the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) combat operation against Serbia in 1999 to stop the bloodshed in Kosovo. Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic's government was adept at spreading misinformation that gained momentum as media outlets reported it. The number of media queries for each of Milosevic's claims quickly overwhelmed the small PA staff at NATO's military headquarters. This resulted in Milosevic dominating the news cycle with his information because the NATO staff had no time to be on the informational offensive.<sup>5</sup>

The problem was exacerbated by leaders of NATO nations drowning each other out with statements – sometimes contradicting one another on alliance policy and the strategic aim of the operation – during interviews and press conferences in their own countries.

The NATO public information staff took a strategic approach to the problem by creating a daily public information schedule, or grid, to coordinate and deconflict press conferences, statements and interviews scheduled in the member nations. The result was a consistent NATO message provided on different mediums and in different countries

throughout the news day. The public information grid effort did not stop Milosovic's misinformation operations, but it did give the alliance a means to better communicate its messages while its public information staff continued to fight the misinformation.<sup>6</sup>

International coordination and complementary informational efforts in the Global War on Terror could be extremely beneficial to achieving success. Hard-hitting, consistent statements against terrorism, particularly by national leaders or opinion leaders in Muslim nations, could do much to reach the non-radicalized elements of Islamic populations. The statements would not necessarily need to be explicit in their support of the US and its partners in the war against terror, but rather could condemn terrorist action as counter to the beliefs of Muslims.<sup>7</sup>

Efforts should be made to create a trans-national communication strategy group comprised of willing nations. As a beginning, at the most basic level, the group could share information and coordinate communication efforts on issues of common concern.

### **The Private Sector**

The private sector also presents several influencing factors to be considered regarding DoD's efforts in strategic communication. America's private sector presence abroad may be the most visible image of America for many foreign audiences. The images portrayed abroad by American businesses, music, films and other entertainment can be valuable commodities as soft power<sup>8</sup> or, depending on the impression made, potentially degrading effects on DoD's strategic communication efforts. Initial, strong impressions are likely to become lasting beliefs – positive or negative.<sup>9</sup>

American business presence in other countries also offers the potential for cooperation between the businesses and DoD and other US government departments or

agencies. Cooperation could take the form of information sharing about cultural awareness and insights and effective communication methods to reach various audiences.

As the Defense Science Board's 2004 report on strategic communication notes, the commercial sector has tremendous capability and expertise in opinion and media surveys, information technologies and measurement of influence in communication.<sup>10</sup>

Although businesses may wish to protect their communication strategies in foreign markets due to competition, cooperation between DoD and the private sector in these ways is worthy of exploration.

The academic community, with its immense resources for research, education, cultural expertise and language skills, also is a valuable conduit through which strategic communication efforts can be strengthened.<sup>11</sup>

Building and maintaining relationships with international students studying in the US is a resource that should not be overlooked. Relationships begun in the US and continued after the student returned to his or her home country would create a useful, global network of people who have personal understanding of the US culture and may be willing to share that insight with their home populations. Additionally, many of the international students may rise to important positions in their home countries, making them influential opinion leaders in their populations. Research shows that people look to family members, personal friends or community leaders more than to the mass media to form their opinions.<sup>12</sup>

## **The Free Press**

The free press is one of democracy's most important strengths: It helps to provide a flow of information between government and its population while also creating a degree of transparency for government actions.

The mass communication media are the most common means to convey a message to a diverse audience. However, due to the editorial process, traditional media outlets employ to vet and refine the information gathered by their reporters before printing, posting or broadcasting the products, it's uncertain in what form the audience will receive the message. The military has no control over the media or the editorial process inherent in commercial news production, nor should it.

The editorial threshing machine, however, is a serious external factor for strategic communication efforts since the potential is very real for intended messages to be distorted or unrecognizable when a reporter's story is eventually distributed to the public.<sup>13</sup>

There is little to be done to mitigate the possibility of messages losing their intended focus during the editing process except to be aware of the possibility, invest time in building the knowledge and understanding of the reporters and retain focus on the strategic goal of the communication.

Use of varied communication channels to consistently convey the messages in support of the strategic goal is critical and underscores the value of strategies that coordinate actions and communication.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> The Washington Post, editorial, "Who can own Media?" 31 May 2003.

## Notes

<sup>2</sup> Baum, Matthew. *Soft News Goes to War: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy in the New Media Age.* Princeton University Press: 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Vargas, Jose A. "Newt Gingrich Tries to Translate His Remarks on YouTube." *The Washington Post*. 6 April 2007. C-01.

<sup>4</sup> US Air Force electronic message. Johnson, Colonel Michelle, to wing commanders. Subject: Base "Newspapers." 29 November 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Author participation in the public information operation at NATO.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Pandith, Farah. Interview with the author. 8 December 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Nye Jr., Joseph S. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics.* PublicAffairs. 2004.

<sup>9</sup> Bertlesen, Rasmus G. "The Statesman and the International System." Ph.D. diss., Churchill College, 2006. 77

<sup>10</sup> Defense Science Board Report on Strategic Communication. September 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Littlejohn, S. *Theories of Human Communication* (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1996

<sup>13</sup> Baum, Matthew. *Soft News Goes to War: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy in the New Media Age.* Princeton University Press: 2003.

## Chapter 6

# Operational Factors

*“In war it is difficult for normal efforts to achieve even moderate results.”*

— Carl von Clausewitz

Several operational factors must be considered as DoD builds its strategic communication processes and cultural focus. Among these important issues are the concept of operations for strategic communication, the level of interoperability between strategic communicators of different services or nations, and the measures of effectiveness used during the assessment phase.

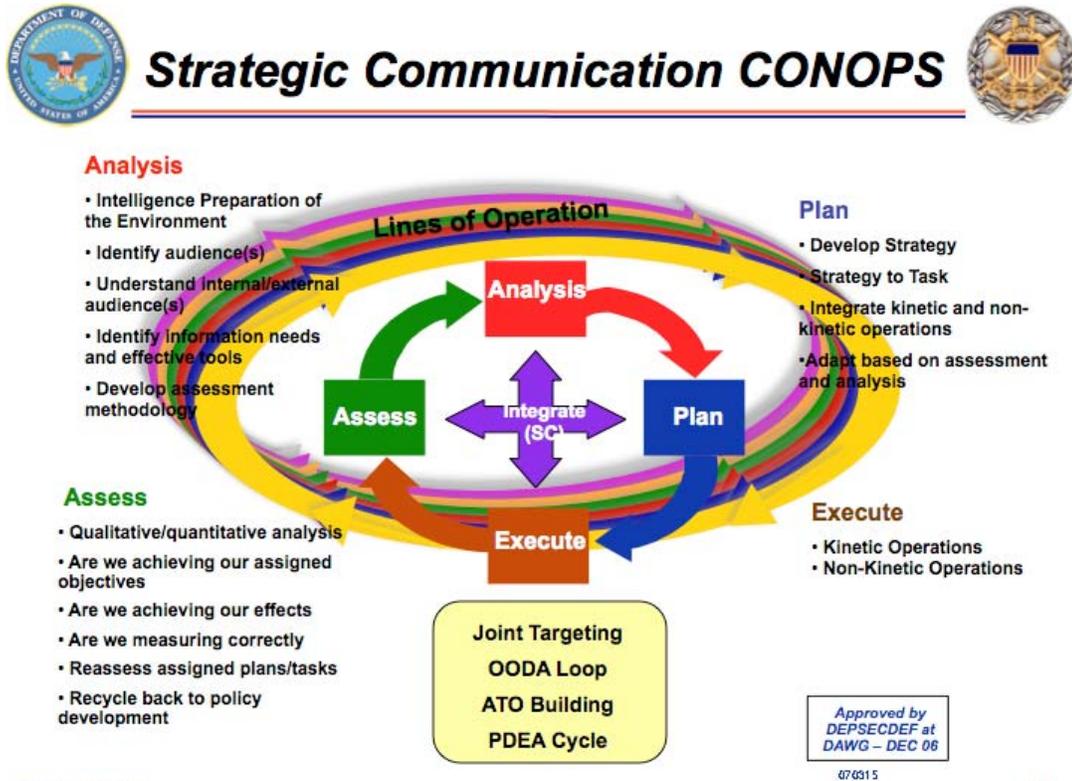
The people on the building crew for DoD strategic communication clearly are aware of the need to build processes that fit well in the military culture and its operations centers. Fortunately, a broadly accepted four-step process for public information and relations lends itself well to the operational world. In fact, the DoD-adopted research, plan, execute, assess communication model is nothing new to public relations; it is widely attributed to the Public Relations Society of America and used throughout the public communication industry. The model fits closely with the military’s observe, orient, decide, act (OODA Loop) model<sup>1</sup> and especially well with the Air Force’s find, fix, track, target, engage, assess (F<sup>2</sup>T<sup>2</sup>EA) model<sup>2</sup> for combat operations.

Although the research, plan, execute, assess model works for the strategic communication process, its origin in public relations is noteworthy. DoD must be careful

to not focus too narrowly on its PA (some would say public relations) operations to the exclusion of other, key information resources vital to effective strategic communication. The model may need to be adjusted in the future to ensure its applicability and usefulness to the wide variety of capabilities contributing to DoD's strategic communication efforts.

## Concept of Operations

The concept for the strategic communication process rests on the four-step, research, plan, execute, assess model.<sup>3</sup> Figure 5 depicts DoD's concept of operations for its strategic communication process.



DDI SCIG Secretariat

Figure 5 – DoD Strategic Communication Concept of Operations<sup>4</sup>

## **Research**

The research phase is focused on the commander's intent and desired effects, the elements that must always shape the four phases of the strategic communication process. During this initial phase of the process, DoD attempts to determine what action is necessary to achieve the desired effects, regardless of whether the action is kinetic or non-kinetic. In short, this phase helps to define the challenge through situation analysis and examination of the issue background – its cause and any precedents that may be useful guides or warnings.

Strategic communication's research phase is analogous to intelligence gathering. Although useful information can be collected and stored long before it's needed for current operations, the research effort is more concentrated when a situation or issue arises.

The research phase also builds DoD's understanding of the audiences: their environment, how they think, what they believe and how they receive information they trust and act upon.

Collaboration, enhanced sharing of information and resources are vital to success during the research phase since not all necessary resources will likely be present at any one location. Cultural insight, historical context, the information environment, media analysis, audience demographics and more are needed for comprehensive research and may only be available through dispersed resources within DoD. Other support may need to be drawn from the interagency matrix, strategic partners or allies.

## **Planning**

Insight regarding the target audience and operational construct meet in the planning phase of DoD's strategic communication process. Here, the department's communication efforts link with the desired effects for the operation as planners develop kinetic and non-kinetic courses of action to meet the commander's intent.

Strategic communication planning includes careful consideration of probable and possible outcomes and effects as the operation matures. In this phase, planners must determine the risks, benefits and consequences of each tactic and decide on the right communication course of action, then create a schedule of activity that includes the channels, media and methods that will achieve the desired effects. Success in this effort is uncertain given the complexity of the task; collaboration is imperative. Strategic communication planning also considers branches and sequels to capitalize on new opportunities while allowing for adjustments in execution shown necessary during the assessment phase.

DoD's concept of operations for strategic communication envisions the planning phase as flexible, allowing planning within the individual lines of operation (which are identified as operations, PA, IO, international affairs, political and diplomatic) and collaboratively between those lines of operation. Regardless of the method, DoD's keen focus for strategic communication planning is for integration and cooperation between the various lines of operations. The concept of operations places this work in the various SCIGs that, by design, should include all specialties for the particular operation or issue. The collaboration is expected to deliver more robust and comprehensive plans that address the gamut of possibilities for strategic communication and provide options to achieve the desired effects.

Communicators' effectiveness as providers of predictive battlespace awareness to commanders is largely dependent on accurate assessment of their products' effects. To accurately predict, one must know what happened in the past – knowledge that may be available through the assessment phase. Through close teaming of PA, intelligence functions and foreign-area experts it may be possible to create the necessary ability to more thoroughly analyze audiences and cultures. This insight and understanding would likely greatly strengthen the capability to predict effects in the public information environment.

### **Execute**

The execution phase puts the plan into effect through kinetic and non-kinetic operations conducted across lines of operation. Execution, like the planning phase, is designed to occur in an integrated way to achieve the desired effects.

Execution will not typically involve all lines of operations, or capabilities, in every effort. The lines of operation employed depend upon the desired effects. For instance, one part of the plan may call for kinetic operations while another calls for movement of forces in concert with mass media interaction, demarche or psychological operations.

From a public communication standpoint, the execution phase is where outreach occurs through carefully timed statements and messages to state the case and establish context. Relationships with opinion leaders and other important members of key audiences may be vital to delivery of the messages to the target audience.

DoD initially planned to use its traditional method of subject-specific annexes to integrate strategic communication into its plans. However, the focus now is to develop a strategic communication tasking memo instead to allow for a more flexible approach.

The tasking memo will direct the services, DoD agencies and combatant commands to take specific actions to help achieve the desired strategic communication effect.<sup>5</sup>

The Air Force successfully used the tasking order method in Europe by the Air Force during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and has a communication tasking order in development for the service's strategic communication efforts.<sup>6</sup> The other services also plan to take a similar approach to direct execution in support of strategic communication.

### **Assess**

Although assessment stands as its own phase in the strategic communication process, it crosscuts all phases in that critical evaluation during each phase is required to render the best products. However, assessment – or evaluation – begins in earnest when the execution phase begins. Assessment-phase findings allow strategic communication planners to consider adjustments in the process' research, planning and execution to help ensure the efforts are creating the intended effects.

DoD plans to employ audience polling, battle-damage assessments, media content analysis and various forms of intelligence to analyze the communication efforts.<sup>7</sup>

The effectiveness of information products is extremely difficult to measure without audience surveys or polls. Use of surveys during operations is frequently limited by short timelines or the inability to reach a specific audience or person, especially within the adversary population. For instance, who can determine what caused Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to pull back his forces from the Kuwait border in 1994? Was he affected by the United States' effort to publicly highlight aircraft deployments to the Persian Gulf in support of Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR, or was it another factor unknown to

anyone but him? Measurement of the effectiveness the communication component of the operation is nearly impossible without access to the decision maker, in this case Hussein.

Product effectiveness measures present one problem but another resides in the means to deliver information to the public information environment. For example, military PA operations rely largely on the commercial news media for distribution of products. The distribution system is robust, modern and usually rapid, but the military has no control over it and the editing process inherent in commercial news production. This lack of control, combined with the unknown regarding how a person will interpret the information, makes public information an imprecise – albeit vital – tool in an operational environment increasingly demanding of precision. Expectation management is important to ensure commanders and leaders understand the capabilities and limitations of information and prediction of its effects.

Assessment also is useful as a means to create a collection of best practices for use in future, similar operations or situations. Information sharing and collaboration tools are necessary to allow this collection of best practices to be used most effectively in the future. A network-centric approach for the information would allow contribution of best practices of strategic communication efforts by forces dispersed globally.

While each phase of the strategic communication process is unique, they are interdependent. For instance, the value of the planning phase depends on the quality of research planners can draw upon. Likewise, the execution phase will only be its most effective if it is conducted from a well-constructed, comprehensive, adaptable plan. Future success of each phase depends on effective assessment of current actions and their outcomes.

Efficiency and success in the strategic communication process may be largely dependent on the absence of barriers between the four phases. If the executors of the plan have the ability to collaborate with the planners, the plan is likely to be better targeted and more effective. Similarly, planners should be able to easily draw upon the results of past assessments. Again, a network-centric approach to linking people and information through the different phases of the strategic communication process is advisable to ensure a better, more rapid and complete effort.<sup>8</sup>

Figure 6 depicts actions by several DoD capabilities in support of an approved strategic communication priority. The figure shows the capabilities', or lines of operation, actions and resulting branches and sequels identified during the crosscutting assessment phase.

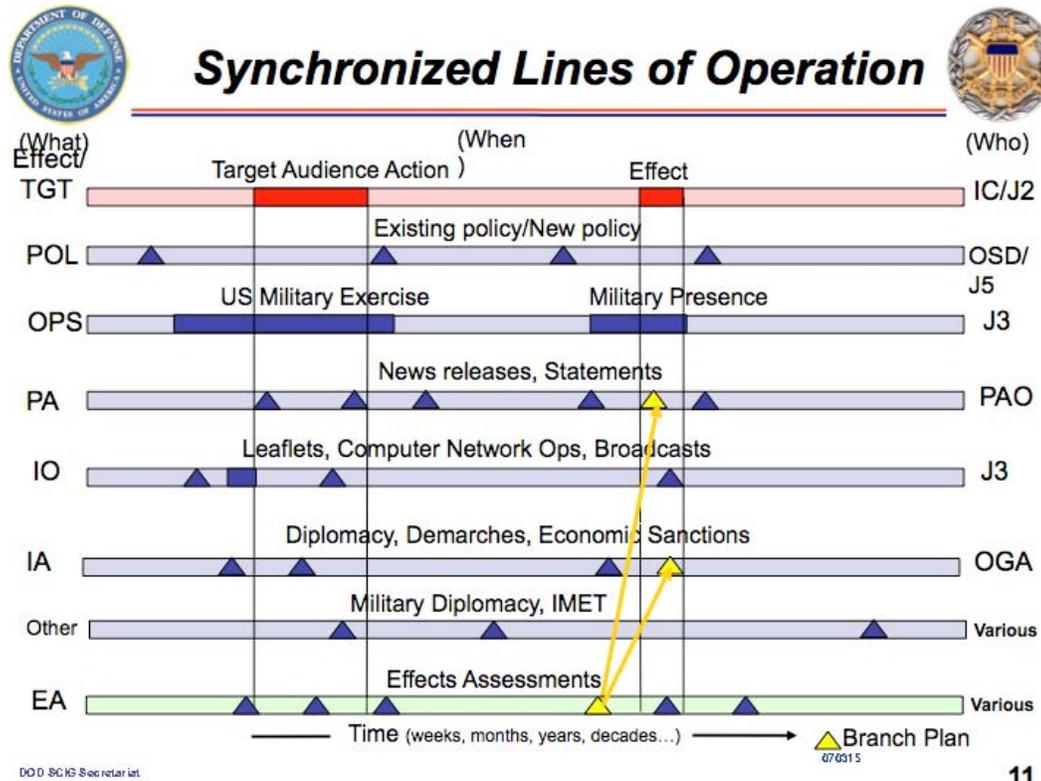


Figure 6 – DoD Strategic Communication Lines of Operations<sup>9</sup>

## **Interoperability**

Success of DoD's strategic communication process is largely dependent on how well its information resources can interoperate, especially when deployed in joint operations. Although each service is pursuing development of its own strategic communication capability, differences in approach may negatively affect DoD's ability to consistently apply its process in joint-service operations.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the services differ in their approaches to strategic communication regarding whether to treat it as an institutional process or to implement it with an organizational structure. Regardless of how each service approaches the question of how to deliver strategic communication capability, efforts must be made by DoD to ensure the services can easily interoperate and contribute to success in a joint-led strategic communication effort.

Each service has specific objectives for its information resources. Although they may be initially trained in a joint school, such as the Defense Information School for PA operators, the services' roles, missions and priorities affect employment of the various information capabilities. If the differences in approach are recognized and planned for, they can be beneficial to joint operations' communications operations. For instance, in the PA career field, perhaps the Army's experience with indigenous populations builds a useful communication skill set while the Air Force's operational and planning focuses give its PA operators another skill set. Creating planned interdependency and building deployed staffs accordingly will benefit operational efforts.

## **Standardization and Evaluation**

Planners and commanders must be able to rely on the consistency of information resources if they are to join traditional military weapons and tactics for use in operations. One way to ensure this consistency is through the practice of standardization and means of evaluation within career fields or specialties counted as information resources.

Clearly articulated DoD guidance regarding what capability or skill sets it expects from each service's information resources in joint operations would allow the services to ensure the capability can be consistently delivered to the joint community while also allowing resources to be focused for service-specific roles and missions when not deployed.

## **Joint Training and Exercises**

Exercises and other training opportunities are important ingredients for successful interoperability of information resources in joint operations. The exercises and training opportunities will allow DoD to help ensure interoperability and assess its processes for strategic communication before operational success is at risk.

Training opportunities for PA operators are planned in the near term to help tighten the strategic communication focus and build necessary skills for work on planning teams and providing counsel to commanders. The Defense Information School will teach a Senior PA Officer course in late April 2007. Plans also are in development for intermediate and expeditionary PA courses.<sup>10</sup> To be most effective, the other information resources that contribute to DoD's strategic communication processes should make similar adjustments to their training plans to increase their effectiveness in strategic communication efforts.

DoD currently values exercises and training opportunities for its operational capabilities and plans to integrate strategic communication into future ones. Much of the current delay is due to the need for strategic communication to be included in the exercises' operations and concept plans and DoD's efforts in strategic communication have not yet caught up with the exercise cycle. One of the shepherds of DoD's strategic communication roadmap said, "We have a long way to go to get to this point."<sup>11</sup>

### **Operating with Coalitions, Allies and Strategic Partners**

Unilateral US military action is unlikely in the current environment of coalitions, alliances and strategic partnerships. Although DoD's strategic communication process and associated culture change are in their infancy, it is important to begin the work now with other nations to build the capacity needed to achieve communication effects in future operations. Execution of communication tactics for strategic communication may be difficult in a combined operation, however, since a nation may quietly provide military support for an operation – such as providing over-flight permission for aircraft – while politically distancing itself from the same operation in public. Additionally, participating nations may provide military support to a coalition while unilaterally pursuing related economic or diplomatic efforts.

However, even though participation by allies and partners may not fully occur, raising their awareness of US strategic communication processes may reduce the risk of inadvertent information fratricide in combined operations. Their increased awareness of the process may also bring contributions of information and cultural awareness valuable to the research and planning phases.

One possible way to achieve this increased awareness is to build strategic communication processes into future multi-national exercises and training events. Larger acceptance and future contribution to strategic communication may result by allowing military planners and operators from other nations to participate in the research, planning, execution and assessment processes.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, Grant T. *The Mind of War: John Boyd and American Security*. Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press. 2001

<sup>2</sup> Tirpak, John A. "Find, Fix, Track, Target, Engage, Assess." *Air Force magazine*. Vol. 83 No. 7. July 2000. Available online at <http://www.afa.org/magazine/July2000/0700find.asp> Accessed 8 March 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Interview with the author. 7 December 2006.

<sup>4</sup> US Department of Defense. *Strategic Communication Concept of Operations Briefing*. 15 March 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Interview with the author. 27 March 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Watrous, Major Ronald. Interview with the author. 7 December 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Alberts, David S. Interview with the author. 8 December 2006.

<sup>9</sup> US Department of Defense. *Strategic Communication Concept of Operations Briefing*. 15 March 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Julian, Lt. Col. Gregory. Interview with the author. 7 December 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 7

### Key Considerations for the Future

*“The instruments of battle are valuable only if one knows how to use them.”*

-- Charles Ardant du Picq 1821 - 1870

The prospect of successful implementation of DoD’s strategic communication process, and its associated culture change, depends largely on careful consideration of several key factors. Although this paper has highlighted some of the external, operational and possible limiting factors in other sections, this section is designed to highlight areas in which further consideration is prudent – consideration not possible within the scope and time constraints of this project.

#### Unity of Effort and Purpose

It is critically important for DoD to establish means for the services to support the enterprise through their communication efforts. Each service clearly needs to have its own strategic communication capacity – or communication strategies – to strengthen its culture and to articulate its roles and missions to various audiences. However, the services’ communication efforts should not come at the expense of DoD’s success in supporting national strategies.

This issue may be beyond the reach of the strategic communication effort since it is deeply nested in DoD's programmatic funding system that pits the services against each other. Perhaps a change in approach can occur, however, through the culture change strategic communication's guides hope to deliver in the department.

Maximum effect in public communication operations only will occur when they are coordinated between the service components. Joint planning efforts for delivery of information can quickly devolve into a service competition for the largest budget allocation or most and best media coverage in an operation. This approach may increase Congressional and public awareness of the service's missions and assist the service in staking claim to future budget allocations, but it is shortsighted in the context of operational success at the DoD enterprise level.

Likewise, it is critically important that DoD and other US government departments and agencies reach agreement on what strategic communication is and how each can complement the other to enhance the strategic effects of communication efforts.

## **Public Communication and Information Operations**

A doctrinal disconnect currently exists between DoD's PA career field's central role in the strategic communication mission to influence audiences and joint doctrine for IO. Despite the operational employment of PA, the joint staff remains reluctant to recognize the public communication capability as an IO core capability. However, DoD simultaneously regards PA as a tool of influence in strategic communication.<sup>1,2</sup>

The joint doctrine for IO states the mission area's role is to coordinate and synchronize "the employment of the five core capabilities in support of the combatant commander's objectives or to prevent the adversary from achieving his desired

objectives. The core capabilities are Psychological Operations (PSYOP), Military Deception (MILDEC), Operations Security (OPSEC), Electronic Warfare (EW) and Computer Network Operations (CNO).<sup>3</sup> This focus for IO makes it synonymous with the DoD strategic communication process goal to coordinate and synchronize information and actions to appropriately influence audiences. However, joint doctrine for PA and IO name public affairs operations as a related capability to IO despite DoD's placement of PA in a central role in strategic communication's focus on influencing target audiences.

The rationale behind the joint staff's reluctance to closely associate PA and IO apparently stems from the fear that PA's association with core capabilities like PSYOP and MILDEC would taint its image as the credible provider of truth.<sup>4</sup>

An artificial line of distinction also exists between PA, Defense Support to Public Diplomacy and PSYOP regarding the audiences their products reach. DoD looks to PA to communicate with the US domestic audience while PSD and PSYOP are depended upon for international audiences.<sup>5</sup> As this paper has already shown, such containers simply do not exist in the modern information environment. Every information product has the potential for global consumption.

PA capabilities can be delivered to the warfighter while simultaneously protecting its credibility. This protection occurs by presenting the relationship honestly and highlighting the value of PA's association with, and knowledge of, other IO capabilities and activities. When PA operators are part of the IO function, they can vouch for the veracity of the information they release since they were a part of the collection and preparation process instead of merely receiving it for use.

The harmonization of public communication and other operational efforts brings tremendous capability to the warfighting commander – DoD’s efforts to create a strategic communication process serve as endorsement of this fact. Public communication efforts by PA are strengthened by a reputation as a credible, truthful interface between the public and the military. Involving PA in operations to intentionally mislead would have lasting, devastating effects on the military’s relationship with the media and publics.<sup>6</sup>

Influence that occurs due to exposure to truthful information, however, is unarguably at the heart of PA operations. A positive image or impression of DoD, its people and operations are the driving force behind PA activities. From civic group tours to media engagements, the effort is to create a positive impression of DoD through better understanding and knowledge by the public of military people, priorities and activities. Done well, this communication with intent effectively influences the participants toward support for DoD’s people, programs and operations.

The balance is fine, however. The temptation can be nearly overwhelming to use PA capability in a military deception campaign designed to mislead the adversary. Commanders are increasingly aware of the capability PA delivers – capability to foster public trust and support while sending clear insight to adversaries about the overwhelming force they would face by choosing combat with the US.

PA operations are continuously engaged across the entire spectrum of military operations, enhancing a commander’s ability to meet mission or campaign plan objectives and desired effects. The basic principles, capabilities and tasks of PA operations remain the same whether units are at home station or deployed – only the specific focus of PA operations change. With this versatile capability comes a significant

responsibility for appropriate use of public information. Strategic communication recognizes credibility hinges on two factors: eliminating the gap between actions and words, the ‘say – do gap.’<sup>7</sup>

Although this doctrinal disconnect likely will not be counterproductive to DoD operations, it is an area of necessary cleanup as the department’s operational use of information evolves.

## **External Coordination**

Coordination of efforts within the DoD is vital to effective strategic communication. Coordination and cooperation is equally important for success at the national and international levels. The lack of coordination can result in conflicting messages and efforts that serve to reduce the effectiveness of the communication and may cause unintended effects.

### **The Interagency**

Coordination of communication efforts by US government leadership, departments and agencies must be a top priority, according to the US National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication.<sup>8</sup>

The strategy charts a three-tiered organizational structure to help achieve the desired communication coordination. First is a ‘communications command central’ in the State Department’s new Rapid Response Center. The role of communications command central is to develop and deliver a coordinated US government message and seize opportunities to communicate it, especially in crises or in relation to issues with high media interest.<sup>9</sup> The strategy also calls on the NSC to organize an interagency

conference call “immediately upon major breaking news.” The NSC also is given the role of assigning responsibilities to departments and agencies for a coordinated communication response.<sup>10</sup> Lastly, the national strategy calls for ‘top priority message distribution,’ a label for the process of distributing the official messages from the Communications Command Central to US government senior leaders, such as ambassadors, cabinet members and the military chain of command for use in public communication efforts.<sup>11</sup>

However, despite this focus and stated intent in the national strategy, the US government continues to lack a consistent and meaningful process for interagency cooperation and coordination on communication efforts. Much of the blame for this deficiency rests on inadequate staffing and funding provided to the State Department and the lack of authority it is given to task across the interagency.<sup>12</sup>

Although the Communications Command Central approach may prove too centrally focused for the rapid communication tactics necessary in the modern public information environment, the plan for greater interagency coordination deserves more attention and effort if the US is to realize its aim of communicating strategically.

As Joseph Nye recognized in his opinion-editorial piece, “The ability to combine hard and soft power into a winning strategy is smart power.” Further, Nye notes, “The United States has a good narrative, but its failure to combine hard and soft power into a smart strategy means that, too often, it steps on its own story, and that can be fatal.”<sup>13</sup>

The US needs to leverage its power smartly. It likely can achieve this goal through greater cooperation and unity of purpose at the interagency level, but much effort remains to make this cooperative approach a reality.

## **The International Level**

Communication coordination between DoD and its counterparts in allied and partner nations also is strategically important.

National policies and military strategies shared between allies and partners can be greatly strengthened by an effort to communicate in a coordinated fashion. As DoD builds its strategic communication processes, it must consider the international aspect of communication and should work with US allies and partners with the aim of encouraging those countries to take a similar approach to communication. At best, the nations will enhance the effectiveness of the actions and policies through coordinated and more effective communication. At the least, the work may help to reduce the risk of conflicting messages between the involved nation states. Effort in this area of DoD's Strategic Communication Roadmap should be made a top priority.

## **Strategic Communication in Network-Centric Warfare**

Information systems architecture and networks to support a networked force are valuable byproducts of DoD's enthusiastic transformation efforts during the past decade. The networked force is seen as essential to successful effects-based operations in the Information Age because it allows a higher degree of shared awareness for planning, executing and assessing operations.<sup>14</sup>

Shared awareness through information sharing and collaboration is one of the tenets of network-centric warfare. DoD information resources counted as capabilities for strategic communication can benefit from a networked approach during strategic communication's research, plan, execute assess process while also providing information to benefit other capabilities and disciplines or operational areas.

Strategic communication clearly has a place in three of the four domains of conflict: the cognitive, information and social.<sup>15</sup> Steps should be taken now to ensure strategic communication processes link to already-established and developing network-centric warfare capabilities. Likewise, developers of DoD's networked force would be wise to consider how to integrate the information and insight gained from – and the effects that may be generated by – the strategic communication process to build greater shared awareness in joint operations centers.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Joint Publication 3-13, "Joint Doctrine for Information Operations," 13 February 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Joint Publication 3-61, "Joint Doctrine for Public Affairs," 9 May 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Publication 3-13, "Joint Doctrine for Information Operations," 13 February 2006., II-1

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., III-20.

<sup>5</sup> US Department of Defense. Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. 12 April 2001 (as amended through 1 March 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Joint Publication 3-61, "Joint Doctrine for Public Affairs," 9 May 2005., I-4.

<sup>7</sup> DoD Strategic Communication Concept of Operations presentation.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of State. "National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication." 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Pandith, Farah. Interview with the author. 8 December 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Nye Jr., Joseph S. "In Mideast, the goal is 'smart power.'" *The Boston Globe*, 19 August 2006.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Defense Office of Transformation. "The Implementation of Network-Centric Warfare." 5 January 2005., 4.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 20.

## Chapter 8

### Conclusions

*"To be persuasive, we must be believable. To be believable, we must be credible. To be credible, we must be truthful."*

— E.R. Murrow

The current efforts to build strategic communication processes and a supporting culture within DoD are admirable attempts to give the US an enhanced ability to deliver effects in the information domain. Expectations regarding the end result must be carefully managed, however.

Modern technology continues to improve to meet society's increasing demand for up-to-date information. The sharpening focus on information provides an increasing opportunity for DoD to successfully communicate with intent through a strategic communication process. However, top-heavy organizational structures built to control and perfect information are not compatible with the modern information environment, characterized in part by its rapid flow of information. Although centralized control and decentralized execution has great merit in most military operations, DoD must be careful to avoid killing its strategic communication process with the very bureaucracy it's building to create it.

Additionally, as commanders execute plans that include strategic use of information, they must be very careful to ensure the public information capabilities, such as those

employed by PA, are used in ways that protect their earned audience credibility. Public information resources' potentially broad, rapid reach provides unique capabilities to commanders but must not be misused to communicate misinformation. To do so would be devastating to these capabilities' greatest asset to the military – their credibility – and would have lasting, limiting effects on the commanders' ability to successfully employ public communication operations afterward.

Long-term funding, renewed training programs, equipment and systems to enable information resources to deliver their full capabilities to the strategic communication effort also must be at the forefront of DoD's efforts. Effects may not be immediately apparent from each action under the rubric of strategic communication. This must not dissuade commanders, DoD and national leaders from continued engagement in the information environment. To back away from communication with intent is to cede the opportunity to current and future adversaries.

Lastly, DoD's strategic communication effort must be accompanied by a cultural shift that places value on effects in the information domain, engagement in the public dialog and places enterprise – DoD – success above the triumphs of its parts – the individual services. This cultural shift must occur not only within DoD but also at the interagency level. As part of the US government, DoD is not operating in a closed system as it develops a strategic communication process. The department's process will improve its ability to communicate with intent and create desired effects in the information domain, but the US needs the strength of the interagency and thrust of presidential emphasis to leverage the full weight of coordinated instruments of national power.

## *Glossary*

DINFOS	Defense Information School
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
GIE	Global Information Environment
EXCOM	Strategic Communication Executive Committee
IO	Information Operations
NSC	National Security Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OIF	Operation IRAQI FREEDOM
PA	Public Affairs
PIE	Public Information Environment
POM	Program Objective Memorandum
PSD	Defense Support for Public Diplomacy
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
SCIG	Strategic Communication Integration Group
SCPG	Strategic Communication Project Group
SCWG	Strategic Communication Working Group
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (NATO)

## ***Bibliography***

- Alberts, David. Interview with the author. Office of the Secretary of Defense Chief Information Officer. The Pentagon. 8 December 2006.
- Baum, Matthew. *Soft News Goes to War: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy in the New Media Age*. Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Bertlesen, Rasmus G. "The Statesman and the International System." Ph.D. diss., Churchill College, 2006.
- Boot, Max. *War Made New: Technology, Warfare and the Course of History 1500-Today*. 'On Point with Tom Ashbrook'. Broadcast by NPR's WBUR 30 October 2006. (available online: [http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061030\\_b\\_main.asp](http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2006/10/20061030_b_main.asp))
- Buckley, Colonel John. Interview with the author. US Army Office of Public Affairs. 20 December 2006.
- Bynum, Colonel Alan. Interview with the author. Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategic Command Liaison Office, The Pentagon. 7 December 2006.
- Clausewitz, Carl von. "*On War*," trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1989.
- Clinton, William J., Presidential Decision Directive 68 – International Public Information. The White House, April 1999.
- Corman, S.R., Hess, A. & Justus, Z.S. "*Credibility in the Global War on Terrorism: Strategic Principles and Research Agenda*." Arizona State University, June 2006.
- Djerejian, E. "Changing Minds Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for US Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World." Report to the Committee on Appropriations, US House of Representatives. 1 October 2003.
- Ganley, Gladys D. "*The Exploding Political Power of Personal Media*." Alex Publishing Corporation, 1992.
- Goodall, B., Trethewey, A. & McDonald, K. *Strategic Ambiguity, Communication, and Public Diplomacy in an Uncertain World: Principles and Practices*. Arizona State University, June 2006.
- Goodall, Jr., H. L. "Why we must win the war on terror: communication, narrative, and the future of national security." *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12, 30-59.
- Goodall, Jr., H. L., and Goodall, S. "*Communication in Professional Contexts: Skills, Ethics, and Technologies*," 2nd. ed. Thompson Learning/Wadsworth, 2006.
- Grunig, James E. "After 50 Years: The Value and Values of Public Relations." Speech to The Institute for Public Relations, New York, NY. 9 November 2006.
- Hammond, Grant T. "*The Mind of War: John Boyd and American Security*." Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001.
- Jenkins, B.M. "World Becomes the Hostage of Media-Savvy Terrorists: Commentary" *USA Today*, 22 August 2004. Available at <http://www.rand.org/>

- Johnson, Colonel Michelle, to wing commanders. US Air Force electronic message. Subject: Base "Newspapers." 29 November 2006.
- Johnson, Colonel Michelle. Interview with the author. Secretary of the Air Force Office of Public Affairs, The Pentagon. 6 December 2006.
- Johnson, Scott. "How the US is Losing the PR War in Iraq." *Newsweek*, 15 January 2007.
- Jordan, Mary. "Going Mobile: Text Messages Guide Filipino Protesters." *The Washington Post*, page A01. 25 August 2006.
- Julian, Lt. Colonel Gregory. Interview with author. Office of the Secretary of Defense, The Pentagon, 7 December 2006.; Telephone interview with the author. 27 March 2007.
- Kaplan, David E. "Wikis and Blogs, Oh My!" *US News & World Report*. 30 October 2006. (Available online at <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/061030/30wikis.htm>). Accessed 9 April 2007.
- Kelly, Michael. USAA Corporate Communication presentation. San Antonio, Texas. 25 January 2007.
- Lapan, Colonel David. Interview with the author. US Marine Corps Office of Public Affairs, The Pentagon. 6 December 2006.
- Lessel Jr., Brig. General Erwin. Telephone interview with the author. Secretary of the Air Force Office of Strategic Communication. 27 October 2006.
- Littlejohn, S. "*Theories of Human Communication*" (5th ed.). Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1996.
- Martz, Ron. "Media New Front in War on Terrorism." *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 23 August 2006
- Nolta, Noel. Interview with author. Secretary of the Air Force Office of Strategic Communication, The Pentagon, 6 December 2006.
- Nye Jr., Joseph S. "*Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*." PublicAffairs: 2004.
- Nye Jr., Joseph S. "In Mideast, the goal is 'smart power.'" *The Boston Globe*, 19 August 2006.
- Osgood, Kenneth. "*Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*." University Press of Kansas. 2005.
- Packer, George. "Knowing The Enemy." *The New Yorker*, 18 December 2006.
- Pandith, Farah. Interview with the author. US National Security Council, Washington, DC. 8 December 2006.
- Pew Research Institute. "2006 Global Attitudes Poll." Washington, DC: 13 June 2006. (Available online at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=252>) Accessed 14 November 2006.
- Robinson, Linda. "The Propaganda War." *US News & World Report*, 29 May 2006.
- Rumsfeld, Donald. Remarks at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, March 27, 2006.
- Scales, Robert H. "Clausewitz and World War IV." *Armed Forces Journal*. July 2006. (Available online at <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/07/1866019/>)
- Talbot, Strobe. "Globalization and Diplomacy: A Practitioner's Perspective." *Foreign Policy*, No. 108 (Autumn, 1997)., 68-83.
- US Air Force Office of Strategic Communication. "Way Ahead" briefing. April 2007.

US Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24 "Counterinsurgency." June 2006

US Department of Defense. DOD Directive 5122.5: DOD Principles of Information. n.d.

US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 1-02. "Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms." 12 April 2001 (as amended through 1 March 2007).

US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-13, "Joint Doctrine for Information Operations," 13 February 2006.

US Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3-61, "Joint Doctrine for Public Affairs," 9 May 2005.

US Department of Defense, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication. Washington, DC. September 2004.

US Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report. Washington, DC. 6 February 2006.

US Department of Defense, 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap, Washington, DC. 25 September 2006.

US Department of State. "National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication." Washington, DC. 2006.

US Department of Defense Office of Transformation. "The Implementation of Network-Centric Warfare." 5 January 2005.

US Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum. "Department of Defense Strategic Communication Integration Group." Washington, D.C. 31 January 2007.

Ward, Brad M. "Strategic Influence Operations – The Information Connection." Army War College thesis, Army War College, 7 April 2003.

The BBC World Service Poll. "World View of US Role Goes From Bad to Worse." London: 2006. (Available online at: [http://www.globescan.com/news\\_archives/bbcusop/?email=hbeasey@nps.edu](http://www.globescan.com/news_archives/bbcusop/?email=hbeasey@nps.edu)) Accessed 9 April 2007.

The Washington Post, editorial, "Who can own Media?" May 31, 2003.

Tirpak, John A. "Find, Fix, Track, Target, Engage, Assess." *Air Force*. Vol. 83 No. 7. July 2000. Available online at <http://www.afa.org/magazine/July2000/0700find.asp> Accessed 8 March 2007.

Vargas, Jose A. "Newt Gingrich Tries to Translate His Remarks on YouTube." *The Washington Post*. 6 April 2007.

Warden, Col. John. "The Enemy as a System" *Airpower Journal*, Spring 1995.

Watrous, Major Ronald. Interview with the author. Secretary of the Air Force Office of Public Affairs, The Pentagon. 7 December 2006.

Winik, Lyric W. "Cycle of Hate." *Parade*. 22 October 2006.

Wray, Captain David. Interview with the author. US Navy Office of Information, The Pentagon. 7 December 2006.

Wriggle, Rebecca. Interview with the author. US Army Office of Public Affairs. 20 December 2006.