

2012



Theater Campaign Planning

Planners' Handbook

February 2012

Version 1.0

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Plans
Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy



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Chapter 1

Introduction and Overview

Introduction

This handbook is intended to provide combatant command planners with a conceptual approach to developing theater campaign plans (TCPs). It is based on insights from a variety of sources over the last several years. This booklet is designed to assist planners by presenting a broad approach to TCPs and country-level planning that considers ongoing security cooperation efforts, current operations, the Phase 0 component of contingency plans, and resourcing constraints as part of the combatant commander's implementation of his strategic approach to the area of responsibility. Doing so successfully requires some modification of traditional operational planning approaches and an appreciation that every Department of Defense (DoD) action, word, and image communicates the real or perceived intent of DoD and the United States Government (USG). This handbook focuses on those insights and modified intellectual approaches as complementary materials to fundamental planner references such as *Joint Publication 5-0*, *Joint Operation Planning and CJCSM 3122 Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES)*.

Background

Over the last several years, the Department of Defense (DOD) has gained five major insights from initial Combatant Command (CCMD) efforts to design theater campaign plans. Together these insights mature the joint planning community's understanding of theater campaign planning. They also point out the need to build toward greater commonality in the presentation of TCPs that serves combatant commanders' and broader DOD and USG needs.

The first of these insights is that TCPs may be most appropriately leveraged as the implementation of a CCMD's theater strategy. TCPs differ from more traditional operational campaign plans in that they are intended to organize and align operations, activities, events and investments in time, space and purpose to achieve *strategic* effect rather than operational effect. To meet that intent, TCP design and execution must be longer-term and resource-informed. Such plans should have a strong programmatic dimension, and they should articulate the CCMD's rationale for sufficient resources to achieve the TCP's strategic end states. Viewing the TCP as a commander's strategy implementation document may change the plan's operational design such that it does not fit within a traditional operational campaign plan model. TCPs have a vital role to play in driving CCMD activity in a coordinated, strategy-centric manner throughout an area of responsibility (AOR). TCPs establish a framework for CDRs to prioritize, organize and integrate all steady state activities within an AOR. It is the only plan to comprehensively do so, and forms the basis for CCMDs to achieve their long-term theater strategic end states and pursuit of long term USG interests such as preventing conflict, promoting good governance, building partner capacity, developing cooperative relationships with critical partners, and facilitating freedom of movement.

Unlike a traditional campaign plan, a TCP's main function is to provide guidance to coordinate Phase 0 and steady state activities across the AOR. CCMDs themselves control very few of the resources applied in the AOR and component commands and supporting agencies are responsible for the vast majority of on-the-ground activity. The TCP provides a framework for the CCMD to

guide such activity according to its objectives, and is a reference point for the Services and other agencies to justify resource allocation. It also provides guidance for more detailed planning conducted through contingency plans, country plans and other subordinate plans.

The dynamic relationship between resources and TCP design makes theater campaign planning particularly challenging. Because resources are likely to be limited, the campaign plan should highlight what can be accomplished within existing resources, and what will require additional resources over time. Hence, the dynamic tension between what the commander wants or needs to accomplish and the resources required over time leads to a process that resembles building a program, except with a discussion of the associated risk if required resources are not made available. This process is iterative and often cobbles together the various types of resources available into a coherent, actionable plan.

The complex and difficult task of building a campaign plan can be compounded by insufficient or circumscribed funding streams. If additional resources are required, DOD must make a compelling case to parties both inside and outside the Department. The strategic narrative – or concept – of the campaign plan should make a compelling case for an integrated and synchronized set of activities and investments to assist the Department’s senior leader’s advocacy for resources from key leaders outside the Department.

The TCP serves a key role as an articulation to senior OSD and other USG leaders about (1) what the CCMD and the Department are trying to achieve, (2) how the CCMD is trying to achieve its objectives, (3) what resources are required, (4) why the resources identified are critical, and (5) what risks are incurred if the activities necessary for successful execution of the campaign plan are not fully resourced. Clearly communicating the narrative that answers these questions enables better-informed decisions when the Department’s senior leaders must make resource tradeoffs between portfolios, or between commands. TCPs should be written with a broad audience in mind to ensure subordinate military organizations, DOD leadership and external stakeholders can understand the strategy implementation plan and resources required to implement it.

A second key insight is the interagency nature of theater campaign planning. Because they are about “strategy implementation,” TCPs support U.S. national security objectives and should be aligned with other USG efforts. This means they ought to be informed by other U.S. agencies’ strategic planning, in particular that of the State Department and USAID. Wherever practical, TCPs should complement and support State’s broader foreign policy objectives¹ and the plan should also not undermine the goals and activities of other USG agencies in a region or functional area of responsibility (see *3D planning Guide*). CCMDs should take full advantage of all resources to coordinate the TCP. Doing so early and often will save time and trouble later.

A third major insight is the relationship between TCPs and the need to conduct detailed country planning. TCP planning should incorporate country planning, and the CCMD’s country plans should align with the Ambassador’s goals because the TCP’s activities and investments typically occur at the country level. The Senior Defense Official (SDO), supported by the

¹ The command’s GEF-directed end states are designed to support the larger national security strategy, and have been developed in partnership with the Department of State to ensure they complement and support foreign policy objectives developed by State – and the USG’s broader national security strategy.

CCMD's security cooperation (SCO) office, helps align the CCMD's plan ambassador's goals.² Further, TCPs depend on country plans in order to aggregate AOR-wide resource requirements. As resources are invariably inadequate to address all of the individual country-level requirements, CCMDs set priorities to achieve GEF-directed end states in the most efficient and effective way possible. Effective allocation will likely require tradeoffs among country plans and the overarching TCP to ensure critical objectives can be achieved. While this process is undoubtedly time-consuming, TCPs will be well-designed if they are supported by realistic, high-quality country plans. Further, TCPs must provide the overarching planning foundation to ensure orchestrated development of country plans to achieve regional objectives.³

Fourth, TCPs are not simply theater security cooperation plans by another name. While TCPs will have a large security cooperation-related component, they should also address posture, ongoing combat operations where applicable, and the Phase 0 component of the combatant command's contingency planning—or generally “setting the theater.” The actions and objectives in each area will affect the others, and will need to be carefully balanced to ensure actions and objectives in one area do not accidentally undermine those of another. TCPs that do not integrate all of these areas, instead treating them as distinct and unconnected areas of planning risk that one area of endeavor will undermine another. Such an eventuality could have adverse consequences at both the operational and strategic levels of war.

The increasingly constrained fiscal environment leads to the fifth insight. DOD should expect Congress, OMB and others to ask increasingly harder questions regarding: where and for what purpose this money is being spent; the risk incurred in the absence or shortfall of funding; and whether the protected return on investment justifies the expenditure.

This will be particularly true for security-cooperation-related funding. DOD leaders need to answer these questions with a compelling rationale if they are to obtain scarce resources. This will take CCMD-level analysis and cooperation with other C/S/As to capture DOD-wide resourcing by country and region, and how that funding supports achievement of CCMD objectives. The foregoing puts a premium on efficiently using the resources available with maximum positive effect and it also means that clear-eyed assessments are critical in the planning and execution process.

These problems result from a lack of standardization, both in the methodology used to build plans and in the format used to convey information. Information that senior decision makers need to know is either difficult to find or is absent. Greater standardization in both areas is needed. The intent of this handbook is to leverage best practices to allow planners to learn from each other.

The following pages discuss these insights at greater length. Many of the recommendations in this handbook are a tailoring of traditional joint operation planning processes and formats to meet the particular needs of theater campaign planning. TCPs do not require a major overhaul of the joint operation planning process (JOPP) and resultant plan content, but they do require planners to

² The SDO/DATT is the Principal DOD official in a U.S. Embassy, as designated by the Secretary of Defense. The SDO/DATT is the Chief of Mission's principal military advisor on defense and national security issues, the senior diplomatically accredited DOD military officer assigned to a diplomatic mission, and the single point of contact for all DOD matters involving the Embassy or the DOD Components assigned to or working from an Embassy." The SDO/DATT supervises the Embassy's Security Cooperation Organization which has a significant country planning role.

³ At a minimum, CCMDs should develop Country Plans for Critical Partners. The development of additional Country Plans is at the discretion of the Commander.

adapt the JOPP and current campaign plan formats in ways that result in synchronization of investments, activities, events, and operations to implement a CCMD's strategic objectives.

Purposes of this Handbook

This handbook serves several purposes:

- Present a common intellectual approach to TCP and country planning, that provides CCMDs enough flexibility to meet their specific requirements.
- Improve the integration of posture, joint operations and steady-state security cooperation with the Phase 0 component of contingency planning—setting the theater.
- Explain where and how the Department's planning efforts align with the interagency, specifically but not limited to Department of State and USAID.
- Help CCMD planners build resource-informed TCPs that (1) identify a total resource demand signal to the Department and other government agencies, (2) link resource expenditures to CCMD objectives, and (3) explain the strategic or operational risks associated with resource shortfalls linked to theater end states.

Achieving these purposes will enable the Department to take a significant stride forward in designing and executing well-integrated, resource-informed TCPs and country plans.

Overview of Document

The remainder of the document is organized into seven chapters which address linking TCPs to resources; considerations during mission analysis; operational concept design; critical elements of information in TCPs; coordination with other USG agencies; and plan implementation, assessment and adaptation over time.

Chapter 2

Resources

Theater Campaign Plans provide an important link to the resources necessary to implement the Commander's strategy. Because CCMDs control only a very small portion of the DoD resources in any given AOR, CCDRs have to rely on other stakeholders to undertake the majority of activities that create the real world effects they are trying to achieve. TCPs provide the mechanism to underpin the interactions with other USG agencies in order to coordinate activities. TCPs also provide clear direction on the CCDRs strategy as a way to establish guidance and accountability with regard to activities conducted in the AOR.

DOD resources that support steady-state activities generally fall into the categories of forces, authorities, funding, and posture. For allocated rotational forces, planners should consult the Global Force Management Implementation Guidance (GFMIG) and the Global Force Management Allocation Plan (GFMAP) for the current fiscal year (FY) and FY+1, and the Forces For document for assigned forces.

Steady state authorities and funding are typically associated with DOD security cooperation programs. These programs enable CCMDs to conduct certain types of activities (from seminars to formal security assistance training), and to pay for certain expenses associated with executing these activities.⁴ Offices dispersed throughout OSD, Joint Staff, Defense Agencies, and the Services manage these programs, often with counterparts at the CCMD headquarters.⁵ Finally, planners should engage security cooperation program managers on the CCMD headquarters staff to develop an understanding of the authorities and funding available for security cooperation activities.⁶

If CCMDs determine that new or modified authorities are required, they can pursue changes through the DOD Legislative Program. DOD authorities beyond those codified in Title 10 are established each year by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The Office of Legislative Counsel (OLC) conducts the DOD Legislative Program process to determine DOD's request for authorities in the NDAA for the program year (FY+2). CCMDs working with OSD(P) Partnership Strategy, and Stability Operations office can submit legislative proposals for new authorities through this process.

Finally, DOD (re)allocates funding across existing programs of record (e.g., Service POMs) and establishes new programs of record through the Program and Budget Review. This annual process is managed by OSD (CAPE) and OSD (Comptroller) and provides a venue for CCMDs to seek additional funding in the program year (FY+2).

⁴ It should be noted that funding sources have certain intended purposes: i.e., most Title 10 funds are meant to benefit DOD, or Counter Narcotic and Counter Proliferation funds are meant to address objectives specific to the authority for those funding sources. In addition, funding cannot be directed to uses not covered by the authority but can be redirected within the scope of the authority.

⁵ Planners should consult the Security Cooperation Toolkit, an online resource maintained by OSD (P)/SOLIC/Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations, for more information (send an e-mail to SCToolsAdministrators@osd.mil to establish an account).

⁶ Some CCMDs maintain a publication that describes the authorities and funding available to that CCMD for the security cooperation planners, i.e. EUCOM publishes the "Handbook of TSC Resources".

Global defense posture—the forces, footprint, and agreements and treaties that support current operations, security cooperation and other steady-state activities—is managed by OSD (Policy). The process includes the development and submission of CCMD Theater Posture Plans (TPPs) as an integral part of the TCP. TPPs outline the current theater posture and proposed CCMD posture initiatives over the near, mid, and long-term. Planners should review their TPPs and consult with CCMD subject matter experts to inform their mission analysis (Chapter 3) and concept development (Chapter 4) for TCP and country plans. TCPs and TPPs should be nested documents, which detail how the CCMD intends to set the theater to promote peace and be prepared for military operations if required.

Significant resources that support TCP implementation are also found outside DOD. A large portion of these resources are provided by other USG agencies. For example, Department of State (DOS) security assistance programs, such as Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants, International Military Education and Training (IMET), and Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), directly support efforts to build the capacity of and strengthen relationships with Allies and partners. FMF and IMET requirements for FY+2 are developed each year through a process managed by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). Security Cooperation Offices and CCMD staff develop recommendations for FMF and IMET funding and submit these recommendations to OSD (including DSCA), and Joint Staff for coordination and eventual submission to DOS. Other countries and multilateral organizations may also contribute resources. In particular, countries and organizations recognized as global core partners and key supporting partners often conduct steady-state activities complementary to TCPs and country plans. Planners should consider how to leverage key partners' resources and activities. The *3D Planning Guide* and Promote Cooperation events are good sources and/or venues to leverage.

Another consideration for TCP and country planning is the dispersed resource management and steady-state activities at the CCMD. Multiple J-codes/Directorates are involved in developing and submitting CCMD inputs into DOD resource allocation processes. For example, the CCMD J3 directorate may be the lead for submitting rotational and emergent force requirements through the Global Force Management process. The CCMD J8 may be the lead for developing funding requirements in the Program and Budget Review. The J4 or J5 directorate may formulate CCMD posture requirements. Similarly, management of steady-state activities is usually spread across various directorates. With responsibilities and expertise distributed across the CCMD headquarters, integrating the staff becomes critical to holistic TCP and country planning, including gaining visibility on the resources available and opportunities to influence resource allocation need to support TCP implementation.

As the above paragraphs suggest, the development of theater campaign and country plans should be informed by an understanding of the resources that support the execution of steady-state activities. However, TCP and country planning should **not** be limited by resource availability. Rather, such planning should identify the resources required for plan implementation (whether at the theater or country level) with emphasis on prioritization of activities should resources be limited. TCP and country planning should inform senior leader discussions during TCP IPRs about what the CCMD can accomplish given available resources, and what additional resources are needed to make greater progress toward theater strategic end states. This planning should also support CCMD inputs into major DOD processes that allocate resources or influence resource allocation, such as Global Force Management, Program and Budget Review, the Comprehensive

Joint Assessment (and Chairman's Risk Assessment), CCMD Integrated Priority Lists, and the DOD Legislative Program.

Finally, it should enable the CCDR and CCMD staff to articulate the risk associated with TCP and country plan implementation and resource availability. As a strategy implementation document, it is important for all audiences to understand what kinds—and quantities—of resources need to be applied in time and space to achieve theater strategic end states. The long lead times inherent in USG funding cycles mean that TCPs must provide early demand signals if they are to influence budget decisions and help direct resources to the CCDR's priorities. CCMDs must focus on establishing clear signals for the type of activities required to achieve the CCDR's objectives, and by extension the resources to do this—at least two to three years ahead of implementation. Maintaining relative consistency in the content of TCPs over time is important to establish the credibility of the demand signals they provide.

Chapter 3

Mission Analysis

In the simplest terms, mission analysis helps the CCMD define and scope the problem set it must address during planning and execution. Thorough mission analysis provides the “big picture” and focuses the planning efforts thereafter. Successful mission analysis is crucial to developing well-formed objectives and establishing their causal relationship to particular theater strategic end states. During this stage, it is essential to eliminate confusion regarding the Department’s guidance and to clearly understand what is expected of the CCMD. Thorough, well-conducted mission analysis provides the planners answers to the following questions:

- What has the CCMD been tasked to accomplish?
- What specific results are desired?
- Where and when must the CCMD achieve these results?
- Why was the CCMD given this task?
- What limitations have been placed on the CCMD, and why have they been placed on it?

If mission analysis is done well, the CCMD will understand its mission and its contribution to the achievement of global and regional end states; the CCMD will have a good understanding of the strategic and regional factors affecting the plan; and the CCMD will possess the necessary insight to begin crafting a feasible concept for the TCP.

THEATER CAMPAIGN PLANNING

Analyze Higher Level Guidance

Higher level guidance for TCPs comes first from the Guidance for Employment of the Force (GEF) and the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP). The GEF translates global security objectives and priorities established in the NSS, NDS, QDR, and other national guidance into planning guidance for the CCMDs.⁷ DOD planning guidance for TCPs include, among other things, theater strategic end states; major assumptions; and country of emphasis designations for security cooperation focus areas. Additionally, the GEF provides instructions for preparing TCPs and contingency plans for review and assessment.

Theater strategic end states outlined in the GEF are broad in scope, focus 5 to 10 years into the future, and may require other agencies' involvement to be achieved. They also tend to be relatively stable, reflecting the enduring nature of US interests in various regions of the world. They are written to provide CCDRs with latitude in developing their theater strategy and TCP. It is the CCMD’s responsibility to develop a TCP centered around specific objectives that contribute to the achievement of GEF end states, and concretely explains the commander’s theory of change.

⁷The NSS provides the broadest guidance. It is developed by the President and the national security staff to address to Congress (and all US planners) the major national security concerns and interests of the United States and how to deal with them via all instruments of national power. The NDS describes how DOD will support the objectives outlined in the NSS. CCMDs should then use the NMS and Unified Command Plan in conjunction with the QDR to ensure any plans developed will conform not only to strategic end states (“ends”) but to the missions, responsibilities, and force structure (“ways and means”) that define many of the resources available to implement theater campaign plans.

The CJCS directs preparation of TCPs via the JSCP. The JSCP translates broad GEF guidance into specific strategic and operational planning directives to CCDRs. It links strategic guidance and the joint operation planning activities and products that implement the guidance. For TCPs, the JSCP provides direction for developing campaign plans and expands on global defense posture, force management, and security cooperation matters found in the GEF.

Analyzing higher level guidance should not be limited to DOD publications. Planners should also recognize the role played in the AOR by key interagency partners, especially the Department of State (DOS) and USAID. Planners should review applicable State Department regional goals, which are outlined in its Bureau Strategic Resource Plans (BSRPs). BSRPs cover geographic regions similar in scope to geographic CCMD AORs and outline DOS' key foreign policy goals and the resources necessary to achieve them. Planners will gain a more holistic perspective by reviewing several BSRPs, starting with the previous year and extending to the program year (FY+2). Planners can consult the 3D Planning Guide for more information about which DOS and country-level documents CCMD planners should review.

Reviewing documents like the BSRP enables the CCMD planner to gain a greater understanding of interagency partners' objectives. Such analysis identifies areas where DOD and other agencies' efforts are potentially complementary or incompatible with each other. Where DOD's and another agency's objectives are inconsistent, they will have to be reconciled through the plan review process. An awareness of other agencies' objectives and planned activities will lead to a more informed plan.

Identify Challenges to Theater Strategic End states

For a TCP, mission analysis should involve identifying and describing threats and opportunities associated with the theater strategic end states. Planners should identify political, military, economic, or other factors in the region that facilitate or hinder progress toward the achievement of theater strategic end states such as key audience perceptions and reactions. For example, CCMDs should determine whether current regional economic conditions threaten to undermine or foster the development of Ally/partner nation military capabilities. Planners should describe these challenges in terms of urgency, magnitude of danger/advantage, geographic proximity, and how they will influence progress toward achievement of theater strategic end states over the timeframe of the plan.

One useful construct for identifying challenges and opportunities is "PMESII-CTP" (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, Infrastructure, Culture, Technological, and Physical Environment). PMESII-CTP systematically considers a wide range of relevant factors in the AOR that could serve as restraints or constraints on the CCMD's efforts.⁸ CCMD planners should also consider how the national interests of countries both in and outside the AOR compete with or support US objectives in the AOR. Further, they should take into account challenges found outside the AOR that can affect the achievement of theater strategic end states, such as transnational threats (e.g., WMD proliferation, illicit trafficking, etc.)

⁸ *Restraints* are activities the CCMD must not do. *Constraints* are activities the CCMD must do.

Identify Key Planning Assumptions

CCMD planners will never have all the information they need for planning. To ensure that planning can continue under these circumstances, planners will need to fill in their "knowledge gaps" with explicit assumptions. Assumptions should be both *valid* (Is the assumption plausible?) and *necessary* (Is it impossible to continue planning without the assumption?). They can span a wide range of topics, including the political conditions in the region or in priority countries, the military capabilities of critical partners and/or actors of concern, and the timelines of events.

Identify Resources Available

As discussed in Chapter 1, TCPs are the CCMD's vehicle of implementing its strategy. They guide the planning and execution of CCMD steady-state activities, including ongoing operations, security cooperation, and Phase 0 activities such as deterrence, shaping, and other preventive activities.⁹ Before planning begins, planners should have an understanding of the resources available to the CCMD to support the implementation of the theater campaign plan. One of the main objectives of the theater campaign planning construct is to provide a framework for CCDRs to identify and articulate resource requirements to execute the steady-state activities needed to implement the CCDR's theater strategy. A thorough understanding of the types and quantities of resources available should inform, but not constrain, mission analysis and concept design. Planners should proceed with developing a theater campaign plan that seeks to achieve the theater strategic end states and identify any discrepancies between current or projected resource availability and what is needed to implement the theater campaign plan. CCMDs should then communicate the demand signal for additional resources, and the risks associated with resource shortfalls, through the appropriate venues. These include IPRs and Department and interagency resourcing processes, such as GFM, the DOD legislative program, Service POM development, and Department of State Foreign Military Financing.

Identify Intermediate Objectives/Focus Areas that Support GEF End states.

Conducting theater-wide operations without connecting them to strategic objectives leads to uncoordinated programming and ineffective campaigns. The process of translating theater strategic end states into intermediate military objectives and further decomposing those objectives into tasks is complex. Decision-makers and planners at all levels must understand this process to ensure successful integration of a wide range of activities, from large scale exercises to capacity building training initiatives, into TCPs.

The USG allocates resources to DOD to achieve strategic objectives. These objectives form the backdrop against which TCPs are planned and implemented. Defining clear objectives at each level is critical to translating national strategic objectives into effective TCP implementation. An iterative process of strategy formulation between levels can mitigate the risk of misunderstanding or confusion. This is important to ensure that all needs and concerns are communicated appropriately prior to final approval of guidance. An iterative process provides the Services, through the component commands, the ability to articulate their priorities and rationale

⁹ Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 11 August 2011.

for Service-centric activities within the AORs, and harmonize those activities with the CCDR's overall strategy implementation objectives.

As part of theater campaign plan development, the GEF tasks CCMD planners to identify intermediate military objectives (IMOs) that support the achievement of GEF theater strategic end states. The intent of this tasking is for CCMD planners to distill the end states into concrete and achievable goals that enable the CCMD to make demonstrable progress toward achieving a GEF-directed end state, or to maintain the state of affairs described in a GEF end state. The tasking to develop IMOs is *not* intended to direct a particular strategic approach toward achieving GEF end states. That said, the paragraphs below describe what is intended by requiring CCMDs to develop "intermediate military objectives."

The GEF refers to them as "*intermediate*" military objectives because their achievement constitutes a positive and substantial step toward achieving an end state. Their achievement is thus intermediate between the completion of the plan and the achievement of the relevant end state. Achieving an end state may only require a single IMO, but it is much more likely that the command will need to achieve multiple objectives phased over time to achieve an end state.

They are referred to as "military" objectives because they represent the military's unique contribution to the achievement of an end state. Many GEF end states are not purely "military," in nature. In such cases, robust interagency involvement and support may be critical to making progress toward or maintaining the conditions outlined by GEF end states. However, as the term "military" suggests, CCMD planners should focus on and document what needs to be done by DOD organizations. This does not mean that such efforts must rely exclusively on DOD resources. It is entirely possible to have a "military objective" that depends heavily (or totally) on State Department – or other government agency – resources. It is also possible for DOD efforts to complement those of other government agencies that are working toward the same goal. Conversely it is also possible that conducting military activities toward and IMO when other agencies are not doing their part may have a potentially counter-productive effect. That is, in some cases the best course of action is to do nothing. Planners are thus encouraged to think about the broader interagency context in which DOD operates. It is important to remember, however, that the theater campaign plan is ultimately a "military" plan.

IMOs should consider other areas of besides building partner capacity or conducting security force assistance. In particular, objectives related to gaining access and/or maintaining relationships should also be considered and pursued where applicable. Objectives related to the Phase 0 components of contingency plans and ongoing operations should also be considered.

To ensure the CCMD can measure its progress, IMOs need to be specific and achievable. IMOs, therefore, should have a higher level of fidelity than the GEF end state they support. One should be able to read an IMO and understand what exactly needs to be achieved and when it should be achieved. Properly formulated IMOs are also critical because they provide the foundation for meaningful assessments of progress (see next section and Chapter 7). The acronym, "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound), outlines a useful construct that can help planners develop well-written IMOs.

First, well-written objectives need to be *specific*. An objective is specific if it is well-defined, unambiguous, and describes exactly what is expected. To be *specific*, an objective should:

- Avoid restating GEF theater strategic end states or developing generic goals without specific milestones or accomplishments. For example, the objective to “build partnerships to enhance regional stability and prevent local crises from expanding into regional conflicts” is not specific enough. To be specific it should focus on the resolution of a specific source of tension.
- Be discrete. Folding multiple outcomes or capabilities into a single objective makes it difficult to assess. Objectives with long lists of things to be accomplished should be divided into multiple objectives.
- Precisely identify the elements of an activity or capability that must be improved upon. Objectives like “increase IMET by 25%” should clarify what the “increase” applies to – the number of courses, the participants, funding, etc.

Second, an IMO should be ***measurable***. An objective is measurable when success is defined with specific targets or bounds, and a reliable and *affordable* system is in place to assess the degree to which the objective has been achieved. To be ***measurable***, an objective should:

- Define success. Verbs like “increase” or “improve” should be accompanied by targets or bounds to define degrees of success. Likewise, objectives tied to building partner capacity should be articulated in terms of specific operational capability to be achieved rather than being loosely – and vaguely – described by adjectives like “effective” or “capable.”
- Specify or imply a means of measurement. While the details of data collection need not be addressed, success should be defined in measurable terms given available (and affordable and feasible) assessment tools.

Third, an IMO should be ***achievable***. To be ***achievable***, an objective should:

- Set reasonable targets or bounds. Measurability should not come at the expense of achievability.
- Not depend on unlikely or unpredictable events.

Fourth, an IMO should be ***relevant and results-oriented***. An objective is relevant and results-oriented if the achievement of the objective contributes to reaching theater strategic end states and it is expressed in terms of what should be *accomplished* as opposed to what should be *applied* (inputs). To be ***relevant***, an objective should:

- Focus on outcomes that advance the CCMD’s end states.

To be ***results-oriented***, an objective should:

- Be framed in terms of what is being achieved beginning with ***outcome-oriented*** verbs/phrases.

When a CCMD objective makes a DOD component the agent of action, the objective will invariably focus on what DOD is doing rather than what needs to be accomplished. This may be appropriate only in rare cases, but be aware that the result will be an “input-oriented” objective.

Another pitfall is constructing objectives that are *process-oriented* versus *outcome-oriented*.

Process-oriented objectives focus on the activities that need to be conducted to achieve outcomes. They describe participants, interactions, and activities. In the country planning context, process objectives typically focus on what DOD should accomplish. The objective, “The GCC should increase the number of SME Exchanges in the region by 15% from the 2011 level by 2014,” is process-oriented. Process objectives are typically specific and measurable but their accomplishment reveals little about what DOD is actually achieving.

Outcome-oriented objectives express the intended results or accomplishments of programs or activities. They focus on changes in a system, environment, or behaviors. In the regional planning context, outcome objectives typically focus on what should happen in the region or what regional partners should accomplish. An example of an outcome-oriented objective is: “By 2014 the region should double the rate of successfully interdicted illegal border crossing attempts from the baseline rate in 2011.”

Finally, objectives should be ***time-bound***. An objective is time-bound if its accomplishment is required within a reasonable time frame (e.g., “by the end of 2013”). To be ***time-bound***, an objective should:

- Require completion of a clear task by a specific time within the plan’s planning horizon and before the accomplishment of the broader GEF-end state.
- Because the CCMD may need to achieve multiple IMOs simultaneously or sequentially before an end state is realized, some will likely be short-term in nature (completed in 2 years or less) while others will be focused on the mid-term (completed 2-4 years out) or longer-term (completed 4-6 years out).

Incorporating the dimension of time will help a CCMD project resource requirements attendant to an IMO and the time period in which they are needed. By projecting compelling resource requirements well beyond the year of execution, CCMDs will have a better chance of positively “shaping” the Department’s and Military Department’s support for resources.

Assess Theater Strategic End states and Intermediate Objectives

At this stage, planners conduct two assessments. One assessment determines what constitutes success—or “sufficiency”—in achieving an end state. The second determines where the CCMD stands initially with respect to achieving the end state—the “baseline.” These two pieces of analysis are initial planning assessments, as opposed to implementation assessments, which are addressed in Chapter 7.

The sufficiency assessment revolves around achieving an end state. In this analysis, the planners must “unpack” an end state and deconstruct it into a complementary set of supporting objectives (IMOs). The cumulative effect of achieving these IMOs should be substantial progress toward achievement of the end state. To derive these objectives the planners must determine what constitutes “good enough” in achieving an end state. This, in turn, requires the planners to understand the requirements, characteristics, conditions or attributes essential in realizing this end state. Developing a clear picture of the end state is critical to developing the path—or activities that will support it.

With clarity on what constitutes successful achievement of the end state, the CCMD is ready to develop a baseline from which progress can be measured. The baseline involves developing a thorough understanding of the *current* situation or “where one is right now with respect to achieving the end state.” With a goal or end state as the future target, a CCMD must know where it stands in relation to achieving that target.

The baseline assessment has broad implications for the TCP. First, this assessment provides the CCMD with an understanding of its operating environment. Second, it plays an important role in post-implementation assessments (see Chapter 7). From this baseline the CCMD establishes a basis of comparison for charting progress that stems from the activities, events, operations and investments it conducts.

CCMDs conduct assessments for each IMO they establish. A well-written IMO will clearly delineate what constitutes success. Once the goal is determined, the planners should then establish the baseline – where it stands with respect to achieving an objective. Objectives could focus on capability building, access/freedom of action, or relationship building.¹⁰ Again, understanding the gap between the baseline and the desired state of the IMOs allows the planners to develop a meaningful course forward. This approach enables the command to develop a compelling narrative on the plan’s progress and assists in developing a clear picture on where to efficiently apply and prioritize limited resources.

Country Planning

Mission Analysis

Mission analysis for country plans involves many of the same steps for TCPs. However, applying the approach outlined above to country planning entails modifying some of the steps and going through some additional steps. These steps are described in the paragraphs below.

Analyze Higher Guidance

For country level planning, higher level guidance will come from the GEF (theater end states, critical partners, security cooperation focus areas), JSCP, CCMD theater campaign plan, and, where applicable, Contingency Plans (Phase 0). In addition to the GEF, planners should look at the DOS Mission Strategic Resource Plan (MSRP) and the USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). The MSRP provides the Ambassador’s goals, the relationships between Mission goals and broader USG regional goals, as well as a discussion of the current operating environment, and informs the DOS budget submission (FY+2). The planners will gain a perspective by reviewing a series of MSRPs - i.e., the previous year or what was executed (FY-1); the year of execution (FY); the budget year (FY+1); and the program year (FY+2).

The CDCS is USAID’s primary country level multi-year strategic plan. The planning model was implemented on a pilot basis in 2010, and is being expanded to include additional countries

¹⁰ Because objectives ultimately flow from the broad, strategic goals of DOD security cooperation activities, “types” of country objectives should be categorized at the top-level according to which strategic goal their accomplishment will contribute towards achieving, i.e.: Building defense relationships that promote specific U.S. security interests (“Relationships”); Developing allied and partner military capabilities for self-defense and coalition operations, including allied transformation (“Combined and Partner Capability”); Providing U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access and en route infrastructure (“Operational Access and Global Freedom of Action”).

by FY 2013. The CDCS describes the basic development challenges and outlines the strategic rationale for how the challenges and opportunities will be addressed. The CDCS also lays out a long term development vision for the country.¹¹ Planners should closely examine the CCMD TCP, and the Phase 0 objectives and tasks contained in relevant contingency plans. These objectives may contain important implications and requirements for steady-state activities.

Assess the Security Environment of the Partner Country

Planners should examine various aspects of the security environment as it pertains to the country for which they are developing a plan. They should study relevant geopolitical trends or conditions that influence key audiences in the partner nation. They should also assess significant internal and external threats to the partner and neighboring countries in the region. Another important consideration is the breadth and complexity of operational demands that these threats impose on partner nation national security capabilities. Planners should identify key security-related opportunities for cooperation, such as the partner nation's role in regional organizations. They should assess the capabilities and resources of the partner nation, including its force structure, defense budget, and expenditures on weapons system purchases from the international market. Finally, planners should consider the goals and activities of other USG agencies and other countries and DOD's role with respect to their efforts.

Define the Desired Security Role(s) the USG Would Like the Partner Country to Play

Planners need to determine what the US wants and does NOT want the country to do. Examples of potential roles that countries can play (or be enabled to play) in supporting US strategy includes:

- A supporting partner in regional security framework(s)
- A potential partner in coalition/bilateral operations
- A stable and secure country that denies sanctuary to terrorists, insurgents, criminals, or other hostile transnational elements
- A partner in providing/protecting access to the global "commons"
- A leadership role on regional security issues
- A partner in developing technology
- A partner in providing intelligence and information sharing
- And a role in deterring a potential state aggressor



Figure 1

Planners should determine and prioritize which of these (or other) roles a country needs to play to support CCMD TCP objectives. Planners should identify the risks to the CCMD TCP and US

¹¹ *3D Planning Guide*, Pre-Decisional Working Draft, 15 September 2011, pp. 18-20.

strategy if the partner does not play the desired role(s). Their analysis should also address the regional implications of US efforts to enable the country to play the desired role(s).

Determine Required Condition of Partner Country to Perform Desired Role(s)

Planners need to assess the partner nation's political will and capability required to perform the desired role(s) identified. What is the necessary degree of consensus among the political leadership and, more broadly, among civil society for the country to contribute forces to coalition operations or to conduct operations to deter potential aggressors in the region? What operational capability and capacity does the partner country require for it to perform these and/or other desired roles? Finally, what institutional capacity is needed to sustain the required operational capability and capacity? Specific institutional factors to consider include: degree of legitimacy and legal status; leadership and planning capability; decision making; resource management; human resources; equipment and logistics; and integrating mechanisms. Planners can use the DOTMLPF framework to identify specific operational capability and capacity requirements.

Assess Partner Condition to Play Desired Role(s)

Planners then need to assess the current level operational capability and capacity, and institutional capability and capacity compared to what is required to perform each desired role. This assessment also involves identifying the security objectives/aspirations of the partner country; determining whether the partner country is already performing or is inclined to perform the desired role(s); and considering the strategic direction of the partner country, trends, opportunities, constraints, the missions and functions of the partner's security forces, and their degree of professionalization. This assessment should help identify areas toward which steady-state activities should be applied, redundancies, gaps, and areas for collaboration. (See Figure 1)

Identify Resources Available

Planners should study the resources available to support the execution of steady-state activities with the partner country. This includes Title 10 funding for which the country may be eligible, such as OSD, Joint Staff, and Service security cooperation programs (e.g., Developing Country Combined Exercise Program), as well as other resources provided by the Services, Service Components, and other DOD agencies. Title 22 funding, such as Foreign Military Financing (FMF), International Military Education and Training (IMET), and Global Peace Operations Initiative, is another key resource. Steady-state activities with a partner country may also be supported by funding from other Titles, such as Titles 32 and 50. The CCMD may have or require forces to support engagement with the partner nation. Other USG agencies and other countries may also provide resources that support country plan implementation. Planners should take into account defense spending and other resources allocated by the partner country toward national security. Finally, enabling agreements (CISMOAs, ACSAs, SOFAs) should be considered.

A thorough mission analysis will better support synchronization of DOD and interagency efforts, resource justification, and the discussion of critical shortfalls and risk associated with strategy implementation. The mission analysis will also contribute to the development of the plan's overarching concept, a narrative that provides a logical and compelling framework for achieving theater campaign/country plan objectives.

Chapter 4

Concept Development

Overview

Concept development is the heart of theater campaign and country planning. For TCPs, it should be conducted with two audiences in mind: the CCMD staff and its subordinate commands who must implement the plan, and senior DOD leaders who must balance competing priorities and assist the CCMDs in securing sufficient resources. A well-developed concept should result in a clear and logical explanation of how the command will use the means it has available to or substantively move toward its end states over a five-year period (to inform and shape the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)). The urgency of achieving end states and supporting objectives should be understandable in terms of time, resources, and military necessity.

A well-developed concept tells the reader (1) what the CCMD intends to do, (2) when it must be done, (3) who must do it, (4) where it must be done, (5) why it must be done and (6) how it will be done. This narrative should convey the CCMD's priorities and focus areas unambiguously by being clear where it is most important to apply limited resources (and why), and identifying the risks associated with failing to address those priorities adequately – either in whole or in part. The consequences and associated ramifications of inadequately addressing the CCMD's priorities should be part of the discussion.

The CCMD should tell the reader in easy-to-understand prose how it will organize activities, events, investments and operations in time, space, and purpose to implement the CCMD's strategy in the most effective and efficient way possible. The sequence of operations, activities, events, and investments in a particular order and in packages of effort/investment should be apparent.

In both theater campaign and country planning, it is essential that the concept delineate the roles the CCMD would like partner countries to play in what it is trying to achieve both in the TCP and in subordinate country plans. Analysis in this area should focus on two questions: (1) "What does the USG want the partner to do?" and (2) "What does the USG want the partner not to do?" Ultimately a partner's willingness and ability to play these desired role(s) will delimit the objectives the CCMD pursues in that country—and cumulatively in the region as a whole.

Finally, the concept in a TCP or country plan should integrate "steady-state" security cooperation efforts, with ongoing operations and the Phase 0 component of the CCMD's assigned contingency plans. Planners must understand the impact efforts in one area are likely to have on those of another. Balancing these tensions to achieve complementary effort across the board in a resource-efficient way will often challenge the planners' creativity and imagination.

Developing a Concept

The mission analysis process described in Chapter 3 sets the framework for concept development. It defines the problem to be solved by breaking assigned end states into achievable sub-components—or essential tasks—which are then translated into military objectives that collectively make substantial progress toward achieving an end state. Mission analysis should also result in defining the gap between the current state of affairs—or baseline—and the military objective or objectives. Identifying this gap and then developing a coherent, effective, and

resource-efficient path from the baseline to the objective(s) is the essence of successful concept development.

Addressing what must be done to get from the baseline to the objective requires planners to know the full array of resources available to the command.¹² Information on available resources will have to be pulled from a wide variety of sources. Multiple offices in the CCMD are likely to be involved in this effort. It is imperative that the CCMD know which program offices or management bodies oversee the allocation of relevant forces and money. Having this information provides a starting point for resource-informed planning.

Theater posture planning is an important consideration as the CCMD lays out the resources it has available and begins concept development. Theater posture has a direct effect on how forces can be employed and supported in theater and may affect other CCMDs as well. Posture initiatives may also alter the requirement for certain kinds of forces and increase the need for others. Posture planning must support the theater strategy and should be developed with the TCP.

The availability of DOD resources may vary over time as a result of the Department's resource allocation processes. In the short term (generally out to two years, or FY+1), a CCMD will have limited ability to influence the resource picture greatly. The year of execution is set, and obtaining additional funds or forces is unlikely except as may come available when other components do not use the resources allocated to them. An exception is the funding from certain security cooperation programs, such as Section 1206 or the Combatant Command Initiative Fund (CCIF), which allocate funding in the current FY or budget year (FY+1). Even in such cases, resources will likely not be identified until late in the year, the amount will likely be limited, and there will be multiple contenders vying for these resources. Likewise, the program year (FY+2) budget will have been largely mapped out and there will be little likelihood of influencing the budget picture significantly except in the Program Budget Review. Even then, significant additional resourcing is unlikely. Hence, the CCMD is largely driven to adapt to the "as is" resource picture in the short term.¹³

Over the longer term the CCMD can be less constrained with its planning. The CCMD has a far greater chance of influencing the resource picture in the out years if it can clearly define how its resource requirements are essential to the implementation of its strategy. Hence, it is in the CCMD's interest to map out a clear long-term, time-phased plan of action with near- and mid-term objectives so that resource providers can understand what the command is attempting to accomplish. (See Figure 2)

The variability in resource availability over time should inform mission analysis and concept design (discussed in the chapters that follow). In the near-term, planners need to adjust ends (e.g., intermediate objectives) and ways (e.g., lines of effort or focus areas) based on an understanding of:

- the amounts and types of resources that have already been allocated to their CCMD;

¹² The Security Cooperation Toolkit can assist planners with identifying which programs are available and can help them with addressing the planning problems they face.

¹³ The foregoing discussion is not intended to convey that the PPBES system is so rigid that additional resource cannot be garnered in the short run. It is merely intended to point out that obtaining resource requirements late in the game to address emerging short-term requirements faces a difficult uphill battle.

- the programs generally available to support the CCMD’s steady-state activities; and
- realistic assumptions about what additional resources (if any) the CCMD can expect to receive within this two-year window.

If resource availability is highly constrained in the near-term, the scope of TCP objectives and activities will likely have to be limited. In the mid- and long-term, planners have greater latitude in identifying activities that require additional resources because those resources can be requested. Thus, TCPs and country plans can influence force allocation, authorities, funding, posture, and other resources toward future CCMD activities and meeting overall theater strategic end states.

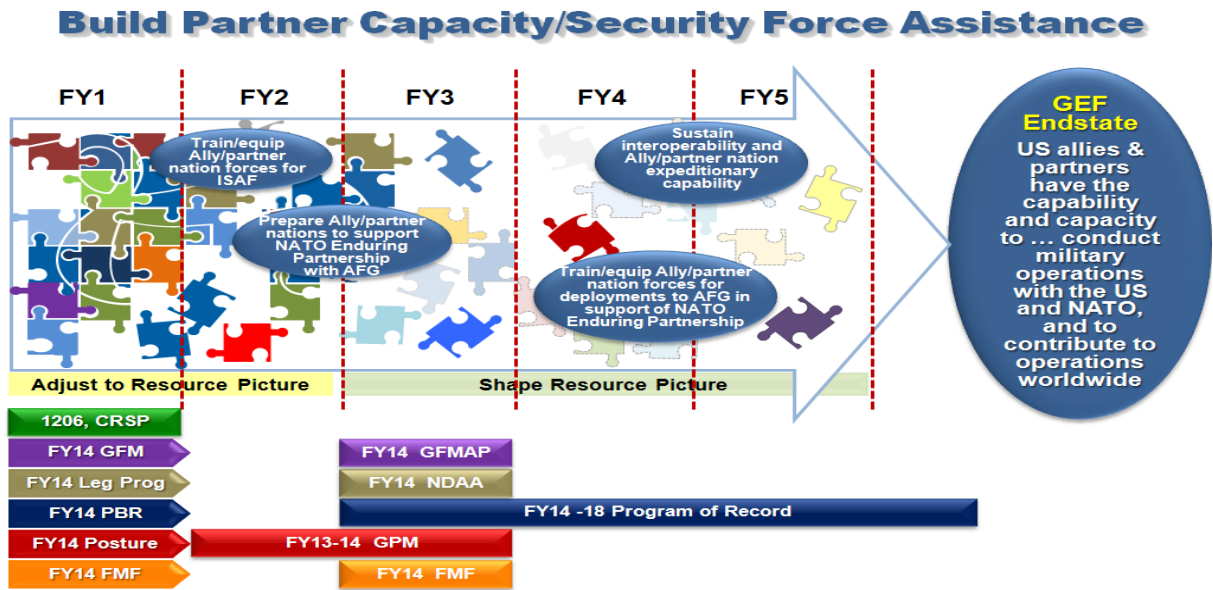


Figure 2

Concept development is often difficult because of the limited amount of resources available and the ways in which those funds can be used. Developing a course of action for achieving an objective or set of objectives is often akin to creating a quilt, as a plan may require “stitching” together a patchwork of authorities and forces. Unlike making a quilt, however, there may not be enough of the right materials to patch over all the “holes” in the plan. The problem can be complicated by a lack of long-term reliability of some funding streams and the limited time-horizon of global force management planning. Hence, developing a viable, effective plan to achieve an end state or long-term objective requires considerable imagination and iteration to stretch scarce resources to meet requirements. Because resources will likely be limited, the CCMD must be clear on its strategic priorities and prioritize accordingly.

In a resource-informed planning environment the CCMD must attain clarity on two things. First, planners must identify all the viable options available that can solve the problem at hand and select those that achieve the best balance between being effective and being cost efficient. For example, a partner nation problem may be rooted in a lack of training, sustainment capability, or doctrine rather than an equipment shortfall, even though fielding new equipment might be the most expedient solution. Rectifying a training, sustainment or doctrine shortfall will usually be less expensive than solving a problem with an equipment solution. While this approach may take

more time to effect the desired change, it may also provide a more sustainable solution. Planners should not forget to think about what allies and key partners might be able to offer as well.

Second, the CCMD must be able to define what constitutes “good enough” without incurring unacceptable strategic risk. Achieving “good enough” is a matter of balance and judgment and will always be problem-dependent. Planners should determine the “minimum essential” level of effort and investment required to achieve an objective. This minimum essential level of effort should be substantial enough so that achievement of the associated objective is relatively assured without incurring unacceptable risk.

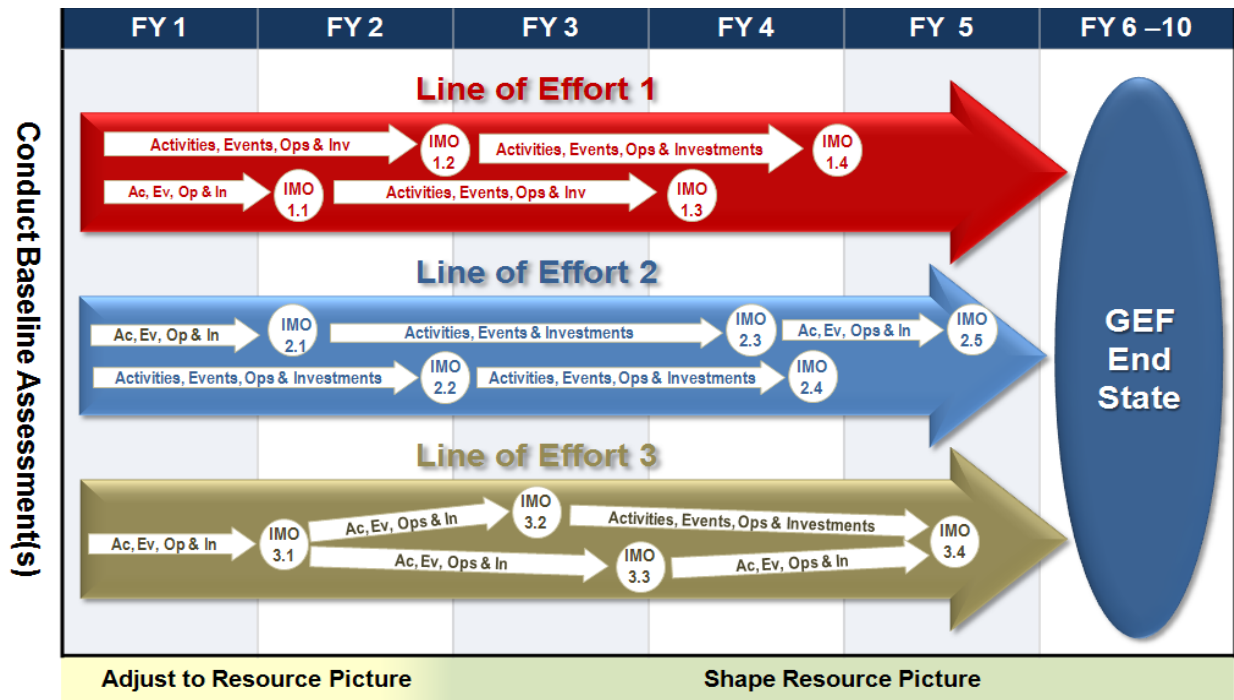


Figure 3

In developing a concept, planners may use “lines of effort” (LOE) to group related ends, ways and means.¹⁴ An LOE can help planners organize related activities, events, investments, and/or operations in time, space, and purpose to achieve objectives that reflect substantive progress towards achieving the theater strategic end state. Planners often find that LOEs provide a useful framework for grouping related sets of short- and mid-term objectives that should be pursued in sequence, in parallel, or a combination to reach a longer-term objective or an end state.¹⁵ Figure 3 illustrates the idea of time-phasing multiple intermediate objectives in pursuit of achieving a broader GEF-directed end state.

An LOE also provides a useful explanatory framework for how, why, and when resources will be used or invested over time.¹⁶ Developing this framework in detail should result in the analytic

¹⁴ For the purposes of this handbook, the term “line of effort” will be used for consistency and is intended to be used interchangeably with the terminology, “line of activity,” and “line of operation” which is used by some CCMDs.

¹⁵ The collection of near-, mid-, and long-term objectives that cumulatively contribute to the achievement of an end state are what the authors of the GEF meant when they introduced the term, *Intermediate Military Objective* (IMO) in the inaugural document.

¹⁶ When the term “resources” is used in this text, it refers to forces, funding, and time.

underpinnings and justification for required resources. Resource constraints will drive a CCMD to phase its objectives in such a way that succeeding objectives cumulatively build upon preceding ones. Each LOE should tell its own “sub-narrative” that contributes to the broader narrative related in the overarching concept.

To achieve a campaign or country plan objective, the CCMD will likely need to pursue activities, events, and investments that fall in one or more of these three areas: relationship building, capacity building, or gaining access/freedom of action. This is true not just for steady-state security cooperation but also Phase 0 planning and ongoing US/coalition operations as well. Even US-only operational and exercise activity ought to be considered through the lens of its impact on these three areas.

It is important to mention that particular activities, events, investments and operations may support the achievement of multiple objectives. The degree that these efforts do so effectively provides a compelling justification for resourcing them. Key actors both inside and outside DOD are interested in the “return on investment” of these efforts. Initiatives and activities that generate a high return on investment may fare better in the resource competition.

Geographic CCMD planners should be cognizant of how their efforts impact other CCMDs’ efforts. For example, all geographic CCMD campaign plans will have a transportation element to them. Planners should work with USTRANSCOM to ensure that activities dependent upon the delivery of forces or equipment can be supported by the transportation assets available. Oftentimes the synchronization of theater transportation assets with strategic movement will be crucial to a mission’s success.

Once a concept is developed, it should be reviewed to insure that its component elements are at consistent with each other. This should be true across the LOEs as well as internal to individual LOEs. This ensures that one component of the plan does not inadvertently undermine another component. Planners should also periodically check with relevant regional and functional offices in the Joint Staff and OSD to make sure the concept they are developing is consistent with evolving policy and strategy at the Department level. In this regard, CCMD planners should review their concept with the relevant components of other USG agencies, particularly DOS and USAID. The intent here is to make sure that CCMD efforts do not work at cross purposes with those of their interagency counterparts. Finally, planners should review their concept to ensure it meets the criteria for a viable plan: completeness, acceptability, feasibility and adequacy.

Chapter 5

Plan Development – Content

TCPs and country plans are naturally collaborative efforts. While actual authorship may vary across CCMDs, these plans are developed best with active participation by other J-code directorates, the Component commands, and, as applicable, the Country team, other USG agencies, the host nation and IGOs and NGOs. TCPs that contain the elements described below will serve as a useful framework for the CCDR to communicate his theory of change for strategy implementation and the resources required to do so.

THEATER CAMPAIGN PLANS

Initial Theater Assessment (Baseline)

The initial theater assessment answers “where we are today.” It should provide an overview of and assessment of the current theater security environment and highlight relevant strategic trends, both positive and negative. The description of the theater environment should include a discussion on key partners, critical partners, and actors of concern.

Mission

The mission statement should be derived from mission analysis of direction from higher guidance and focused on supporting IMOs that will achieve theater strategic end states.

Concept of Engagement

This section discusses the CCDR’s theater engagement concept. The concept should outline the commander’s operational approach and broadly describe actions the CCMD needs to take to achieve theater objectives. It should also describe priorities for theater shaping, force posture and access, partner capacity building, and steady-state operations support that support achieving theater strategic end states. It is presented in narrative and could introduce lines of effort (LOE).

Enabling/Intermediate Objectives and Tasks (to Components)

This section involves the identification of Intermediate Military Objectives (IMOs). IMOs are milestones that must be met over time to achieve the end states identified in the mission analysis. They should provide the basis for tasks to subordinates and other agencies responsible for specific categories of activities to address regional or sub-regional objectives. It should describe the level of effort directly related to the priorities outlined in the Commander’s theater engagement concept.

Coordinating Instructions

Coordinating instructions allow the planners to address issues affecting the plan’s design and execution. These instructions should include a discussion of authorities, key enabling agreements (e.g., CISMOAs, ACSA, SOFAs), operational limitations, contextual assumptions, and strategic communication themes. This information is needed to provide context on how objectives will be achieved.

Resource Discussion

This section involves a discussion about the resources – especially forces and funding – allocated to and required by the CCMD to implement the theater campaign plan. This discussion should address the impact of resource shortfalls – in terms of strategic or operational risk – on the achievement of theater objectives. It should also outline how such risks might be mitigated.

COUNTRY PLANS

The development of country plans should occur in parallel with the development of the theater campaign plan. This would allow the nesting of country plans within the theater plan and would allow country planners to inform and be informed by the higher level discussions between the Joint Force and steady-state actors. Theater and regional campaign plans and the MSRP should be referenced directly. Country Plan objectives should be consistent with those found in the theater and regional campaign plans and should reflect an understanding of GEF End State guidance and how it may be applied to the country.

Country Assessment

Country plans should begin with a country assessment that is focused on defense related issues. This assessment serves as the baseline for measuring progress and identifying needs – including critical shortfalls that inform the development of country-level objectives. The assessment should also discuss the strategic context in which planning is being conducted and should address the following areas:

- the security environment,
- the role the US desires the country to play in the region,
- the country's track record with respect to past or ongoing security cooperation programs,
- the Department of State's/Country Team's objectives and efforts,
- the objectives and efforts of other USG agencies,
- security-related resources, capabilities, capability gaps, and resources to cover gaps,
- objectives, efforts, and resources of other countries that complement or undermine US efforts with respect to the Ally/partner nation in question.

Country Objectives (US)

The discussion of country objectives is a key element of country planning. Country objectives should focus on the role that the United States wants the Ally/partner nation to play in achieving theater objectives. Country objectives should be derived from and prioritized in accordance with higher-level guidance. Ideally they should also be informed by and – at a minimum – consistent with the objectives and priorities of DOS (as articulated in Mission Strategic and Resource Plans) and other USG actors. However, because a country plan describes a bilateral partnership between the United States and an Ally/partner nation rather than unilateral US actions, the security priorities and interests of the Ally/partner nation need to be taken into account. Planners should

work with the Country Team to assess the desires, objectives, and vision of the Partner Nation in an effort to work towards alignment and compatibility with US objectives.

Planners should identify concrete near- (1-2 years), mid- (3-5 years) and long-term (5+ years) objectives for the country that progressively contribute to the achievement of overarching country and/or theater objectives. These country objectives should be expressed in terms that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (See Chapter 3). Near-term objectives would be resource constrained because budget and execution year resources were already largely allocated. Mid-term objectives would be resource-informed because the CCMD would have ample time to work with program managers and the Services in influencing security cooperation related investments and determining what investments are feasible. Long-term objectives will be relatively unconstrained because resources were neither planned nor programmed beyond 5 years into the future. Objectives should not focus solely on building or sustaining partner capacity. In particular, objectives related to gaining access and/or maintaining relationships should be clearly articulated. Moreover, in addition to security cooperation objectives, goals tied to applicable strategies and setting conditions for contingency plans, global campaign plans, and crisis action plans – should also be considered.

Concept of Engagement

Country plans should contain a narrative that outlines a concept of engagement. The concept should describe how operations, activities, investments, and events will be executed and how they support the achievement of near-, mid-, and longer-term country objectives. As appropriate, the concept should define lines of effort/operation/activities and address how collectively they would work together to support the achievement of near and mid-term objectives.

Synchronization Matrix

A synchronization matrix should lay out the execution of activities, operations, investments, and events linked/required to achieve country objectives over time and space. Similar to a plan of action and milestones (POA&M), the synchronization plan should describe how the efforts of supporting organizations are sequenced in a manner toward achieving a specific objective (see Figure 4). While the synchronization matrix

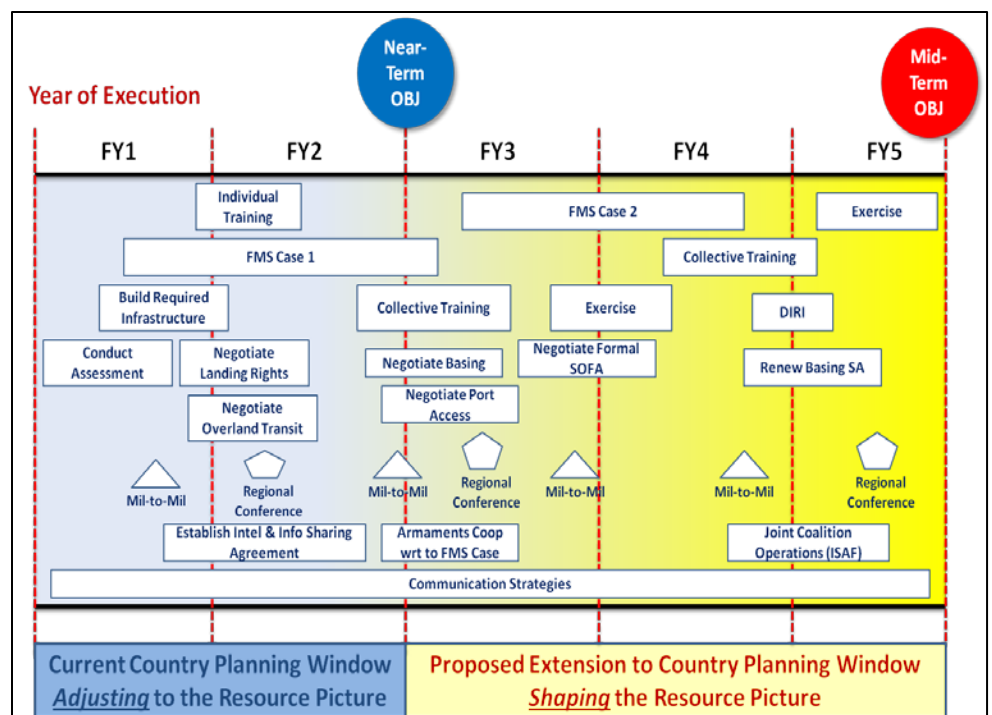


Figure 4

should cover the FYDP, there will inevitably be greater uncertainty associated with events, activities, operations, and investments proposed for future years (3 years out and beyond). The synchronization matrix could also facilitate collaboration, coordination, and synchronization with DOS and USAID at the country level.

Coordinating Instructions

As planning can cross several dimensions planners should be aware of existing coordination mechanisms and relationships between and among the actors (i.e., DOS, USAID, OSD, CCMD, JS, Services, Partner Country) related to the planning process and its intended outcome. Promote Cooperation (PC), for example, (See Chapter 6) is a forum which allows for interagency collaboration on DOD plans and CCMDs hold PC conferences which enable planners to engage with interagency counterparts. Country coordinating instructions should be provided to describe the context in which DOD will seek to achieve US objectives. These instructions should include discussion of relevant authorities, key enabling agreements (e.g., CISMOAs, ASCAs, SOFAs), operational limitations, contextual assumptions, and strategic communication themes.

Chapter 6

Plan Development – Process

Internal DOD Processes

Producing the substantive content of TCPs and country plans requires a modified approach to plan development than typically used to develop traditional contingency plans. TCPs and country plans are broad in scope, encompassing regional and functional objectives, critical bilateral and multilateral relationships, theater posture, and the entire range of a CCMD's steady-state activities. Moreover, TCPs are strategy implementation documents, guiding and integrating the execution of ongoing operations, security cooperation, and other shaping or preventive activities on a CCMD AOR. This chapter offers some considerations in designing processes for developing and implementing TCPs and country plans.

A common approach to plan development at the CCMD headquarters level is the establishment of an operational planning team (OPT) composed of representatives from various J-codes or Directorates under the leadership of the organization with primary responsibility (OPR) for developing the plan. Given the broad scope of a TCP, the composition of the OPT may require the participation of offices responsible for contingency planning, current operations, security cooperation programs, strategy, posture, resource management, intelligence, assessments, and interagency coordination. Representatives from these offices can assist with mission analysis and concept design, including integrating Phase 0 objectives, developing intermediate objectives, understanding resources available to support theater campaign plan execution, identifying lines of effort or focus areas, and describing the role of steady-state activities.

Plan development and implementation also depend upon additional planning below the CCMD headquarters level. Service Component Commands and functional HQ staff organizations play a critical role in the theater campaign planning process. Service Component Commands HQ staff organizations should be included in OPTs, planning conferences and tasked through a PLANORD or TASKORD to develop supporting plans to both TCPs and country plans, and participate in the CCMD development and implementation of those documents. This include, conveying Service and Department-level functional equities to the CCMD and conveying CCMD equities to their Service, assisting with concept design (especially tasks and activities supporting theater level IMOs), and with determining the resources required to execute identified steady-state activities, and developing a synchronization plan for these activities.

The development and implementation of country plans should involve the participation of the SDO/DATT and Security Cooperation Offices (SCOs)¹⁷. At a minimum, it is essential that the CCMD headquarters provide SDOs/SCOs with a standard construct and language for writing country plans. Such standardization is critical because of the significant variation in SDO/SCO manning, staff expertise, and in the nature of the bilateral relationship between DOD and the Ally/partner country.¹⁸

¹⁷ SDOs can be assigned primary responsibility for country plan development or share responsibility for plan development with country desk officers at the CCMD headquarters. SDO staff can be brought together with CCMD headquarters country desk officers at AOR-wide, regional, or sub-regional planning conferences dedicated to the development of country plans or by leveraging other existing CCMD processes (e.g., SCO training) that bring SDO staff to the CCMD headquarters. Alternatively, the CCMD headquarters can send its country desk officers out to SCOs to work with them in country to develop their country plans.

¹⁸ SCCs at their discretion can develop component plans supporting the CCMD plan.

Finally, planners should consider the timing of TCP and country plan development processes. In doing so, planners should take into account other major DOD muscle movements that can support plan development and implementation. For example, to the extent possible, planning that identifies near-term (FY+2) requirements for forces, funding, and authorities should be timed to enable the CCMD to submit requests for required resources through the GFM, Program and Budget Review (PBR), and DOD Legislative Program processes, respectively. Of course, each of these major DOD processes has a schedule that is entirely independent of the others and, in some cases, varies from year to year. Thus, a major challenge for the CCMD headquarters is to identify the window(s) of opportunity that enables it to best leverage TCP and country planning to develop and submit resource requirement inputs into these and other processes.¹⁹

The process of developing and coordinating TCPs is central to their effectiveness. TCPs require a highly collaborative approach, both within a CCMD and across Service elements and the interagency. This approach is essential to enable CCMD planners to draw on the broad range of resources necessary to understand the complex issues facing the CCMD and develop effective approaches to address these challenges. At a minimum, the Department of State (DOS) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) should be included in TCP planning.

Interagency Input and Coordination

Promoting and protecting US interests abroad rests upon the three pillars of Diplomacy, Development, and Defense (the “3Ds”), which are represented, respectively, by DOS, the USAID, and DOD. Although each of the 3Ds has unique roles and responsibilities, they provide the greatest value to the nation when their actions are mutually reinforcing. CCMD TCPs and country plans are articulations of the substance and implementation of Defense strategy at the regional and country level, and encompass a significant portion of DOD’s contribution to the 3D process. Therefore, the development and implementation of these documents should be coordinated with the plans, policies, and activities of DOS, USAID, and other government agencies. CCMD planners should first read the *3D Planning Guide* to gain an understanding of DOS and USAID plans and planning processes as well as opportunities to coordinate planning efforts. The following paragraphs supplement the information provided in the *3D Planning Guide*, focusing on three coordination mechanisms/venues available to CCMDs: CCMD headquarters Interagency Groups (IAGs), Promote Cooperation (PC) conferences, and Country Teams.

All Geographic CCMD headquarters have an Interagency Group (IAG). IAGs consist of liaison officers (LNOs) from DOS, USAID, and other government agencies. Although these LNOs typically do not have the authority to represent their agencies, they do provide the capability to reach back to regional and/or functional subject matter experts. CCMD planners can leverage IAGs in several ways. For example, the DOS LNO can convey issues or questions to appropriate regional or functional experts. Another possibility is to include the IAG in the staffing of the TCP within the CCMD headquarters. Although LNOs cannot provide formal agency inputs or positions on the content of the TCP, they can provide input based on their own expertise and knowledge of their agency’s perspective, policies, and activities. Finally, planners can leverage the IAG to assist in designing a Promote Cooperation event (discussed in more detail below). LNOs can help determine at what point(s) a PC event can be useful in aligning plan development.

¹⁹ Implicit in this discussion is alignment, to the extent possible, with Service programs/processes that can support plan development.

Promote Cooperation events provide an opportunity for CCMD planners and staff to meet with representatives from various USG government agencies. Meetings are typically conducted in the Washington, DC area and held at the AO/planner level up to flag officer/SES level in a variety of formats, including plenary sessions, panel discussions, or staff visits to individual partner agencies. These events should be viewed as two way discussions designed to generate synergy and synchronization of activities. CCMD's request these events through the Joint Staff/J5, which will organize a PC event. PC events are required for TCPs and can be scheduled at any point in the planning process. A PC event provides the opportunity to synchronize the theater strategy with US foreign policy for the region, as established by DOS, and obtain interagency input at the beginning of TCP development. They are usually more successful when planned earlier rather than later, in particular after the initial concept design and identification of lines of effort/focus areas but before the concept is fully developed. Finally, CCMDs can address country-level issues and plans with interagency partners at a PC event. Because DOS, USAID, and other government agencies are largely authorized and funded to conduct activities on a bilateral basis, examining issues with interagency partners at the country-level is somewhat easier and may sometimes be more productive than reviewing them at the regional level.

Regardless of when a PC event is executed, CCMD planners should identify the specific inputs sought from interagency partners in advance of the event and likewise should be prepared to provide inputs to partner agencies planning efforts (see *3D Planning Guide*). CCMD requests for information should then be communicated to interagency partners through Joint Staff/J5. CCMD staff should also make materials available to participating partner agencies well in advance of PC meetings so representatives are correctly identified and prepared to participate in the events.

The primary conduit for interagency coordination in country plan development is the Country Team. At the country level, DOD is in a supporting role to the Chief of Mission (CoM) (typically an Ambassador). While the CoM or DOS does not have formal review/approval authority over CCMD country plans, the plans should be consistent with the objectives and priorities of the CoM and align with the country plans of DOS, USAID, and other government agencies working in that country. CCMD planners should review the *3D Planning Guide* for more information about DOS Mission Strategic and Resource Plans (MSRPs) and USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategies and the processes that are used to develop these plans.

In addition, SCOs provide DOD input to MSRP development and the formulation of Title 22 Security Assistance (e.g., FMF, IMET) requirements. CCMD country plans, derived from CCMD TCPs, should serve as the basis for DOD participation in these processes. Finally, DOS visibility on activities and resources DOD is planning for a particular country, (e.g. training security forces or providing humanitarian assistance) informs DOS and USAID planning.

At the beginning of the country plan development process, SCO staff should brief their interagency counterparts on DOD planning guidance applicable to the country in question. This will provide counterparts from DOS, USAID, and other government agencies with information about DOD objectives and priorities for the country. As the SCO and CCMD work to develop the country plan, the SCO should conduct targeted interaction with various members of the Country Team. For example, when developing elements of the plan that could involve DOD humanitarian assistance or exercise-related construction activities, the SCO should consult the USAID mission director to ensure the DOD country plan is informed by USAID development objectives, priorities, and activities. Similarly, elements of the CCMD plan related to building partner nation

security capacity should be coordinated with DOS counterparts responsible for the security assistance portion of the MSRP. Once a draft of the CCMD country plan has been produced, the SCO staff should circulate the draft to Country Team counterparts, conduct a detailed review of the plan with them, and request their feedback. After the country plan has been completed and approved by the CCMD headquarters, the SCO staff should brief the finished CCMD country plan to the Country Team and to the Ambassador. When the CCMD's J5 visits the country, the J5 should discuss the CCMD country plan with the CoM (Ambassador) and address the linkages between the CCMD country plan, the TCP, and the MSRP.

Finally, CCMDs should coordinate with the Country Team on country plan implementation. Often the CoM is the final approval authority for the execution of DOD activities and those of any other government agency within a country. Providing the CoM and Country Team counterparts with visibility on planned CCMD activities can facilitate coordinating the execution of these events. Another possibility is for the SDO or CCMD staff to produce a list of planned events that support the CCMD country plan and provide such a list to Country Team counterparts. Most importantly issues affecting execution should be addressed with the Secretary of Defense and CJCS during the plan review process especially when there is the potential for friction between the Command and CoM. This conversation is appropriate at any point in the plan review process. With regard to future year activities, it should be made clear to interagency counterparts that event execution will likely differ from what is originally planned. Nevertheless, some visibility on planned activities (especially in the FY+3 timeframe) can help inform DOS planning and resource allocation processes.

Chapter 7

Plan Assessment and Adaptation

The Relationship between Plan Assessment and Adaptation

Theater campaign and country plans are continually in some stage of implementation. At the same time, CCMD planners should expand their planning horizon annually to extend another year into the future.²⁰ This combination of simultaneous execution and future planning requires a CCMD to continually assess its progress in achieving its objectives and then revise, adapt or terminate elements of the evolving plan accordingly.²¹ This dynamic process makes assessments a necessary precursor to plan adaptation. Assessments are thus fundamental to refreshing these implementation documents ahead of resource allocation processes.

Assessing basic plan implementation is difficult enough, but events can arise external to the CCMD's control that affect plan execution, future planning, or both. Some of these events can impede achievement of one or more objectives while others may present opportunities to advance the plan more rapidly than anticipated.

External events fall into two broad categories. The first are those events that change the strategic or operational "environment" in which a CCMD implements a plan (J2 focus).²² The second category involves those events that change the resource picture with respect to funding, forces, and time available (J8 focus). While these two types of external events can clearly influence each other, this document treats them as separate considerations because they can influence plan implementation independent of each other.

Purposes of Plan Assessments

While assessments should tell the CCDR many things about how well plan implementation is proceeding, their most important purpose is to tell the CCMD how well it is addressing the gap between its baseline and its various objectives.²³ The cumulative assessment of how well the CCMD has closed these gaps will indicate whether the command has been effective in implementing its strategy. Comprehensive and rigorous assessments should help a CCDR understand where the plan is succeeding and where it is not. From its assessments the CCMD should understand whether its *means* and *ways* are adequate to the *ends* they support, where they are not, and why they are not. When assessments are done rigorously and well, they enable the

²⁰ Plans will need to be revised or updated no less often than once a year so that updated resource requirements can be identified and fed into the PPBS cycle. Planners should update a plan to address the new 5-year horizon (FYDP). The program for the four years addressed in the last plan will need to be revised as required, and the fifth year's program will have to be built.

²¹ The RAND Corporation has developed a useful assessment framework that can be used in analyzing both campaign and country plans. Elements of that framework are used throughout this chapter. For a more detailed discussion, see RAND's Country Plan Assessment Framework (Draft), dated November 2011.

²² The various categories of events that could influence the strategic environment are encapsulated in the acronym, PMESII-CTP (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information, Cultural, Technological, and Physical Environment). Sometimes events can fall into more than one of these categories).

²³ Collective progress toward achieving key CCMD intermediate objectives informs the command as to how well it is proceeding toward its GEF-directed end states.

CCMD to establish a new baseline for the next cycle of planning and inform the CCMD on how it might adjust or revise a plan's ends, ways, or means.²⁴

Assessments can be helpful in other ways. They can validate or invalidate elements of the plan's design. They may confirm or deny key assumptions. They can identify which activities, events, investments and operations are the most effective in achieving desired outcomes and which are less so, thus informing which programs or funding streams, in combination or isolation, are most useful and which are less so. Effective assessments should also give the CCMD a good sense of its return on investment. For example, relatively expensive yet marginally effective security cooperation-related activities should be scrutinized for elimination in favor of efforts that are more effective and efficient in achieving the CCMD's objectives.

Assessments also inform broader DOD processes and analysis. First, assessments play a crucial role in the plan review process. They should form the basis for discussions between CCDRs and the SecDef during TCP IPRs once the plan has been completed and has begun regular review. Rigorous assessments enable a combatant commander to inform the Secretary where the plan is proceeding apace and where it is having difficulty. In particular, these IPRs can serve as a forum for identifying which objectives are at risk of not being accomplished within the scope or on the timelines required.

A risk analysis should play a major role in such discussions and aid the CCMD in identifying where the Secretary's assistance will be most valuable. In these IPRs, CCDRs should also be prepared to discuss how plan shortfalls and associated risks might be mitigated or how end states may be adjusted. Remedial courses of action could address the requirement for additional resources or resource tradeoffs (forces, funding or time) the need for the Secretary or President to engage with partner governments, the need to adjust DOD-level priorities, new approaches to addressing the strategic or operational requirement, or possibly even adjusting the objectives.

TCP assessments also play a critical role in informing the Department's key strategic processes and systems, including strategy development, planning guidance, assignment of roles and missions, force employment, force management, force posture, and force development.²⁵ They enable the SecDef and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) to formulate advice to the President on the strategic direction of the Armed Forces. CCMD assessments can also inform the design and execution of Military Department programs and budgetary or programmatic decisions affecting them in the annual PBR. In this regard they can help reconcile issues and requirements across Services and CCMDs. They assist in identifying key accomplishments and analyzing the most pressing military issues. Finally, they assist in DOD's outreach to Congress and other agencies in the government.

Conducting Assessments

The rest of this chapter outlines the various types of assessments CCMDs should conduct. It addresses assessments from two perspectives: one that is plan execution focused and one that is

²⁴ This is no small point. Thoroughgoing and rigorous assessments will require a significant investment in resources. This means that CCMDs will need to program adequate manpower, time, and money to insure that they are done adequately.

²⁵ For a fuller discussion of the role assessments play in the Joint Strategic Planning System (JSPS), see CJCSI 3100.1B, *The Joint Strategic Planning System*, dated 15 October 2008.

strategic environment focused. Plan execution focused assessments analyze how well the plan was executed and how effective it was, as compared to its original design. These assessments provide the CCMD with a good understanding of where it stands – its new baseline – as it proceeds forward with the next cycle of planning. Strategic environment assessments analyze changes in the strategic or operational environment and the forecasted resource picture. They help the commander understand how the next version of the plan will need to change – either in terms of ends, ways, means, or some combination thereof. In this regard, they may also cause the CCMD to reassess fundamental assumptions upon which the plan is based. Together, the assessments from these two perspectives should provide a CCMD with the insights it needs to revise, adapt, or terminate elements of the plan – or the entire plan itself. In reality, these perspectives often overlap and influence each other. For the purposes of this handbook, however, it is useful to consider them separately to illustrate the respective roles they play.

Before laying out a framework for conducting assessments, a word of caution is in order. The framework that follows is intended to result in a comprehensive and clear strategic *narrative* that helps the CCDR, the SecDef and the CJCS understand how well the implementation of the CCMD's strategy is proceeding, and why. It is not intended to generate vastly complex and highly-detailed technical analysis that requires numerous analysts and multiple man-years to produce. Such an approach is not only inadvisable given the manpower and time a CCMD has at its disposal, it may well be counter-productive.

Plan Execution Focused Assessments

Broadly speaking, there are three aspects to an assessment a CCMD should address:

- Performance in Executing Planned Tasks that Support Objectives
- Effectiveness in Reaching Objectives
- Resource Effectiveness of Investments

Each aspect provides the command independent but complementary and mutually reinforcing insights. Considered together, these three aspects of an assessment provide a holistic picture of how effectively and efficiently the plan has been executed.

Performance in Executing Planned Tasks that Support Objectives

The first aspect focuses on the execution of directed tasks in the plan. It is concerned with the CCMD's *performance* of these tasks, which revolves around the execution of particular activities, events, operations and investments. This assessment can provide insights into the programmatic and operational design of the plan's component elements as well as their sequencing. This assessment answers the following questions:

- Did the CCMD execute its activities, events, investments, and operations as planned?
- If so, how well were they executed? If not, why not?
- If there were issues with resources or authorities, did any risks emerge post-activity? Was the activity truncated or cancelled? Identify probability, timing, or severity of risk due to lack of execution.

First and foremost, this aspect of the assessment should address whether planned activities, events, investments and operations accomplished the assigned task or tasks. In addition, they should address whether:

- Planned activities, events, investments and operations have been implemented according to schedule and standard.
- Each of these specific efforts has been executed within budget and that resources were expended properly and on time.
- Appropriate processes and requirements have been followed.

The insights and lessons learned from the foregoing help the CCMD identify plan strengths and weaknesses at the task level and rectify deficiencies in future planning cycles. Ideally this assessment should be conducted after the completion of each activity, event, operation, or investment.²⁶ Many of these efforts are conducted or overseen by a Service Component Command (SCC), or a CCMD-level functionally oriented organization; such an organization is the right one to assess these efforts. Likewise, if a CCMD staff element has responsibility for key efforts, it should provide the assessment. SDOs should be prepared to assist SCCs with addressing this aspect of the assessment process specific to plan-related efforts in their partner nation. The CCMD compiles these assessments and uses them in plan adaptation.

If supporting tasks are designed well, they should be objectively measured and documented. Accordingly, CCMDs should use *measures of performance* (MOPs) to measure how successfully a task has been accomplished. A measure of performance identifies a basis or standard of comparison for assessing how well a task is performed independent of its impact on achieving the objective it supports.²⁷ An example of a MOP for a task might be the number units in a brigade that successfully complete new equipment training. The *metrics* for each MOP define what constitutes success in completing the task. One of the metrics of success for new equipment training might be the number of crews that qualify at basic gunnery at the end of the event.

A variety of tools and methods can be used to collect the information required for conducting this assessment. The list below provides examples of the ways information for this aspect of an assessment might be gathered:

- After action reports from operations, activities, events, or investments that have been completed
- Solicited inputs from tactical and operational commanders
- Tactical- and operational-level intelligence analyses/assessments
- Training assessments by mobile training teams
- Country team and/or security cooperation office reports
- Cost data collected and maintained by security cooperation program managers

²⁶ The Global Theater Security Cooperation Management Information System (G-TSCMIS) is specifically designed to capture data related to Level 1 assessments. The cumulative data collected can be used as well to support Level 2 and Level 3 assessments.

²⁷ While there should be a clear, causal relationship between executing a task and the achievement of the objective it supports, a Level 1 Assessment focuses only on the immediate, execution-related aspects of the task. The task's effectiveness in contributing to the achievement of an objective – or objectives – is measured in Level 2 Assessments.

Effectiveness in Reaching Objectives

The second aspect of an assessment addresses how well the CCMD is implementing its strategy, as opposed to how well it is executing its tasks. This focuses on the effectiveness of the plan's design as expressed by designated ends, ways, and means. Its principal purpose is to examine how well the command has closed the gap between its baseline and the objective or the objectives it has set for itself. This aspect of an assessment should answer four broad questions:

- Is the CCMD advancing toward achieving the plan's objectives?
- If the CCMD made adequate progress toward achieving an objective did that progress also result in progress toward achieving the end state it was designed to support?
- If it did not make adequate progress toward achieving an objective, what prevented it from doing so?
- What risks do the CCMD, DOD and the USG assume by the CCMD falling short of its objectives?
- What could be done to rectify plan shortfalls and address unacceptable risk?

In answering the foregoing major questions, CCMDs should consider the following:

- The adequacy of the plan's lines of activity/effort and their internal conceptual design
- The validity of the plan's assumptions
- The sufficiency of resources available
- Factors or events outside the CCMD's control that affected plan implementation

In addressing this second aspect of an assessment, CCMDs should take into account SCC and CCMD Functional Directorate aggregation of assessments of component and functional tasks and examine their individual and aggregate effect in terms of achieving CCMD objectives. At this level the CCMD assesses *sets of tasks* designed to achieve a particular objective or series of related objectives that, in turn, contribute to theater strategic end state.²⁸ *Measurable, time-limited, and results-oriented* objectives help the CCMD more easily determine whether it is progressing or not. Where it has not done so, the CCMD will have a clear idea of the obstacles it faces, and indications of where to look to get back on track.

This aspect of an assessment employs *measures of effectiveness* (MOEs) to determine the progress made in achieving individual objectives. A MOE identifies a basis or standard of comparison for assessing the extent to which an objective has been met. The metrics for each MOE define what constitutes progress or success. MOEs and associated effectiveness metrics should be implicit in well-designed objectives. The example below illustrates the relationship between an outcome-oriented objective and an associated MOE and metric.

- **Objective:** Bandaria has the capability to defend its six oil platforms in the Bandarian Gulf against small-scale maritime attacks by 2014.

²⁸ For campaign and country plans, a long-term objective – as opposed to an end state – should extend no further out than the 5-year planning horizon. How well intermediate or subordinate objectives are achieved along the way will provide the CCMD with a clear idea of how well the plan is progressing.

- Measure of Effectiveness: The extent to which the Bandarian Navy can continuously deploy fully armed and operational patrol ships in the waters around the oil platforms and conduct combat patrols.
- Metric: The percentage of time that the Bandarian can sustain full-up combat patrols by 2014.

A great variety of tools and methods can be used to collect the required information. Many of the methodologies and tools identified above are also useful when looking at this second aspect of an assessment.

Because addressing this second aspect requires analyzing the entire plan and looking across SCC, functional organizations, and SCO responsibilities, it is best organized and managed at the CCMD level. These assessments should be conducted regularly throughout the year and reviewed collectively no less often than once a year.²⁹ Annual assessments should be completed in time to influence the Department's broader processes and systems. Typically, CCMDs should be prepared to submit their input to the Department no later than the end of the fiscal year so they can influence the Chairman's Risk Assessment,³⁰ Program and Budget Review (PBR) and the Services' programmatic planning for the next FYDP.

If CCMDs develop well-written objectives, measuring how much progress has been made will be relatively straightforward. The quantitative nature of the objectives and associated MOPs and metrics will make it so. Understanding "why" progress has or has not been made is a much thornier issue. First and foremost is the problem of determining cause and effect. One dimension of this problem has to do with those cases where the achievement of an objective can result from multiple efforts executed over time. In such cases, isolating which effort or sets of effort are principally responsible for success or failure may be difficult. Being able to do so clearly and well is essential for addressing the third aspect of assessments successfully.

Some CCMD objectives will be dependent upon influencing the decisions or behavior of another nation's key actors, complicating the causality problem. The rationale for such decisions may be opaque – even unknowable. Unless a foreign government explains why it has made a particular decision or done something in response to US actions, what prompted the decision can only be inferred inductively. Even in those cases where a foreign government provides explanation for its behavior, such explanations should probably be taken with a grain of salt. CCMDs should be prepared to reassess its analysis as it observes behavior patterns.

Finally, compounding both of these difficulties is the problem of "lag time" between an effort or set of efforts (the cause) and the results achieved (the effect). In some cases, the time between an event and the results it is designed to bring about may be quite lengthy, possibly even years. There are two issues associated with the problem of lag time. The first addresses establishing positive links between the cause(s) that may have occurred well in the past. There may be a temptation to attribute causality to efforts more proximate to the result observed. The second

²⁹ Most CCMDs have a staff element that analyzes how well various activities, events, operations and investments have been implemented, both individually and in the context of the entire plan. In some cases they are located in the J7, and in others they can be found in the J8 or J9. In either case, this cell plays a fundamental and crucial role in assisting the J5 with performing Level II Assessments.

³⁰ CCMDs are tasked to provide an assessment of their campaign plans as part of the Joint Staff Comprehensive Joint Assessment (CJA), which is used to develop the Chairman's Risk Assessment and other JCJS products. The suspense for this input is typically the end of the fiscal year.

issue concerns the possibility of prematurely concluding that an effort did not help, or help sufficiently, in bringing about the desired results.

While the “problem of causality” can make addressing this second aspect of assessments difficult, it doesn’t make them impossible. It requires the CCMD to devise techniques that assist in analyzing how a particular effort or set of efforts has contributed to achieving an objective. It also requires strategic patience on the part of the CCMD, and the Department, in drawing conclusions about a LOE or objective. Some efforts just take time to achieve the desired results.

Resource Effectiveness of Investments

The third aspect of assessments focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of the CCMD’s resource expenditures in executing the plan. By determining the relative “bang it is getting for its buck,” the CCMD can help determine how resources might be better allocated and expended across the plan. In this regard, this aspect can be especially useful in identifying how resources could be redistributed to mitigate the most serious risks associated with plan shortfalls.

Addressing this aspect of assessments should also enable the CCMD to make the case to Department-level audiences for additional resources where justified or to identify where opportunity cost trades could be made between DOD and Service-level resource portfolios. Such assessments should enable the SecDef and other key DOD leaders to understand which resources are most useful across the board and which are of less benefit. Such knowledge helps inform DOD’s senior leaders as they look at broad resource-related tradeoffs across the Department and make the case to Congress and others outside the Department about how such resources might be better allocated across the FYDP.

Addressing this aspect of assessments should answer the following four questions:

- What resources did the CCMD expend in the pursuit of its objectives?
- How efficiently were resources expended relative to the outcomes achieved?³¹
- Were resource expenditures reasonable relative to the magnitude of the benefits?³²
- Could any of the objectives have been achieved in a way that required fewer resources?

The answers to the foregoing four questions help the CCMD determine how effectively it has invested available resources in implementing a campaign or country plan. In answering them, CCMDs should consider the following:

- The effectiveness of the CCMD’s allocation of resources across the plan
- Where a lack of resources impeded the achievement of desired results
- Where resource efficiencies and attendant savings could have been achieved

³¹ Resource efficiency measures “how much” can be accomplished given the resources available. In a resource-efficient effort, no resources – or very few of them – go unused or wasted in unproductive action.

³² This question addresses “how well” the resources are used, or the *relative benefit* of the end gained versus the resources expended in achieving it. This concept is often referred to as “*return on investment*.”

- Which resources were most useful and which were less useful – both in achieving particular objectives and across the plan
- Where resource portfolio trades might be beneficial
- The impact of force posture in mitigating resource shortfalls

Beyond determining the actual costs of executing a plan, which is clearly quantitative in nature, the third aspect will provide a significant qualitative element that will require informed judgment. This will require the CCMD to integrate insights from the first and second aspects of the assessment and perform an overall assessment of performance, effectiveness, and cost. This integration requires a measure of subjective judgment for two basic reasons due to the causality issue discussed earlier, and due to lack of a comparative basis to measure return on investment. The conditions surrounding the execution of each plan will likely be different enough to make such comparisons difficult. The CCMD will need to design carefully its measures and criteria for assessing cost effectiveness. To the degree they can be designed to measure concrete indicators of success, they should.

Addressing the third aspect of assessments is best organized and conducted at the CCMD level even though the data used in them could be gathered by lower-level headquarters. In addressing this aspect, the J5 should work closely with the appropriate resource managers in the J8 or other staff sections and the staff element that typically conducts operations research and systems analysis for the CCMD (J7 or J9). While the cost-effectiveness of individual efforts can be analyzed regularly throughout the year, a holistic review and analysis should be completed no less often than once a year, preferably in time to influence the Program and Budget Review and Service planning for the next FYDP.

Before addressing strategic environment focused assessments, two closing points are in order. These three assessment aspects outlined above are reality three successive steps to developing a holistic assessment of the plan and should be treated that way when the analysis of all three aspects is complete. While they tell the assessor different things about plan implementation, they collectively work together to give a complete picture of how well the plan worked as compared to its original design.

Completed plan execution focused assessments perform two major roles. They provide significant input to mission analysis in the next cycle of planning by giving planners feedback on the existing plan's design, or concept. They help the CCMD determine how well the plan's IMO's contribute to the material achievement of the plan's end states. Both are crucial in adapting the plan and should be done before proceeding to strategic environment focused assessments.

Strategic Environment Focused Assessments

Plan execution-focused assessments help the CCMD understand how the plan could be improved. Strategic environment focused assessments, on the other hand, help the command identify how major external events and related trends contribute to reshaping the plan – whether in minor or major ways. While plan execution focused assessments generally tend to result in incremental change, strategic environment focused assessments can result in significant changes to the plan. As stated earlier, there are two broad types of strategic environment focused assessments: (1) those that analyze major events or trends that affect the CCMD's strategic or

operational environment and (2) those that address significant changes in the CCMD's resource picture. These two types of strategic environment focused assessments should address both potential problems and potential opportunities.

Assessing Changes to the Strategic or Operational Environment

Events and related trends that change a CCMD's strategic or operational "environment" can have nuanced to disruptive effects on campaign and country plans.³³ They can drive modifications to the regional strategy – or even the global strategy – which in turn could change DOD's planning guidance and the plan itself. Extreme examples of "environment-changing" events include the collapse of the Soviet Union, the recent Arab Spring uprisings, the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and the 9/11 attacks on the United States. While less-disruptive events can result in more subtle changes in a region's strategic environment, they may also significantly affect plan implementation and design. Their impact must be analyzed as well.

Assessments of changes to the strategic or operational environment endeavor to analyze how significant events and related trends affect the nature and direction of US security interests in the region. Such assessments should, at a minimum, consider:

- The emergence of any new and significant threats (e.g., particular hostile countries, new capabilities or intent, national or regional instability, environmental, health, etc.) in the region – or that could affect the region
- The emergence of new and significant opportunities in the region – or that could affect the region
- Changes to the balance of military power in a region and security relationships between regional neighbors
- Changes in the nature of US bilateral and multilateral security relations with nations and international organizations in the region

CCMDs should assess the ramifications of these changes to determine whether they:

- Affect the ability of the CCMD to achieve existing end states and key supporting objectives
- Require new objectives or changes to current US security objectives for the region
- Change key security-related assumptions about the region
- Alter US security-related priorities in the region
- Compel changes in the US' security posture in the region
- Force changes in the approaches (the "ways") it uses to achieve its security objectives
- Require more resources, new resources, or a different set of resources (as a result of the foregoing)

³³ The various categories of events that could influence the strategic environment are encapsulated in the acronym, PMESII-CTP (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information, Cultural, Technological, and Physical Environment). Sometimes events can fall into more than one of these eight categories.

Any of these considerations could result in substantial changes to plan design and perhaps require a complete overhaul of the plan.

Assessing Changes to the Resource Picture

Major increases or decreases in funding, forces, and time available can also profoundly affect what can and cannot be accomplished. It is noteworthy that these three resource categories are often interdependent, so changes in one category can – and often do – influence resource requirements in the others. For example, it is not unusual for a decrease in one category to require a compensating increase in one or both of the others. Conversely, increases in one area can also relieve the burden on the other two.

While significant changes in the resource outlook – either in total amount, in allocation, specific kinds, or all three – can result from significant events or trends that change the strategic environment, they can also be driven by factors independent of such events and trends. As recent events have amply demonstrated, major changes in the resource picture can actually drive a reevaluation of the strategy itself. For these reasons, this document addresses resource changes as an independent variable.

Assessments of the future resource picture should examine how significant increases or decreases in resources will serve to expand or constrain DOD's and the CCMD's strategic ambitions in a region. As with changes in the strategic or operational environment, significant changes in the resource picture can affect all the elements of campaign design: end states, supporting objectives, assumptions, priorities, and how the command uses available resources to achieve its objectives.

Summary

Assessments mark the end of one planning cycle and the beginning of the next. They are as important as any of the other elements outlined in previous chapters. They give the Department and the CCMD vital feedback on how well the *National Defense Strategy* and associated planning guidance to the CCMDs is being implemented. Equally important, they help to point the way forward for future planning as the strategic environment and resource picture evolves.