



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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12 June 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION, TECHNOLOGY, AND LOGISTICS

Subject: Report of the Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force on Understanding Human Dynamics, March 2009

1. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Defense Science Board Task Force March 2009 Report on Understanding Human Dynamics. It is a compelling document with many sound recommendations.
2. Informed by the Joint Operating Environment document and the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations, U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) is keenly aware of trends that will shape the future threat environment and the need for the joint force to more fully understand the human dimension of conflict. To this end, USJFCOM is endeavoring to make irregular warfare a core competency for the joint force. There is clear correlation between USJFCOM efforts and many of the recommendations contained within the DSB Human Dynamics report, with mutual appreciation of the warfighting situation between JFCOM and the DSB report.
3. My comments provided below highlight USJFCOM efforts related to the content of the report.
 - a. Chapter 3 on Coordination and Leadership states, "There have been numerous, though mostly uncoordinated, efforts within DoD." It further states, "Substantial improvements by DoD are needed in understanding human dynamics." To be effective in the long term, DoD must develop more cohesion in its efforts and capability, and be able to expand beyond the focus of current armed conflict. The current analysis on understanding human dynamics should be expanded beyond the cultural and language aspects to include an increased understanding of new concepts, competencies and capabilities that enable small units to operate autonomously in response to regular or irregular threats.
 - b. Unified Quest is referenced in the report, but many other current and future joint exercises and experiments currently include and will continue to include non-DoD partners. Through exercises and experiments such as Blue Advance, Austere Challenge, Unified Action and the Multi-National Experiment series, U.S. Joint Forces Command has taken great effort and made significant progress in incorporating interagency and international participation in joint exercises and experiments.
 - c. From the Terms of Reference it is noted the original name of the Task Force was "The Task Force for Understanding Adversaries" and "understanding adversaries" was mentioned four times in the terms of reference, yet the report does not have any specific recommendations on how to better understand and thwart enemy ideologies that currently threaten the Islamic World

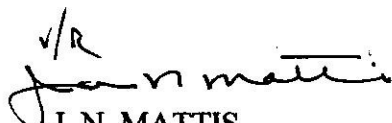
and which we confront in almost every theater of operations, for example "takfirism." Understanding a peer competitor's military is fairly straightforward since we have much in common with most nations' militaries. Understanding an irregular adversary is orders of magnitude more difficult, because there is little to no common frame of reference and templates seldom add understanding. Recommend the final report recognize this difficulty and devote a section of specific recommendations to this effort. USJFCOM can work with the Task Force to craft these recommendations.

d. The report cites the need to: "Support the Services in modifying the standard curriculum at U.S. military academies, as well as joint/service-specific curricula, to incorporate basic training in human dynamics." It should be noted that U.S. Joint Forces Command's Virtual Cultural Awareness Training is available on our Joint Knowledge Development and Distribution Capability.

e. The report recommends the establishment of an "Institute for Public Administration Training." Instead of establishing a new institution, it may be more effective and holistic to leverage existing DoD educational and training establishments to build tailored programs to fill the existing gaps, imparting this expertise across the force.

f. In the Executive Summary, Human Dynamics Advisors are called upon to: "Build partnerships between DoD and other U.S. government departments and agencies in order to build a "whole-of-government" solution to challenging multi-disciplinary issues." To optimize the use of the comprehensive approach, recommendations also need to include development of new contracting methods to nimbly move groups of experts in and out of working groups based on experience and an active understanding of the problem set. The focus should not be only standing, full time reach-back groups comparable to Knowledge and Information Fusion Exchange (KNIFE), but also on groups or individuals with required expertise that can be acquired as needed.

4. I strongly concur with the overarching finding of the Task Force that the Department of Defense needs to improve the fundamental understanding of human dynamics in order to mitigate the likelihood of future conflict, conduct irregular warfare or prosecute conventional combat operations. USJFCOM is eager to work with the Department and the Services to develop improved capabilities in this fundamental domain.

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