2021 Civil Affairs Symposium Report
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The Civil Affairs Association hosted its annual web-based Symposium, sponsored by Third-Order Effects, Valka-Mir Security, and Conducttr, from Monday, November 8th to Wednesday, November 10th 2021. Flowing from last year’s discussion and the realization that CA can help the Army better understand strategic competition, this year’s theme was “Building a Global Civil-Military Network.” Recent events suggest critical lessons for building a global civil-military network to strengthen alliances and attract new partners. A global civil-military network also helps regional commands, interagency bureaus, and embassies deal with challenges like Chinese and illicit network penetration in Latin America and Africa, hybrid warfare on the European periphery, anti-access and area denial in the Indo-Pacific region, and climate-driven disruptions.

The creation of a more formal and deliberate global network of civil-military enterprises is long overdue, now more obvious in an era of great power (or strategic) competition in which access and influence define positional advantage. In today’s geopolitical environment, global competition resonates most at the levels of key leader and population engagement. Whether for major combat operations, irregular warfare, gray zone encounters, or continuous competition with state and non-state actors, advantage falls to the force that acculturates a superior learning network – institutionally and not just operationally.

The greatest value-added of CA, strategically as well as operationally, has always been in its ability to develop and leverage civil networks, resulting from persistent civil reconnaissance and civil engagement and captured in civil knowledge. CA does this by, with, and through a vast array of military and civilian partners. This capacity, however, is now more vital to “winning without fighting by leveraging all elements of national power,” as Army Chief of Staff General James McConville explained in his paper on competition.¹

As the premier Army and Joint capability to win without fighting, these “warrior-diplomats” comprise a diverse and people-centric force for influence, collaboration, and competition in Multi-Domain and Joint All-Domain Operations and information and irregular warfare. As it maneuvers in the human geography, it builds personal and professional relationships, gaining positional advantages from access and influence as well as regional and cultural understanding vital to strategic and operational design for interagency-led competition in-theater. A lead economy-of-force capability for narrative, direct, and indirect competition, CA enriches civil-military integration.
Civil networks and knowledge from nonstop virtual and forward-deployed engagements also mitigate the inherent U.S. handicap as the “visiting team.” This is especially true when CA works by, with, and through country teams, Security Force Assistance Brigades, National Guard state partners, Foreign Area Officers, NATO and UN CIMIC, commercial enterprises, peacebuilders and humanitarians, women’s groups, etc.

What should that network look like? What should be its collaborative frameworks and tools, as well as its civil knowledge, convening, and information-sharing architectures – institutionally and operationally? What other changes in Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership & Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) should take place, within and beyond current capacities to facilitate this expanded learning organization? How should they be implemented and prioritized? These were the questions framing the discussion at the Symposium and Civil Affairs Issue Papers.

**Major Findings**

The Symposium provided neither comprehensive nor conclusive answers to these questions. From the speakers, workshops, and Civil Affairs Issue Papers, the Association and friends will enable the CA Corps and its partners to offer ways ahead to further refine at the Roundtable next spring. Among the findings:

- Especially for strategic competition, having a robust civil-military network as a result of robust and consistent civil engagement, at home as well as abroad, provides a wide and continuous feedback loop to enable more effective unified action and political-military decision-making.
- The resulting civil knowledge from such networks must be integrated with other knowledge platforms to promote unified action. Knowledge itself being power, the ability to share and integrate it rapidly is vital to success in complex operations, regardless of where, when, and why.
- Building broad-based civil networks produce and perpetuate regional and cultural competencies, which, in turn, enhance and enable information operations is critical to long-term mission success.
- While the U.S. Army just updated FM-3-57 on Civil Affairs Operations (CAO), both NATO and the UN are about to field updates of their own civil-military policies and doctrines. In all three cases, while these updates may have closed some cognitive gaps in respective emerging civil-military operations, many questions remain on how to institutionalize the necessary “OTMLPF” changes to unleash the considerable potential of civil-military forces. Platforms like the Symposium and Roundtable can help the major civil-military centers of excellence to conduct development flank coordination while enhancing a worldwide learning organization.
- Civil affairs NCOs will be the driving force in the transition to updated CAO concepts and new CA military occupational specialties (MOS’s).
- Regional civil-military networking calls for CA professionals to: continuously map and visualize the network as it grows to better understand and visualize its reach, power, and gaps; network internally and organize for a network approach; and build layered networks. It also requires a civil engagement approach centered on common aspirations (opportunities) as much as common problems (threats), continuous forward presence, and operationalizing CA teams in the rear to support forward teams. Strategic empathy, understanding how CA supports security cooperation, and presence and engagement with a genuine view to learning are also important.
• Especially in security cooperation missions in strategic competition, civil engagement activities also serve as a form of civil reconnaissance, enabling CA to better understand cultural context and identify deep-seated social grievances and aspirations at different levels of society, as well as threats to and opportunities for interagency and interorganizational stabilization.

• CA operators must be knowledgeable of and networked with interagency as well as other military information and influence related capabilities in order to be strategically shaped to gain and maintain positional advantage in the information environment. This requires persistent engagement with them, institutionally and not just operationally.

• CA activities must actively support U.S. interagency strategic messages for targeted civil societies, rather than assume that merely their broadcast is sufficient to lay the groundwork for the tactical or operational success of specific stabilization projects or key-leader engagements.

• In order to have a synergistic impact with interorganizational partners, CA must be nearly as knowledgeable of them as interagency partners, as well as applicable DoD authorities and funding mechanism such as Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (ODACHA) in order to be able to speak authoritatively as the primary advisor to military commands about them and how to best appropriately and discreetly integrate military capabilities with their capacities operationally.

• Reserve CA forces are still not readily available to military commands for other than major combat or post-conflict operations. They are still limited by archaic and arcane authorities and funding mechanisms that prevent them from leveraging the unique capacities of CA and other information-related capabilities largely in the reserve component. While detrimental to conventional wartime and post-conflict operations, the Army's inability to readily and steadily access such forces could prove incapacitating in strategic competition. It also encumbers the strategic depth of shrinking active component CA forces under greater demand for security cooperation and persistent engagement missions.

• The growing military involvement of Russia and China in UN field missions in Africa gives them greater regional access and influence as well as enabling them to change UN peace operations policies in ways counter to U.S. and Western interests and international norms, as a recent National Defense University paper observed. To counter this, the U.S. could increase military staff involvement in UN field missions, on the military staff and as military observers. As warrior-diplomats, CA would be an ideal force for these missions.

• One of the best ways the expanded Civil Affairs Corps can help build a global civil-military network for strategic competition is through the commercial connections that a civil affairs industrial base in applied social sciences and related technologies can engender. While this includes leveraging technologies in artificial intelligence, human domain and social media analysis, and simulations, it also involves entrepreneurial and venture capitalism’s crowdfunding and blockchain development platforms, as discussed in the Issue Paper on "Innovation as a Weapons System."

Finally, while this year's discussion has been largely about improving or expanding CA's capacities and capabilities, what also became loud and clear is the need for a consistent presence of CA forces at theater, joint, and service commands as well as U.S. embassies for situational awareness and understanding, planning, and security cooperation and other "persistent forward engagement" missions in order to shape and build the decisive positional advantages of a robust global civil-military network.
As 2021 Civil Affairs Roundtable keynote speaker retired Lieutenant General Eric J. Wesley stated, “you can’t compete if you’re not there.” Or as COL William Smith warned at the Symposium: “If we don’t get into the fight during competition, by the time we get to open conflict, the war is already lost.” Beyond reviving the 2016-17 discussion of “leveraging civil affairs,” the issue of how to create a demand signal for CA in strategic competition may merit greater attention.

Keynote Speaker

This year’s keynote speaker was Major General Darrell J. Guthrie, Commanding General, 88th Readiness Division and former commanding general of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), or USACAPOC(A). “Observations of a Former Civil Affairs Commanding General on Operation Allies Welcome,” facilitated by Association Vice President and former USACAPOC(A) commanding general Major General Daniel R. Ammerman, U.S. Army (Ret.).

As senior mission commander for the operation, MG Guthrie was able to draw on many of the 88th’s 55,000 Soldiers based in 250 facilities in 19 states from Ohio to the Pacific Northwest to receive and process over 77,000 “guests” from Afghanistan between 17 August and 25 October. The majority of these resettling evacuees worked directly with U.S. military, diplomatic, or development efforts, or are their family members. At one of eight DoD installations, about 1,500 Soldiers of Task Force McCoy are working with representatives of 200 federal interagency and non-governmental organizations, as well as state and local governments, to resettle almost 13,000 of these evacuees. From his point of view, the civil-military, federal, state, and local governmental and community coordination has been “absolutely amazing.”

In response to Association president Kirlin’s mention of the last such operation, in which CA was involved, for Cubans in the “Freedom Flotilla” in May 1980, MG Guthrie noted some similarities. Among these were the scale and rapidity of the surge of evacuees and the complex challenge of interagency, intergovernmental, and interorganizational coordination, let alone military command and control. The lines of responsibility, however, are now clearer under the Defense Support to Civil Authority (DSCA) construct, with smooth State Department transition, as the initial lead federal agency, to the Department of Homeland Security, with clearer delineation of legal jurisdictions. And today’s information-rich environment, including social media, has enabled faster and more consistent dissemination of information to the guests. Finally, this resettlement mission will continue through the winter months.

Concurring with this year’s theme, MG Guthrie emphasized how the operation he oversees demonstrates the criticality of building networks in complex, multi-domain operations. One of the great comparative advantages of reserve forces in general and reserve CA forces in particular is their natural ability to build civil networks, noting the definition from the new Army FM 3-57, Civil Affairs Operations:

*A civil network is a collection of formal and informal groups, associations, military engagements, and organizations within an operational environment that interact with each other with varying degrees of frequency, trust, and collaboration.*

In *Operation Allies Welcome,* “we learned to trust and collaborate on the fly. It would have been so much easier if some of these networks were already established.” As an aside, he also noted the Civil Affairs Association and events like this contribute to greater frequency, trust, and collaboration within the interagency, international organizations, and non-governmental organization community. It also enables better understanding the population in question and its formal and informal structure. In today’s operational environment, especially for strategic competition, having a robust civil-military network as a
result of robust and consistent civil engagement, at home as well as abroad, provides a wide and continuous feedback loop to enable more effective unified action and political-military decision-making.

For his second major insight, he cited FM 3-57 again to explain how the resulting civil knowledge such networks generate must be “integrated with other knowledge about the operational environment to create shared understanding among commanders, unified action partners, international organizations, and civilian partners.” “Knowledge is power,” he went on, “and the ability to share and integrate it rapidly is critical to success in complex operations is essential to creating shared understanding across the interagency and NGO representatives. This is true whether you are in Syria or in Wisconsin.”

His third insight is how civil networks produce and perpetuate regional and cultural competencies. Yet, he noted, “we continue to struggle in this space when it comes to tribal, ethnic, and cultural norms.” He then gave his personal recommendations on how to move the civil affairs enterprise forward:

- First, DoD and DA civilian executive as well as military command leadership must better recognize the capabilities, skills, and talents that reside in USACAPOC and the civil affairs community writ large. The demand is undoubtedly there for CA forces in DSCA mission sets – Army National Guard units maintain CA personnel in their ranks and, in this operational case, all eight DoD safe havens have requested CA support. Yet, there were only two CA-qualified officers in the operations (one of which was MG Guthrie). There remains a sense of confusion if CA forces are restricted to operating only overseas. CA forces, both Active and Reserve, need more full-spectrum legal authorities and budget mechanisms that make it far more accessible to joint and Army commands. More CA personnel were needed for this operation, but Reserve CA forces are still not readily available to military commands for other than major combat or post-conflict operations. While detrimental to operations like these, this could provide incapacitating in the steady state of strategic competition.

- His second recommendation is with respect to how CA’s unique abilities for civil networking, civil engagement, civil analysis, and civil knowledge integration make it a de facto force of choice in psychological as well as information operations. Again, drawing from (para. 1-44) of FM 3-57, MG Guthrie noted how, when deployed, “CA forces enhance and enable information operations (IO) by identifying civil aspects of the information environment, assessing and evaluating civil indicators of IO effectiveness within the AO, and providing actionable options to the supported commander’s IO plan regarding themes and messages. CA forces complete these actions and provide support to IO through the conduct of CAO.” As an information-related capability, CA “is profoundly important because money and thought leadership, like today, is flowing to those providing these capabilities.” Whether in Operation Allies Welcome, competition, or conflict, operations are conducted in a rich information environment. Therefore, being able to enhance and enable information operations is critical to mission success and the long-term success of civil affairs.

Workshop I – Civil Affairs Proponent Updates: CA in Joint, Army, Marine Corps, & NATO Initiatives

The Symposium workshops kicked off with a panel of institutional representatives from the “proponents/schoolhouses” to provide updates on issues and initiatives their organizations have been working on since the CA Roundtable held in April 2021. As in previous sessions, Colonel (Ret.) Dennis J. Cahill, Deputy Civil Affairs Capability Manager at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Force Modernization Center (UFMC), and a current Civil Affairs Association Director, returned to moderate this
The panel members included, in order of presentation, Lieutenant Colonel (promotable) Dave Henning of the Joint Civil Affairs Proponent at U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM); Colonel Kurt Sisk, Civil Affairs Capability Manager at the UFMC; Colonel Jay Liddick, Director of the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI); Mr. Aaron Weiss, U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Civil Affairs Strategic Planner at the Office of the Deputy Commandant for Information (DCI), who is also a senior Civil Affairs non-commissioned officer and a Civil Affairs Association Director; and Lieutenant Colonel Stefan Muehlich, Branch Chief of the Concepts, Interoperability, and Capabilities Branch at the NATO Civil-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence (CCoE).

LTC(P) Henning kicked off the briefing portion by providing a USSOCOM J39 Civil Affairs Update. He first presented an overview of the current J39 Civil Affairs Branch structure, which consists of four officers and one civilian contractor. He then provided an overview of two main points:

- The J39 is in the process of updating the USSOCOM Directive that governs the MFP-11-funded civil-military engagement (CME) program of record. Connected to this update is a related effort to develop a better system of tracking and reporting CME progress and achievements in each theater so that decision-makers better understand the value proposition of special operations CA Soldiers in global networks during competition.
- The FY20 Annual Assessment of USSOCOM’s status as the Joint Proponent for Civil Affairs was completed and submitted in written form in March of 2021. A formal presentation of results to the office of the Assistant Deputy Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC)) has been delayed for several reasons, but course of action development for future execution of Joint CA proponency is expected to resume with a 16 November 2021 briefing to the USSOCOM Chief of Staff. The J39 will conduct the FY21 Annual Assessment by the end of second quarter FY22 and will likely present the results of both the FY20 and FY21 assessments to the ASD (SO/LIC) at that time. In the meantime, the Joint doctrine team projects initial coordination and a call for a writing team to update Joint Publication 3-57 sometime in the 2nd or 3rd quarter of FY22.

COL Sisk followed with a U.S. Army Civil Affairs Proponent Update, focusing on the following:

- A restated value proposition to augment existing strategic communications messages: “Civil affairs forces provide commanders a capability to understand and address the political, economic, and social challenges of the operational environment that affect all military operations.”
- An overview of the current Civil Affairs Capability Manager Division structure, which consists of six officers, one non-commissioned officer, five Department of the Army civilians, and two individuals borrowed from outside organizations to focus on key elements of CA modernization.
- A discussion of five priority efforts and the multiple supporting efforts he and his team are working on to move the Army’s CA force into the future. Recent developments include the publication of a new version of FM 3-57, Civil Affairs Operations, on 29 July 2021; the redesignation of active CA officers from 38A to 38S and the active NCOs from 38B to 38R, 38T, 38W, and 38Z. Chief among the ongoing efforts is the development of a CA Science and Technology Learning Ecosystem (CASTLE), which incorporates technical elements of the CA Solution-Army (CAS-A) effort and a multi-disciplinary science approach to understanding and analyzing the human aspects of military operations that will be built into a unique framework for training and educating future CA Soldiers and units.
COL Jay Liddick then updated for the Joint Proponent for Stabilization and Peace Operations:

- While PKSOI remains at Carlisle Barracks, PA, and works with the U.S. Army War College, it now reports to the commander of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, KS.
- With about 20 assigned personnel, PKSOI concentrates on policy and strategy; concepts and doctrine; training and exercises; and leader development and education. In order to move both stabilization and peace operations forward, PKSOI works closely with the CA Capability Manager and CA Branch Proponent on key elements of those responsibilities.
- Within four lines of effort designed to improve DoD, interagency, and other partner peace and stability capabilities, PKSOI key efforts include: updating Joint Publication 3-07, Stabilization Activities, to be published by December 2021; institutionalizing the Joint Interagency Stabilization Course with 2 courses per year for 30 students each in March and October; implementing the Global Fragility Act in coordination with DoD, Department of State (DoS), and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and working with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stabilization and Humanitarian Affairs (DASD (SHA)) to execute the Biennial Stabilization Assessment for 2022.

Mr. Aaron Weiss provided a USMC CA proponent update, covering four main points:

- A recent virtual CA working group for USMC CA units and professionals developed or refined multiple topics across DOTMLPF-P to focus the USMC proponent in its work to improve civil affairs group (CAG) operations and force professionalization.
- The proponent has nearly completed a new policy for civil affairs and civil-military operations that covers topics such as governance of the CA community within the USMC structure and the role of CA within information operations.
- Within the area of force professionalization, the proponent is recoding CA positions into a 17XX code set that combines psychological operations and civil affairs into a single career track for Influence Officers and Influence Marines and in the active component. There will be no immediate change to management of reserve component CA Marines until after the active component changes are assessed. At the same time, security clearance requirements for CA planners are being upgraded to enable better integration with maneuver planning. These changes have necessitated a reassessment of training requirements and an increase in the number of military occupational specialty courses for FY22.
- Work is being done to finalize the Marine Civil Information Management System (MARCIMS) as a program of record. It is important to continue to improve this system and to be able to share civil information with partners, the CA community, and maneuver units as well as to integrate analysis with the intelligence community.

LTC Muehlich concluded the briefing portion of the workshop by providing a view of current NATO CIMIC from the perspective of a Branch Chief at the CIMIC Center of Excellence (CCoE). His main points touched on policy, a comprehensive approach, and potential opportunities and risks.

- NATO’s revised policy on CIMIC and CMI (civil-military interaction), currently in staffing, reflects several trends in NATO CIMIC, including an increased focus on three areas: non-lethal methods for effects through CMI, analysis and assessment of the civil environment, and widening the scope of operations to include the broader continuum of competition.
The ability of NATO CIMIC forces to talk to and plan with civilian agencies before crises occur is often challenged by national sovereignty issues and political fears that NATO is interfering with national priorities. To remedy this, the concept of comprehensive approach is finally being addressed at high levels and will ultimately be defined in NATO policy and doctrine.

The CCoE continues to work on the comparison of changing U.S. CA and NATO CIMIC doctrine (announced at the CA Roundtable in April) and hopes to execute the planned courses for EURO-NATO CIMIC familiarization for U.S. CA units in the first quarter of calendar year 2022. One challenge already identified is the number of terms used by both forces that have different meanings, requiring better synchronization in the writing and publication of foundational documents.

The question-and-answer period provided an opportunity for proponent representatives to respond to questions and concerns of the community of interest and covered a broad range of topics, including: the importance of 38G and why 38B NCOs are currently restricted from pursuing 38G; the delta in the enlisted ranks of USAR CA units and restructuring of the Army CA force; ownership of CA data using systems like Palantir and a question regarding the ultimate system for capturing, analyzing, and storing CA data; information advantage as it relates to CA operations; USMC CA force structure changes in terms of active and reserve components, enlisted MOSs, and regional focus; and the continuation of ASCOPE-PMESII as a tool for binning data vs. analysis and building the assessment framework for CA.

### Workshop II – USACAPOC(A) Command Strategic Initiatives in Civil-Military Networking

Among the more insightful discussions of the implications of the new CA doctrine was led by Colonel Marshall Straus Scantlin, USACAPOC(A) Director of Strategic Initiatives, was joined in a review of “Command Strategic Initiatives in Civil-Military Networking” by three current CA brigade commanders: Colonel Keith K. Kelly, who commands the 364th Civil Affairs Brigade; Colonel Reginald J. Kornegay, commander 360th CA Bde; and Colonel William J. Smith from the 308th CA Bde.

The panel started with and introduction by COL Scantlin and the question, what do we [USACAPOC(A)] look like and what do we do in the future as our doctrine and environment changes? It focused on two new elements in the 28 July 2021 update of civil affairs doctrine, FM 3-57, Civil Affairs Operations. The new field manual brings a different way of understanding and implementing civil affairs doctrine. Those two groundbreaking elements are the Civil Affairs Task Force and Civil Network Development and Engagement. So, the panel centered its discussion around these two questions: “What is a Civil Affairs Task Force [CATF] and how does it operate during competition, conflict, or large-scale combat?” and “How do we plan and implement Civil Network Development and Engagement [CDNE] during competition, conflict, or large-scale combat?” The panel members describe their approaches to these two elements of FM 3-57 and then responded to audience inquires.

From FM 3-57, a CATF is a scalable unit in charge of the stabilization elements and organized around the nucleus of CA and support elements and provide an important linkage between interagency, inter-organizational, and non-government organizations. The augmentation can include public affairs, maneuver elements, engineers, medical units, military police, logistics and transportation elements, or other units as necessary for stabilization operations. Also from FM 3-57, CDNE is the activity that engages, evaluates, develops, and integrates civil network capabilities and resources into operations and provides commanders with a more complete understanding of the operational environment. CDNE
enables freedom of movement and maneuver, management of limited resources, preserving combat power, and options to find, disrupt, and defeat threats in the civil component.

COL Keith Kelly focused on the INDOPACOM area of responsibility and stated the USACAPOC(A) owns the bulk of the Army's (and thus the Join force's) influence capabilities (i.e., 90% of CA and PSYOP and 75% of IO), including almost all the its strategic and operational level CA. CDNE helps frame civil reconnaissance, civil-military engagement, civil knowledge integration (CKI), and other aspects of CAO activities with respect to the human domain. In this sense, he said, “CA Soldiers shape the operational environment,” throughout the competition continuum, including crisis and conflict. He identified two issues with the CDNE concept. One is whether CDNE is a staff or team function as continued engagement is needed to maintain and build the network. The other is how CA should share the products and information derived from CDNE. In addressing the CATF, he stated the requirement has to be added to theater operational plans with planning assistance from USACAPOC(A)'s civil affairs commands (CACOMs).

COL Reginald Kornegay emphasized the need to adjust our thinking about civil affairs within the context of the new doctrine. Civil networks must endure during all phases of operations and civil network development to support operations is inherently different from the paradigm of American strategic culture. In especially great power competition, he concluded, “we’re going to have to get out in the field much more in pre-crisis in order to shape the competition environment.” This is because of the greater relevance of strategic and situational understanding, which is more than just awareness. CATF's are not always focused on support to conventional maneuver; in fact, they can be the focus of operations, and be the lead element for the fulfillment of theater campaign and national strategic objectives. CATF personnel must not only be far better educated than before, but must also train in combat training centers (CTCs) more frequently. Figuring out the CATF’s role in combined/joint/interagency settings will allow us to win without fighting. “We cannot be an afterthought,” he stressed, at any point in the competition continuum.

Further noting the criticality of the constant forward presence of civil affairs forces in theater strategic and operational commands, COL William Smith observed that “if we don’t get into the fight during competition, by the time we get to open conflict, the war is already lost.” He noted how the CATF concept worked very well in the latter stages of U.S. operations in Afghanistan and in CA's work in Kuwait on refugee issues, adding how access and influence and information advantages have also been a key factor there. Two issues these operations raised are: the lack of a task force in Qatar to work information advantage and information operations; and, whether the echelon for basing a CATF should be the CACOM.

Among the questions the panel addressed in the following interactive discussion were:

1. Can we use CA brigades and CACOMs at Warfighter exercises? The consensus is yes, we need to use them at higher echelon exercises – where Army and Joint force leaders stand to learn to understand and leverage CA in general and CATFs and CDNE in particular.

2. What will CA force structure changes look like with the new doctrine? USACPOC(A), in coordination with the Civil Affairs Proponent, is working some of these issues and expects to forward a recommendation in June 2022. (Note: This may be impacted by the deactivation of the 83rd CA Battalion – the last active component conventional CA formation, along with possible reductions in the 95th CA Brigade structure.)
3. Should the information-related capabilities consolidate in one organization? Although no consensus emerged, USACAPOC(A) provides that structure (albeit, not as an operational, force development, or training and doctrine command for Army information-related capabilities).

4. How do we prepare senior NCOs and field grade officers for thinking at Combatant Command level? Considered are various opportunities to achieve a better development model, e.g. training with industry, college partnerships (as well as self-development platforms ideal for reserve component CA professionals, such as those listed in the Association website’s “Learning Resources” page).

5. What potential institutional and force development hurdles are we facing and how do we adapt through operational iterations to prepare for the future? Potential solutions include new ideas and different ways of doing things that are tested; failures will identify areas to improve; vector-based analysis tools to understand the environment. USACAPOC(A), the panel concluded, has to provide feedback to proponent to further develop and refine doctrine.

6. How would disruption of civil networks, caused by conflict, impact CATF operations and engagements? The current Army model is not sustainable, the panel contended. Sporadic RC CA deployments restart relationships and network development at the beginning of every deployment and do not share knowledge from rotation to rotation. As COL Smith noted, CA cannot help the Army help the Nation to win without fighting if it is not maintaining a constant presence at supported Joint and Army commands, nor maintaining a persistent presence in forward areas in order to conduct CDNE. Human networks evolve rapidly and continuous engagement is required to understand civil and cultural considerations, shape narratives, limit disruptions, evaluate networks, identify opportunities, and respond to changes.

7. What does the U.S. Marine Corps version of information advantage look like? USMC transformation includes a cadre to deploy forward and develop and maintain long-term engagement. Marine Littoral Regiments rotate in and out of theaters to maintain a persistent presence forward but with the reduced footprint of a Marine Air Ground Task Force. MLRs include littoral combat teams, logistics, air, PSYOP, CA, and network analysis and engagement.

**Workshop III – Non-Commissioned Officer Forum – The Role of the CA NCO in Building Networks**

The first day ended with the non-commissioned officer forum on the role of the CA NCO in building networks – a topic also covered in this year’s winning Issue Paper. Facilitated by Civil Affairs Corps Honorary Sergeant Major and Association Vice-President retired Command Sergeant Major Timothy Kohring, who also serves as a Regional Plans Specialist at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, the discussants included: Sergeant Major Analisa Ortega, Operations Sergeant Major, 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group; Sergeant Major Frank Mathias, G37 Sergeant Major, USACAPOC(A); Master Sergeant Nicholas Weisenberger, Operations NCOIC, 98th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A); and, Staff Sergeant Lucas Vaughan, Civil Affairs NCO, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A). A word of thanks goes out to 1SG Sean Acosta from the Association for initiating this forum.

The forum centered is discussion around a major implication of the new FM 3-57 in Civil Network Development and Engagement (CDNE) as new core competency of CA warrior-diplomats and as part of CAO. Future NCOs will eventually learn the new doctrine training within the CA course curriculum, considering that a new officer branch (38S) and a new enlisted MOS (38R) will be created by 2023. For a
time, however, the CA operational force will be challenged with having two overlapping CA MOSs within their teams – the original 38B Civil Affairs NCO (whose MOS converts to 38R as all positions within the tables of organizations and equipment recode to 38R); and, the 38R Civil Reconnaissance NCO.

The challenge of managing this transition will fall largely to CA NCOs. School training has yet to be developed to teach the (not yet mature) CDNE concept as envisaged in the doctrine to the operational CA force. In the interim, current CA NCO leadership needs to work within the Army structure while leveraging their well-established leadership, mentoring, and adaptive skills to integrate the CDNE concept within the CA force at tactical unit and team levels – all while maintaining current operations tempo in CA team rotations to supported commands in-theater.

While the parallel CDNE and MOS integration processes are taking place first among active CA, the reserve CA force must also contend with it as a longer and more difficult process. As this transition takes place, networking between active and reserve CA NCOs must take place simultaneously with building institutional and operational civil-military networks outside the CA Corps. For one, this will enable unit transition processes (as an extension of training). Secondly, it will maintain unit and CA Corps readiness during competition operations. Active/reserve CA unit senior NCO collaboration will drive much of the CDNE and MOS transition process. Their own knowledge and understanding of the new doctrine and human domain will go far to get units and teams up to speed quickly and effectively.

One area of concern was shown by how the panel members themselves understood the new MOSs only as far as the Military Occupation Change Status (MOCS) as approved, but without clear and detailed descriptions of the new officer/NCO MOS's. At the time of the Symposium, the Proponent was working hard on the 38R MOS but was not available to brief. The panel agreed that the Proponent needs to brief both CDNE, the new MOS's; and the transition process at the CA Roundtable next spring.

This will help reach some key CA NCO leaders. Following a discussion with CSM (Ret.) Tim Strong, CA Proponent leadership development chief, the panel identified a parallel need for a series of online NCO professional development sessions to socialize these complex sets of changes among the largest possible number of active/reserve NCOs. The CA Association has offered to sponsor these online sessions.

Given all these challenges, CA NCO leadership must clearly march the CA Corps forward into the future as outlined in the CA Proponent’s 2020 Capabilities Based Assessment (CBA). The mission as described in the CBA outcome is changing for CA. The doctrinal changes in the newest FM 3-57 are more substantial than the incremental ones over the last decade or so. Fortunately, CA NCOs are well educated, motivated, and cognizant of the importance of their mission. With an intrinsic understanding and knowledge of their enterprise, they are a driving force within the CA Corps and its transition. Advising bottom-up as well as mentoring top-down, they will manage the changes to come through the Force Modernization process.

**Workshop IV – Lessons in Building Regional Networks: Recent, Current, and Emerging Operations**

The second day opened up with Workshop IV on “Lessons in Building Regional Networks from Recent, Current, and Emerging Operations” from CA practitioners recently or currently deployed in theater locations. Facilitated by Major Assad A. Raza, Division of Civil-Military Studies (DCMS), Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), the panel included: Major Nick Dubaz, Civil-Military Plans Officer, C9 Directorate, U.S. Forces Korea; Captain Benjamin Ordiway, a graduate student
formerly assigned to the 92nd Civil Affairs Battalion (SO) (A); Captain Benjamin Gump, Chief, Civil Information Management Cell, OEF-HoA; and Sergeant Major Chris Melendez, Civil-Military Operations Planner, U.S. Army Pacific.

MAJ Dubaz noted how contemporary conflict and competition requires building regional civil-military networks that cross borders to accomplish operational and strategic objectives. While CA teams are proficient at developing local networks, there continue to be issues of tying them with tactical level networks at the operational level to achieve sustainable strategic effects. The Syrian civil war is a case study of both conflict and competition for influence in a complex environment with various insurgent groups supported by foreign powers fighting alongside or against each other, along with a humanitarian crisis creating a massive influx of refugees into Europe. Given poor cooperation among countries like Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, CA teams were effective in border area civil network development to support coalition military objectives. There are three key lessons that CA could apply to any regional network-building approach at operational and tactical levels:

- **Continuously map and visualize the network as it grows to better understand and visualize its reach, power, and gaps.** The Naval Postgraduate School’s CORE Lab provides courses on social network analysis methods, theories, and analytical tools used for more information. The techniques taught at the CORE Lab draw insights from network data for operational effects. These social network analysis mathematical and visualization tools can identify key nodes, connectors, influencers, and other measures of networks that would not be apparent in raw data.

- **Network internally and organize for a network approach.** Once networks are mapped and analyzed, it is critical to utilize their information to improve internal networks and organize for an approach more adaptive to their circumstances. In Northeast Syria, the combined State/USAID interagency team and CA company was the critical civil-military networking node. This organizational design effectively linked previously disconnected networks, including local councils, emerging civil societies, NGOs, IGOs, and interagency partners. Understanding these networks has allowed for effective coordination and targeting of stabilization assistance in post-ISIS controlled areas.

- **Build layered networks.** Once organized for a networked approach, it is essential to adapt and scale networks through a layered approach. This requires both tactical development and operational integration, as well as identifying complementary and supplementary networks that this approach reveals. This can improve the resiliency of networks and account for gaps among them as seen early on in the Syrian conflict, as CA teams worked in the peripheries in Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey. The CA company’s layered approach starting in Qatar facilitated the successful access and entry of U.S. forces in the Syrian interior once the decision was made to deploy them.

CPT Ordiway provided a case study from his CA team’s experience with developing networks in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The U.S. Embassy Sarajevo asked his team to identify civil engagement opportunities at the local level in Republika Srpska (RS), given the difficulty of the Embassy’s programmatic approaches, personnel limitations, and the RS’s general aversion to any U.S.-backed initiatives. His team developed civil networks, from local mayors to NASA’s Headquarters and Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the Environmental Protection Agency, for Embassy use. Most compelling was its intra-state ethnic and
political factors model explained in his *Defense Visual Information Distribution Service* story. Major lessons included:

- An engagement approach centered on *common problems* is a good recipe for short-term success. (e.g., Pliva River flooding across the inter-ethnic boundary). A longer-lasting approach, however, is to find and capitalize on initiatives centering on *common aspirations*. For example, their CA team established a common aspiration by leveraging NASA programs to help educate children.

- Strategic competition undoubtedly requires continuous forward presence, but what you make of that presence is even more critical. For example, each engagement the CA team and its successors had with the Jezero mayor coincided with an increasing number and variety of local and U.S. organizations. When the U.S. Ambassador delivered a letter from the NASA Director of Mars Exploration Program to the mayor, media interest grew from local radio to RS media to regional media through the Balkans. For the Perseverance Rover landing on Mars, the CA team helped organize a youth-based “landing party in Jezero” covered by major media in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as the Associated Press, spreading to National Geographic, ABC, NBC, and NPR.

- Operationalize teams in the rear to support the forward team. One challenge for rotating CA teams is in maintaining the relationships with established networks, with the risk of burning out these relationships or losing rapport as teams are often short-term visitors for local partners. This reinforces the common view that, while CA teams may be endearing, their efforts are not enduring. By ensuring continuity of deployed team actions, the CA company remained connected with the forward team to help ensure continuity as well as unity of effort. Much of this was due to team-to-team succession management and coordinated mission preparation at Fort Bragg, NC. This also helps designated teams maintain constantly updated situational understanding at any point in the rotational cycle.

As the Civil Information Management Cell Chief at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, in support of *Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa* (OEF-HOA), CPT Gump related the challenges in Africa in how Russia and China continuously seek access and influence with governments in the region. The Chinese are perceived to have unlimited funds and manpower for highly attractive massive infrastructure projects, presenting dilemmas for U.S. civil and military operators unable to respond symmetrically to that challenge. CA teams at OEF-HOA utilized several initiatives to develop local partnerships. Three of them were: support to the DoD initiative on Women, Peace, and Security; capacity development of local doctors and veterinarians; and an English language discussion group. CA teams engaged with partners from local to senior government levels as well as interagency and interorganizational partners. These civil engagement activities also served as a form of civil reconnaissance, enabling them to better understand social grievances and aspirations at different levels of society. Among their discoveries in military and government agencies was their intense interest to partner with or attract U.S. investors for tourism and other economic opportunities, which proved useful to the U.S. Embassy.

However, they also discovered the population’s low confidence in their own governments to meet local needs. In addition to advocating on local behalf with their governments, CA teams helped identify non-government resources to fill essential service gaps. CPT Sabin’s team, for example, collaborated with the government to refurbish a well to increase local access to water, improving local trust in the government.
Joint training with allies and partners to improve local service capacities such as veterinarian services were an excellent mechanism to strengthen and expand networks without compromising them.

The English language discussion groups provided an opportunity for local groups to focus less on their differences while learning English together. At the same time, the CA teams learned to better understand various local network dynamics, helping to frame engagements with government officials better as they advocated for locals based on their knowledge of societal needs gathered through these initiatives.

SGM Melendez acquainted the audience with the Indo-Pacific’s vast scope and scale as well as its numerous extremes. This provides challenges to how theater Army commands must build strong, regional partnerships within such a complex “neighborhood” through the twin efforts of strategic dialogue and exercises at multiple levels as critical to this goal. He also cited the Defense Institution Reform Initiative (DIRI) strategic framework for general principles in building such relationships.

SGM Melendez had three considerations for CA in building or contributing to regional networks:

- **Strategic Empathy** – We craft campaign plans, operations, and orders from various strategic policies and strategies because we know ourselves and our priorities. Similarly, we must continually cultivate an appreciation for the internal pressures (e.g., social, economic, political) that shape our allies’, partners’, and competitors’ range of options. CA must go beyond the mere collection of facts to the internalized recognition—and appreciation—of such factors.

- **Security Cooperation/Civil Affairs Relationship** – There is a very important, albeit underdeveloped, relationship between CA and the security cooperation enterprise. This relationship often goes unnoticed at tactical levels where CA teams concern themselves with achieving “success” in relatively short rotations. Critically, CA elements ought always to consider how their activities either help or hinder long-term security cooperation efforts in a given country.

- **Presence & Engagement** – This is probably the most obvious observation, but it is so critical that it bears repeating often. Partnerships are reciprocal relationships. If you want to be a good neighbor in the Pacific—or anywhere—you must show up, participate, and be willing to learn from others. We exchange best practices and learn from one another. Exercises and strategic dialogues provide a great opportunity to bring the team together and build “reps” around common problem sets.

**Workshop V – Interagency Coordination for Advancing the Information Element of U.S. Power**

The impetus for this year’s interagency workshop comes from how the pervasive threat posed by mis-, mal-, and dis-information has grown and evolved over the past decade or so. This is a challenge that straddles the civilian and military aspects of U.S. foreign policy, particularly in strategic competition. It also transcends the strategic tension we sometimes feel, as we adapt to a world centered around strategic competition on the one hand, while also dealing with the continuous challenge of non-state actors on the other. In both types of competition, our adversaries are making malign use of Information to further their goals at the expense of the United States and its allies. CA obviously has a lot to contribute to this effort. But there are other key actors across the civil-military spectrum working in this space with which civil affairs would benefit in networking.

Moderated by Ryan McCannell, a Civil Affairs Association director who works for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as Director of the Center for Conflict and Violence Prevention, which
is part of the Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Stabilization, the interagency panel focused on the strategic role that information plays as an element of national power. Representatives from four key agencies described the broad range of efforts underway in the Information realm, where global and regional networks are adapting to evolving threats and opportunities. They included: Stevie B. Hamilton, Jr., Director of the Interagency and International Coordination Cell at the State Department’s Global Engagement Center (GEC); Mick Crnkovich, Director for Information Operations in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Special Operations & Combating Terrorism; Mrs. Mirela Bruk, Senior Strategic Program Analyst at the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) in the Office of Policy and Research; and Lieutenant Colonel Diana Parzik, Counter-Disinformation Coordinator at USAID’s Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, as well as commander of the 440th Civil Affairs Battalion in Fort Carson, CO.

The discussion started with brief summaries of the organizations’ respective contributions in relation to the Information element of national power. Although the four featured agencies contribute to the same strategic end – the promotion of democracy and deterrence in the face of mis-, dis-, and mal-information operations by violent non-state adversaries and autocratic competitors – the ways and means vary widely. Both USAID and the GEC provide grants and technical assistance to independent media and civil society organizations in host nations to improve media literacy, secure online information sharing, and debunk propaganda. State/GEC also plays a critical coordination role across agencies in Washington, at numerous diplomatic posts, and with the media and technology industries; as well as data analysis and policy formulation based on trends and innovations in the Information sector.

The United States Agency for Global Media centers its work around the six networks it supports: Voice of America; the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, which oversees Radio and TV Martí; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Radio Free Asia; the Middle East Broadcasting Networks; and a new Open Technology Fund, which provides secure and uncensored access to the internet for those living in information restricted countries. The mechanisms for such support vary across networks, but in all cases, USAGM maintains a legal and operational firewall between the policy making and coordination functions of the agency itself, and the constellation of independent media networks receiving support. This firewall embodies the U.S. constitutional framework and ensures that supported entities can achieve the highest journalistic standards while remaining free of influence in the content of their reporting. USAGM also maintains coordination networks with like-minded national broadcasting agencies and provides professional education and training to journalists and other key actors in host nations.

Meanwhile, DoD maintains numerous information-related capabilities such as IO, PSYOP, CA, and even classic human intelligence activities. Mr. Crnkovich noted that the Department has recently redoubled its efforts to coordinate among these capabilities, at the behest of the Congress, including new senior IO advisors undertaking posture reviews to recommend enhancements that should streamline and focus IO capabilities in the near future.

The question-and-answer period focused on two key themes that emerged from this broad overview. The first explored the strengths and weaknesses of the diverse and relatively decentralized U.S. approach to Information, as compared to the apparently more focused and centralized means employed by autocratic competitors. Panelists noted that this approach reflects the American political culture and structure of
using checks and balances among several competing organizations to avoid a concentration of power and promote a pluralistic approach to solving problems. However, they acknowledged that coordination remains a continuous challenge and various inefficiencies can result from this approach. What works best is when the White House and other key policy makers articulate clear strategic goals and messages that agencies can rally around. After less than a year in power, the Biden Administration is still formulating its national security strategy and installing key political appointments, which explain some of the challenges agencies face even as their capabilities continue to grow and evolve.

The second theme was, quite naturally, what role the Civil Affairs Corps can and should play in today's complex, information-rich environment. Panelists responded that CA is an important and unique capability for civil-military networking and influence, given its dual role of informing commanders about the civil environment while serving as a principal touchpoint for the U.S. military among civilian interlocutors in embassy country teams and host-nation civil society. Moreover, the information environment has changed remarkably in the past decade – what Mr. Crnkovich refers to as “an electronic herd mentality” – where the challenge is ensuring “the speed of command [can] exceed the speed of maneuver.” This challenge required persistent engagement and a clear sense of how the CA mission set contributes to both an embassy country team’s overall goals, as well as the DoD’s IO architecture.

As LTC Parzik noted, this challenge is complicated by the fact that IO occurs primarily in steady-state and gray-zone environments where competition is occurring in real time and below the level of traditional warfare. These factors require more sophistication and a somewhat different skill set than CA personnel receive in the course of their qualification courses and other military training. It also requires a change of mindset: CA activities must support the strategic messages that the U.S. Government is attempting to send to civil societies in host nations, rather than perceiving that those messages are broadcast to lay the groundwork for the tactical success of specific construction projects or key-leader engagements. It is therefore incumbent upon the CA Corps to be knowledgeable of and networked with interagency as well as other military information and influence related capabilities in order to be strategically shaped to gain and maintain positional advantage in the information environment.

In summary, the information challenge aligns fundamentally with the core strength of CA: its fluency in and comfort with the seams between civilian and military communities. As LTC Parzik put it: “it takes a network to fight a network,” and CA, a premier U.S. civil-military networking capacity, is integral to the information and influence ecosystem in which it – and the commands they support – operate. As such, the CA Corps is a national strategic land power capability in advancing U.S. power in the information realm.

**Workshop VI – Operation Allies Refuge: Lessons on Interagency and Multinational Collaboration**

Following MG Guthrie’s keynote observations on civil-military networking from *Operation Allies Welcome* in the U.S. there was a similar review of interagency and multinational collaboration in Europe during the associated *Operation Allies Refuge* (OAR). Association Vice-President Colonel Caroline Pogge, who has been posted with the U.S. Army Europe & Africa (USAREUR-AF) as the G39 Civil Affairs Planning Team Chief, steered a rich discussion by an eclectic group of practitioners from across DoD, DoS and the NGO community. They all quickly engaged in the operation from prior to the arrival for the first Afghan Travelers in Europe in mid-August through those still involved in operations today. These included:
- Major Susan Graler from the 361st CA Bde, posted at the 21st Theater Support Command at Ramstein Air Base and Rhine Ordnance Barracks to provide active-duty operational support (ADOS) as CA detachment leader
- Ms. Dee Swanier from the American Red Cross, Europe
- Ms. Colleen Denny from the NGO, Spirit of America, Europe
- Captain Josh Black, B Company, 415th CA Battalion CA Team Leader, Camp Liya (Kosovo)
- Lieutenant Colonel Tyler Waterhouse, attached to the Department of State as Military Advisor at the Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) in Washington, D.C.
- Mr. Josh Mater, Department of State – temporarily supporting PRM in Washington, D.C.
- Ms. Gina Kassem, Department of State (Bucharest) – temporarily supporting PRM in Kosovo; and
- Master Sergeant Larry Lloyd from the 308th CA Bde, currently posted as USAREUR-AF G39 OAR lead planner in Wiesbaden, Germany (and also a 2020-21 Civil Affairs Issue Papers author).

Following quick introductions and a bit of background on organizational roles in OAR, members of the group provided observations, with many of the panel members echoing MSG Lloyd’s comment about the need to establish a network both internal to your organization and external across interorganizational spaces as a function of operational readiness.

Josh Mater, in his opening remarks, noted the importance of recognizing positive as well as negative lessons. “We need to recognize success. It is always easy to identify what went wrong or could go differently, but we need to celebrate all the things we did well despite all the obstacles and significant changes.” He also reinforced Susan Graler’s point about how authorities and funding for complex operations like OAR are clearly identified and delineated, stressing the need for all civil-military players to understand the various respective funding streams, and for what they can be used. For example, a civil action focused event will no doubt involve CA. “We need to be smart about what can be accessed, such as ODACHA [Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid] funds. We need to understand who can join the effort and may be able to extend our resources to other partners we may not be able to directly work with.” NGOs, in turn, provide valuable expertise and fill important gaps, such as the American Red Cross in accepting local community donations, and Spirit of America in quickly purchasing items on local markets such as diapers, coats, etc. In order to have a synergistic impact, CA must be knowledgeable of all these things and able to speak authoritatively within military commands and DoD offices about these options and how to best integrate CA and partners into operational planning and execution.

In this respect, the panelists also recognized the value of the CA voice both within DoD and also within DoS offices at higher levels. They relayed these more practical points of view and explained the perspectives of partners and affected populations and provided cultural understanding. All this is incorporated into decision-making and planning processes and not to be an afterthought, particularly with regard to interagency coordination and funding considerations. For example, identify what can be funded by whom and how, what does not need funding, and where there may be duplication of funded efforts with and fratricidal or unintended impacts on other actors in the network.

Another point of consensus is the importance for strategic level leadership to understand the impacts of “D.C. level decisions” on the CA teams and their partners attempting to operationalize their directives and guidance on the ground. This is prompted by Gina Kassem’s stress on the importance of constant vertical and horizontal communication. How to ensure bottom-up as well as top-down communication and
enable and manage multiple feedback loops to promote better interorganizational decision making and outcomes (as MG Guthrie noted) is an area that merits particular interagency study and experimentation. This is especially true in the fog of humanitarian assistance in a dynamic and information-rich operational environment with a large, diverse group of actors. Speaking with a more unified voice through jointly amplified messages when raising problems through all hierarchies is critical to common executive operational picture and the kind of decision-making that should come from it. Ms. Kassem gave the example of how she and Captain Black coordinated their respective CAT and PRM daily report drafts to ensure they highlighted issues in mutually supporting ways to ensure better and faster responses.

Colonel Alan McKewan, Division Chief, CCJ3 Interagency Action Group Civil Affairs at USCENTCOM with multiple tours in Afghanistan, provided some additional insights as a participant from the CENTCOM perspective on the same general mission during the same timeline. At CENTCOM, planning started earlier, before June, on a classified platform. Once the determination permitted a shift to unclassified networks, they were able to bring more partners into the conversation who simply couldn't access information across classified platforms. CA planners in particular need to have a keen understanding how ground realities compare and contrast with high-level planning, in order to mitigate civil-military and interagency issues either lost in translation or unaccounted for. He noted, for example, the early conflict of NEO planning with Special Immigration Visa (SIV) movement requirements, particularly as they were simultaneously happening.

A few of the panelists spoke about the delayed ability of reserve component CA to get on ground quickly, given how authorities and funding for RC CA mobilization and deployment have hardly evolved since the Cold War. Both CENTCOM and EUCOM utilized regionally aligned forces and assigned elements to serve as initial support. While Compo 3 (U.S. Army Reserve) force mobilization is programmed as a backfill options, the reality is both COMPO 1 and 3 entail intolerable lags to obtain operational support under ADOS orders. This shortfall will be even more keenly felt with the loss of the last active component conventional CA unit, the 83rd CA Battalion. This often necessitates labor-intensive workarounds, such as having CA personnel assigned to Reserve Troop Program Units or reassigned to enable quicker access. The 361st CA Brigade, an Army Reserve CA command is based in Europe with longstanding experience and solid working relations with NATO and other regional partners. They may be the next best solution, with ADOS orders taking about 12 days to produce for TPU CA Forces who live and work in-theater, eliminating much of the lag overseas deployment times. (Unfortunately, however, USAREUR decided two years ago to disband the 361st CA Brigade.)

**Workshop VII – Allied and Multinational Approaches to Building Civil-Military Networks**

Keeping with the general theme of multinational as well as interorganizational networking, the second day ended with Workshop VII, on allied and multinational approaches to building civil-military networks. Retired Colonel Christopher Holshek, an Association Vice-President and Distinguished Member of the CA Corps, facilitated. Guests included: Colonel Stephanie Tutton, Office of Military Affairs, United Nations; Major Csaba Szabó, Deputy Branch Chief, Concepts, Interoperability and Capabilities Branch, NATO CIMIC Center of Excellence; Lieutenant Colonel Dave Allen, U.K. Army, formerly Land Warfare Center Irregular Warfare/Engagement Doctrine Focus; Lieutenant Colonel Vincent Couturier, Plans & Capabilities

Being the farthest away, at the CIMIC Center of Excellence (CCoE) in Den Haag, MAJ Szabó began by highlighting the major changes of interest in the soon-to-be-approved revisions of NATO Civil-Military Interaction (CMI) policy (MC 411/2) and Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) doctrine (AJP 3.19). [For those less familiar, CIMIC is the military capability and operational activity for the implementation of CMI under the North Atlantic Council’s strategic concept of “comprehensive engagement” (i.e., civil-military and multi-agency engagement).] Among the most noteworthy changes is the greater focus on civil or societal resilience as a way to deal with hybrid warfare on NATO’s eastern flank, as explained in NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg remarks at last year’s Global Security Conference in Bratislava:

“In today’s security environment, non-kinetic threats pose as grave a danger as kinetic ones. If NATO is going to be successful, its military capabilities must be backed up by societal resilience in the member states. Without societal resilience, military excellence is useless. Successful resilience involves not just infrastructure but people too. Both the states and NATO need to consider how they ensure that societies are also more resilient in the face of potential shocks.”

Updated CIMIC doctrine will place greater emphasis on civil-military engagement to enable greater societal resilience as a civil defense matter, as well as to promote healthier civil societies more resistant to, for example, mis/dis-information. CIMIC remains a supporting rather than leading capability in information warfare. The CCoE has already begun to socialize this understanding with an online seminar series on “Societal Resilience – Conceptual observations meet practitioners’ experience,” which is accessible on the CCoE website.

At the same time, NATO CIMIC fully embraces the idea of “building a global civil-military network,” already having identified its key nexus in a CIMIC-CA enterprise of enterprises in the “CIMIC-CA Synchronization Project” that it forwarded at last year’s Symposium and in a corresponding issue paper. As the doctrinal development and schoolhouse counterpart of the USAJKSWCS, the CCoE is pursuing greater synchronization of civil-military doctrines in the current update, as well as interorganizational co-learning by opening its online courses to CA personnel, including a primer on CMI/CIMIC. Still, more formalized crosswalks need creation among the enterprises and their corresponding networks.

MAJ Szabó agreed that a truly global civil-military network would not only result in better situational understanding for all players. It would also afford the Alliance far greater diplomatic optionality with competitor and non-aligned states. “Such a network,” he noted, “must be managed and not just established.” The better understanding arises in terms of strategic context and on-the-ground cultural and societal dynamics that, in turn, enhance better political-military and civil-military decision-making.

In a return appearance from last year, COL Dave Allen, reporting from the U.K., provided a short update on what is now called the “Integrated Operating Framework” (having moved on from being a “Concept”). The British are moving to a “fusion doctrine” incorporating a multi-layered approach within a continuum of military functions. This approach acts to “protect and engage” (which are “operating” functions) and to
“constrain” [i.e., deter] and “warfight” (which are “warfighting” functions), all in response to great power competition, transnational challenges, and rapid technological changes.

The “protect and engage” operating functions are done constantly in forward areas, mainly by Special Forces and Security Force Assistance Brigades, to maintain persistent global presence, deny and assure influence and “compete at the threshold of conflict.” Civil engagement networks, he added, are essential to enabling persistent presence, strengthening old ties while building new relationships, and gaining and maintain regional expertise. All of this, along the lines of the military functions, serve to anticipate events, reassure allies and partners, and deter and – if necessary – defeat adversaries. Within the Western alliance structure, a major value-added of having various large and small forces is to help the alliance gain better access and influence in places where the presence of superpower or former colonial power military forces from the alliance could prove problematic. This is a little appreciated value of a global-civil-military network as well as an alliance structure.

Among such forces are those from Canada. Canadian CIMIC comes under the direction of the Canadian Peace Support Center and the Army’s Influence Activities Task Force (IATF), from where LTC Couturier and MAJ Storm briefed in Kingston, just across Lake Ontario from New York. The mission of the IATF is to “promote, enable, and synchronize Influence Activities (IA) capabilities in support of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) across the full spectrum of operations. IATF delivers personnel, training and capability development; and ensures a sustainable, operationally relevant CIMIC and PSYOPS capabilities, ensuring its personnel are operationally deployable anytime and anywhere.”

Given their relatively small sizes, Canadian CIMIC and PSYOP forces are limited in their ability to provide the kind of persistent presence in forward areas that COL Allen discussed or the robust network among civil-military professionals the Symposium is calling for. Nonetheless, they have turned to innovative uses of technology and information platforms to maintain presence, human connectivity, situational awareness and understanding – including the Association and its Symposium and Roundtable platforms, for which they are most grateful to have become a part since last year.

Among the more interesting practices in Canada is its high level of integration of CA and PSYOP force management and operations. The Canadians use “CIMIC,” “PSYOP,” and “influence” more integrally in their operational language. CIMIC-PSYOP teaming for operational support in Afghanistan is now being institutionalized under “Force 2025” transitioning to composite active-reserve CIMIC companies, containing both CIMIC and PSYOP teams, in each division. The addition of a PSYOPS C2 element will add flexibility for contingent structuring as well as enable greater focus of company resources for civil-military networks. Some are currently deployed in in missions in Latvia and Congo.

At any time, these formations are also available for humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations, both in foreign, multinational and domestic settings – although, under Canadian doctrine, while CIMIC is both an expeditionary and domestic capability, PSYOP is for expeditionary purposes only. (This is remarkable, given how CA-PSYOP operational integration remains a struggle in especially conventional U.S. Army formations, albeit coming from the same command.)
Colonel Tutton is a U.S. Army field artillery officer seconded to the directing military staff at the United Nations headquarters. In a sense, her presence demonstrates access and influence. Greater US military staff involvement at both UN headquarters, as well as military observers in UN field missions, are needed to counter the ambitions and actions of greater power rivals like Russia and China.

The forward presence of U.S. military personnel in these places simply helps to build good will locally, regionally, and internationally. This is in addition to gaining positional advantage through their own access and influence, and through experience in multinational coalitions, and improvements in peacekeeping capacity-building programs. These programs serve as an economy-of-force measure to reduce stabilization concerns especially in areas of Africa and spare the need for greater US military footprints there. The interest in the UN for reasons of strategic competition is explained in Bryce Loidolt’s National Defense University study published before the Symposium.5

Of note to USAJKFSWCS and USACAPOC(A), civil affairs officers such as now-retired Major General Hugh Van Roosen, an Association director who has served as a Force Chief of Staff in the UN Mission in Liberia and as Deputy Military Advisor at DPO in New York, as well as COL Holshek, who has had extensive civilian and military service in UN field missions are ideal for this strategic influence role.

The first revision of the UN-CIMIC (in the UN sense, “coordination” rather than “cooperation”) since the original in 2010 is awaiting approval at the Department of Peace Operations, along with a new UN-CIMIC operations handbook. UN-CIMIC is a military staff function that facilitates the interface among the military, police, and civilian components of an integrated UN field mission—as well as between the military force and various humanitarian and development actors, local authorities, donor agencies, non-governmental organizations, host national government, and civil-society organizations. “Civil engagement,” now an operational term in the revised UN Infantry Battalion Manual, includes a new requirement for each maneuver battalion to field an “engagement platoon” of four teams of four personnel (much like CAT-A teams). The teams promote civil stability and interact with local authorities and populations, organizations, key political and community leaders, national military and police, and parties to the conflict—all to improve UN mission situational understanding of the “human terrain.”

Unlike U.S., NATO, and most national civil-military doctrines, UN-CIMIC is not there solely to enforce the commander’s intent. UN-CIMIC acts as a primary portal for the military component for civilian mission components, the host nation, local civilian population as well as humanitarian/development actors. Of note, humanitarian civil-military coordination is well addressed in the “UNCMCoord” enterprise under the aegis of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

As UN military peacekeepers have been mandated to take on expanded responsibilities to provide more support to civilian-led and mandated tasks, UN-CIMIC serves as an important tool within the integrated field mission structure. They develop a comprehensive civilian operational picture through a Civil-Operational Estimate, and then they support integrated “joint” (i.e., civil-military) planning and military support operations for the mission. For these reasons, UN-CIMIC is as much a UN field mission as a military operations function. While not doctrinally explicit, civil-military networking, in the UN understanding, is integral to multicomponent, multi-agency, and civil-military coordination.
Workshop VIII – Civil Affairs Industrial Base: New Gaming Technologies to Train in the Human Domain

One of the best ways the expanded Civil Affairs Corps can help build a global civil-military network for strategic competition is through the commercial connections a civil affairs industrial base in applied social sciences and related technologies can engender. In continuation of this general theme, Workshop VIII, looked at “new gaming technologies to train in the human domain,” led by Colonel Arnel P. David, DACOS G5 NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (U.K.), co-author of *Military Strategy in the 21st Century* and editor of the upcoming book, *Warrior-Diplomats*, and an Association Vice-President. Guest speakers included: Robert Pratten, CEO & Founder of Conducttr – the newest among Association sponsors; Brigadier General (Ret.) Ben Edwards, CrisisCast; Brian “Mitch” Mitchell, Founder of Crisis Cast; Francesca Hunt, Co-founder of Crisis Cast; Dr. Aleksandra (Aleks) Nesic, Chair of the Europe and Eurasian Affairs at the Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State; Dr. Patrick J. Christian, Lieutenant Colonel, USA, SF (Ret.), Founding Partner & Senior Social Scientist at Valka-Mir

The first technology discussed was Conducttr’s simulation software which provides a high-fidelity information environment that allows realistic engagement in cyberspace. A whole range of social media engines backed by AI/ML help generate content, conduct analysis, and provide feedback. COL David explained that “in defense exercises we rarely wargame or simulate activity ‘left of bang’. We routinely start exercises in Phase III with high-intensity warfighting and concentrate on that activity.” Conducttr provides simulation and crisis scenarios which could be brought to bear, early and often, before the fighting begins. Information specialists can test narrative warfare, psychological operations, and influence operations in a safe-to-fail environment.

According to Robert Pratten, their “mission is to make everyone’s life an adventure, because it is through adventure that people can achieve their full potential in life.” Conducttr creates adventure through immersive experiences that are realistic and use their simulation platform. They have helped defense and government organizations simulate hybrid warfare all across Europe. From campaigns to key leader engagements, the software can scale to meet a wide range of training objectives.

The second technology discussed was developed by Crisis Cast, Valka-Mir, and the British Army. It was initially called the Human Domain Matrix and later named Project Tyrion. The matrix of factors to describe the human domain was developed by Dr. Pat Christian and Dr. Aleks Nesic. The virtual reality (VR) and filming technologies came from Crisis Cast. Together, they combined the best of the creative arts and the science of the human domain to build this initial prototype focused on Mali. “We are inhabiting more of a world of emotions and stress behaviors,” explains Mitch from Crisis Cast. Everyone talks about the cognitive dimension of warfare, but Dr. Aleks and Valka-Mir emphasize the importance of emotional warfare. Many of our adversaries and competitors know how to evoke emotion in people and influence them in ways that we do not even consider. This project brings this dynamic to life in a powerful VR scenario that provides a new way to learn about culture, tribes, and human behavior.

The group’s goal is to make more scenarios focused on a number of landscapes across the world to improve frontline personnel (military, diplomatic, and development workers) performance in the human domain. The project has already brought the motion capture and technical leads for movies like *Lord of...*
The Rings, Mad Max Fury, and Star Wars Mandalorian. They also had high end artificial intelligence companies integrate their technology into the background of the platform.

“The real power behind these projects is the speed with which these prototypes and projects were funded and delivered,” COL David highlighted. “What normally took years was accomplished in only months and that is truly incredible.” He closed by asking leaders to consider “how often are they exercising the core business of their profession? Going beyond the normal shoot, move, and communicate, is it a few times a year or just once?” These simulations could be used all throughout the year and at all levels. Imagine what they could do for individuals, teams, and entire organizations.

Civil Affairs Issue Papers

The Symposium culminated with the presentation of the five papers selected for Association of the United States Army Institute of Land Warfare publication. Authors competed for best paper presentation cash prizes of $1,000 (first); $500 (second); and $250 (third). The winners were (in order of ballots casted):

- “Civil Affairs and Great Power Competition: Civil-Military Networking in the Gray Zone” - Sergeant First Class Nicholas Kempenich Jr.
- “Innovation as a Weapons System” - Major Giancarlo Newsome, Colonel Bradford Hughes, and Lieutenant Colonel Tyson Voelkel
- “Maximum Support, Flexible Footprint: Civilian Applied Research Laboratories to Support the 38G Program” - Doctor Hayden Basset and Lieutenant Kate Harrell
- “Individualism vs. Collectivism: Civil Affairs and the Clash of National Strategic Cultures” - Colonel Marco A. Bongioanni
- “Building a Global Civil-Military Network: Back to Basic Civil Affairs” - Major Jim Munene and Staff Sergeant Courtney Mulhern

Issue Paper Committee Chairman retired Brigadier General Bruce Bingham noted how this year’s crop – in addition to discussing the past, present, and future of civil affairs – had some unusually “out of the box” thinking, e.g., an organizational restructuring of humanitarian assistance at embassies, the expansion of an existing prototype applied research lab in academia, and private sector entrepreneurial investment opportunities where CA teams should play a more robust and impactful role in strategic competition.

The papers will be published, along with the final Symposium Report, in the eighth volume of the Civil Affairs Issue Papers, in early 2022. Authors will also discuss them more on the OneCA podcast, Previous volumes and the summaries of the current papers are also available on the Association website.

Final Remarks

Association President Colonel (Ret.) Joe Kirlin closed out the three-day forum, noting the importance of continuity and resilience in the Association’s effort to “educate, advocate, and motivate” through platforms such as the Symposium, Roundtable, Issue Papers, Eunomia Journal, OneCA Podcasts, and others that help the CA Corps advocate through engagement of key civil and military institutional leadership.
These Association platforms are more valuable than ever, he noted, because civil affairs and its ability to “secure the victory” has even more relevance in strategic competition than it had in major combat operations and post-conflict reconstruction, which Army and national defense leadership needs to better understand so that they can more effectively provide military support to U.S. and allied competition with adversarial powers and illicit networks.

Along with his thanks to the CA community, its allies from around the world, and its organizational partners for their robust participation, he noted the Association will continue to grow its resources as well as expand its convening role in interorganizational collaboration in order to promote a worldwide enterprise of civil-military enterprises – the original intent of the Worldwide Civil Affairs Conferences that took place each year during and after the Cold War. He looks forward to continuing that endeavor at the online Roundtable next April and at an in-person meeting sometime next year.

For more information, and to stay updated, go to the Civil Affairs Association website.

Notes:

1 James, C. McConville, Army Multi-Domain Transformation Ready to Win in Competition and Conflict, Chief of Staff Paper #1 (Unclassified Version) (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army) 16 March 2021, i.