Command approach: Problem bounding vs problem solving in mission command

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DRDC Toronto

14th ICCRTS – C2 and Agility
Track 7 – C2 Approaches and Organisation
Outline of talk

- Introduction and caveats
- Background – command approach concepts
- Review of relevant studies
- Conclusions
Land Doctrine: CF

“Mission Command ... has three enduring tenets: the importance of understanding a superior commander’s intent, a clear responsibility to fulfil that intent, and timely decision-making. The underlying requirement is the fundamental responsibility to act within the framework of the commander’s intentions.”

(CFP 300(3) Land Force Command)
“Mission command also contributes to an effects-based approach as it stresses the importance of understanding what effect is to be achieved rather than determining the ways by which it would be achieved. At the tactical level, network-enabled capabilities enhance forward command.”

(UK ADP Land Operations 2005)
Conceptual Framework for $C^2$

(Pigeau and McCann)

The establishment of common intent to achieve coordinated action.

Common Intent: The sum of shared explicit intent plus operationally relevant shared implicit intent.
Adapted from Pigeau & McCann (2006)
Degree of Central Control

Adapted from Alberts & Hayes (1995)
Adapted from Alberts & Hayes (1995)
Cyclic Interventionist Problem-solving Problem-bounding Selective-control Control-free

Order Specific Objective Specific Mission Specific

Degree of Central Control

Detailed Loose

Command Approach Directive Specificity

Adapted from Alberts & Hayes (1995)
Cyclic Interventionist Problem-solving
Selective-control
Control-free
Mission Specific
Command Approach
Directive Specificity
Degree of Central Control
Detailed to Loose

Adapted from Alberts & Hayes (1995)
Cyclic Interventionist Problem-solving

Selective-control

Mission Specific

Command Approach

Directive Specificity

Degree of Central Control

Detailed

Loose

High

Implicit Intent

Explicit Intent

Shared Intent

Low

Centralised

Decentralised

Adapted from Pigeau & McCann (2006)

Adapted from Alberts & Hayes (1995)
Cyclic Interventionist Problem-solving

Problem-bounding

Selective-control

Control-free

Mission Specific

Directive Specificity

Command Approach

Centralised Decentralised

High Low

Shared Intent

Common Intent

Implicit Intent

Explicit Intent

Thermoregulatory System

Order Specific

Objective Specific

Degree of Central Control

Detailed Loose

Adapted from Pigeau & McCann (2006)

Adapted from Alberts & Hayes (1995)
Cyclic Interventionist Problemsolving

Selective-control

Control-free

Specific Objective

Specific Order

High

Low

Centralised

Decentralised

Command Approach

Directive Specificity

Shared Intent

Implicit Intent

Explicit Intent

High

Low

Centralised

Decentralised

Adapted from Pigeau & McCann (2006)

Adapted from Alberts & Hayes (1995)
Field Marshal Slim

“I have published under my name a good many operational orders and a good many directives… but there is one paragraph in the order that I have always written myself… the intention paragraph.”

Quoted in CFP 300(3)
### Components of the CI Statement (Klein, 1993)

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What is more important to you as a commander?

n = 55 Army Officers
28 from UK Joint Service Command and Staff College
27 from US Army Command and General Staff College

Adapted from Firth (1993)
Conclusions

• More evidence / research required
• Development of a command approach assessment tool
• Historical updating in the light of recent campaigns
• Implications of differences
  – Joint operations
  – Multinational operations
  – The influence of new technology
  – ‘Full spectrum operations’
  – Risk
  – Future evolution of mission command