Multi-National Command and Control—Beyond NATO

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Abstract

While C2 procedures and requirements developed by NATO suited Cold War purposes and threats, the Post Cold War world portends many coalition operations outside of the NATO structure. These Post Cold War operations will increasingly be in the form of Operations Other Than War (OOTW). With the political changes arising from the end of the Cold War, and other challenges such as incompatible technologies, legalities of intelligence sharing and cultural differences, C2 procedures for non-NATO coalitions need to be developed. This paper focuses on these issues as they are addressed by the six-nation multinational working group (MNWG).

Introduction

Throughout its fifty-year history NATO has developed the requisite command and control to operate its forces. This task has not been easy and has involved much coordinated effort in committees, panels (e.g., RSG, SAS) and exercises. NATO C2 was mostly directed to, and suited the threats of the Cold War. Today however, the necessities of the post Cold War world require that the US and other nations operate in coalitions outside of NATO, and in operations that increasingly trend to the lower end of the military spectrum; that is, operations other than war (OOTW). These include various peace operations, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). Thus there is a need to develop command and control procedures that will serve non-NATO coalitions. A six-nation, multi-national working group (MNWG) comprised of Australia, Canada, France (observer), Germany, United Kingdom, and the United States has been formed to address the issues. This paper addresses the issues, approaches, and solutions identified by the MNWG.

Historical Perspective

Throughout the twentieth century, the United States has been involved in many conflicts involving the formation of coalitions. These coalitions have been achieved under different forms of command structures. Some of these have involved unity of command, lead nation, or parallel command structures. A brief examination of a few conflicts, and

the command and control structures implemented, will provide a historical perspective for a deeper discussion of future multinational coalitions.

During WWII, the lessons learned regarding alliances made during WWI were put into place. However, the development of the allied coalition was a gradual process. The process began with the establishment of the Supreme War Council. This council was comprised of two Premiers, their Foreign Ministers, and their senior military advisors. At this point, the command structure was based on lead nation status. Lead nation status was determined by the representation of a nation in a given theater. Therefore, in the Mediterranean Sea, the French led in the West, and the British led in the East with a French naval squadron under its command. However, at this point in the development of the coalition, there was no real unity of command. As then Field Marshall Montgomery pointed out, multinational exercises were not being conducted, and coordination between the Belgians, BEF, and the French First Army was lacking.

While Great Britain and the US had very similar cultures and a common language, which increased the ease of coalition formation, other nations involved had different languages and cultures. Some of these other nations include France and Brazil. When the French arrived, a French Training Section was established. Their duties included teaching the French personnel how to handle American equipment. In addition to this training, an American officer was assigned to each French division. The duties of these American officers included serving as advisors to the division commander and acting as a communication liaison between the US 5th Army and the French divisions. And, when Brazil declared war on Germany, August 22, 1942, "it offered an expeditionary force to fight under US command in the Mediterranean theater of operations" [Botters, 1995]. To help decrease the effects of cultural differences, when the Brazilian troops arrived in theater, they were provided training very similar to what the French received.

Unity of command was not established until after the defeat of the French Army in 1940 and the creation of the Anglo-American Alliance in 1941-2. At this point, the Australian, British, Dutch, American Command (ABDACOM) was established under General Wavell. The coalition partners agreed in the need for a coordinated higher direction of the war, and therefore established a Combined Chief of Staff in Washington D.C. Coalition partners also agreed that theater command belonged with the commander in each particular theater. However, Allied unity of command was only applied in the Western Mediterranean, Western Europe, and South East Asia theaters. Other theaters of operation maintained a lead nation form of command.

"Operation Torch," a combined landing in Africa, provided an example of a combined operation under a unified command. During this operation, General Eisenhower was appointed Supreme Commander and General Anderson, Commander of the 1st British Army, was given the right to appeal decisions which could inflict negative consequences upon British troops. And to support the Allied Commander, an integrated Head Quarters in Africa (AFHQ) was established. The AFHQ had an integrated and combined staff which could help reduce the chance of decisions being made along national lines.
As a result of lessons learned from operations such as "Operation Torch," the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) also had a combined and integrated staff. The SHAEF received joint input from collocated planning staffs. Input was

occasionally received from full air and naval component staffs, and is thought to have led to the development of an Allied Air Commander-in-Chief.

During WWII, the coalition of allied forces successfully established unity of command, along with unity of purpose at the grand strategic level. This has not been successfully established in any other coalition command since. The lack of unity of command and the use of other command structures will be seen in the following coalition examples.

During the Korean War, a lead nation, rather than a unity of command structure, was established. The South Korean Army was ill-equipped, under-trained, and led by inexperienced officers and NCO's. Therefore the US filled the role of lead nation commander. Another reason the US filled the role as lead nation commander was due to the size of its commitment when compared with that of other participating nations. Under this command structure, the US had unilateral operational command and control over all coalition forces. And ground units were typically subordinate to US Army divisions even though South Korea provided more ground force personnel than any other nation. There were significant cultural and language differences between the ROK and Eighth US Army (EUSA). Differing religious customs, the importance of 'saving face' and the limited number of translators of the Hangul language, as well as the lack of modern technical terms within this language, were difficulties to be overcome. To facilitate joint operations, a liaison corps (US Military Advisory Corp - KMAG) was established between the EUSA and ROK Units. The KMAG's main responsibilities included maintaining a liaison between the ROK Army and the Eight United States Army (EUSA) and assisting the ROK Army by providing guidance and suggestions relating to US actions and intentions. As the liaison, the KMAG HQ was collocated within the ROK Army HQ. Since the KMAG advisors were also assigned to ROK units, they were able to provide information regarding the activities and status of these units to EUSA. Despite problems within the KMAG, such as not having enough advisors and equipment, it was helpful in overcoming differences between the coalition partners.

During Operation Desert Storm, the coalition implemented a hybrid of parallel and lead nation command structures. Under this hybrid, Saudi Arabia led the Arabs, and the US led the Western nations. There were several cultural differences between Saudi Arabia and the US. These included differences in language, religious customs, beliefs regarding women's roles, personal relationships, 'saving face', and a discomfort with outsiders. To provide formal coordination and liaison arrangements between the US and Saudi Arabia, a Coalition Coordination, Communication, and Integration Center (C3IC) was established. Multinational task groups were also implemented for specific tasks, such as anti-surface warfare. These task groups were assigned to a single commander, such as the Joint Air Component Commander commanding the air operations no matter the origin of the aircraft. During Operation Desert Storm a unity of effort rather than unity of command was the priority.

As can be interpreted from the few examples stated above, one of the obstacles to the development of official coalitions is the debate between unity of command and unity of effort. Some arguments for unity of command include the belief that without it, each commander-in-chief would value only his own armies interests, and thus make him unable to see the issues from another commander's viewpoint. A second argument would

be that without unity of command, the ability to see a problem in its entirety would be hampered, if not lost. In addition to these arguments for unity of command, some believe that for successful unity of command to occur, significant consideration should be given to those individuals in the field. General Eisenhower suggested that a central allied command required certain characteristics. These included an earnest cooperation of service officers assigned to an allied theater. Therefore these officers should exhibit qualities such as selflessness, devotion to a common cause, a generous attitude, and mutual confidence. These characteristics are necessary because no single commander "can be given complete administrative and disciplinary powers over the whole command" [Rice, 1996]. And in establishing, 1st the AFHQ and later the SHAEF in NW Europe, he emphasized good officer qualities such as confidence, logic, and loyalty instead of a specific structure or form of organization. It has been argued that the achievement of unity of command in WWII was a reflection of the focus on these qualities in individual officers, as well as the common cultures and values of the coalition partners. However, despite these arguments for unity of command, there has not been a multinational coalition which has had unity of command since WWII.

Current doctrine (Joint Pub 3-0 Doctrine for Joint Operations and Joint Pub 3-16 Joint Doctrine for Multinational Operations) suggests three possible command arrangements for coalition operations. These three include parallel, lead nation, and a combination of parallel and lead nation structures, with a focus on unity of effort rather than unity of command. Of the three forms of command, Army Pub FM 100-8 suggests that parallel command is a good starting point for maturing coalitions.

In looking to future coalitions, the MNWG not only examined the lessons learned over history but also looked beyond to consider advanced command and control technology and its potential impact on coalition partners. Other issues considered included specific concerns about military size, ability, experience, cultural differences, and the political situation of the MNWG and other potential coalition members.

Problems and Solutions

One might suspect that because of the long history of generally successful coalition operations that the problems of coalition C2 could be easily solved. Instead the opposite is true. The problem has been exacerbated because of several factors. First of these is technology. While technology offers many opportunities to achieve interoperability, the complexity of modern computer and communications systems, plus the rapid speed of technological change, dictates against compatibility unless the systems are designed in concert and with mutual agreement on technical standards. That is simply not the case today. Further, many potential coalition partners lack the technical sophistication of the high technology nations. A second factor contributing to the problem is each nation's laws and procedures regarding intelligence sharing. Usually designed to protect sensitive sources and methods, these laws place strict limits on the ability of a coalition commander to share the needed information with coalition partners. Third, there remains the host of perennial problems that range from language to culture.

Considerations

To be effective, coalition C2 needs to be considered in its broadest possible context beyond narrow definitions of command and control. This means that one must consider the full range of planning and strategy required for each operation. Since each operation will likely be unique, each represents a new set of challenges and parameters, and each must be comprehensively planned. In its initial workshops, the MNWG developed a set of primary planning considerations. These include:

- Characterize the Threat
- Develop Objectives
- Articulate a Strategy
- Define Military Tasks
- Allocate Resources to Military Tasks

Characterizing the threat, particularly in the context of OOTW, involves much more than a traditional "Red Force" analysis. In an OOTW the "threat" could vary from traditional military forces to organized crime and petty criminals, to refugees and displaced persons. What is the likelihood of civil disturbances such as demonstrations, rioting and looting? Who in the AOR (community) has influence and is that influence for good or evil? What are the status, contribution and relevance of NGO's and PVO's? These and numerous other issues such as economic, political, and cultural factors need to be carefully analyzed in the context of each coalition partner's respective national interest.

Once the "threat" analysis is accomplished, the next step is to develop objectives. Foremost is defining an acceptable end state and the limitations that might hinder achievement of that end state. Congruent with the end state is an analysis of achievable exit criteria. These should be defined in terms of measurable conditions (e.g., military, economic, political and territorial). Can the planners predict possible mission changes or evolutions (mission creep) that obscure or change the end state and exit criteria? The US/UN experience in Somalia is a stark example. Who would have anticipated that a humanitarian mission to feed starving children would evolve into urban warfare against the same people the mission was attempting to help?

Next, the coalition leaders need to develop and articulate a strategy that builds upon the previous analyses. Some form of confrontation or opposition to the mission is likely. Indeed it is difficult to imagine many operations where there will not be some level of confrontation. Even in a disaster relief operation one may confront bandits and looters. The strategy must therefore explicitly consider how, and in what phases that confrontation will be dealt with (e.g., isolation, defensive operations, offensive operations, and disengagement). This is crucial because it will frame the top-level rules of engagement (ROE) decisions that are vital to the military performance of the coalition.

Only after the coalition has analyzed the threat, developed objectives, and articulated a strategy can military tasks be logically determined. Each phase of the operation needs to be planned from intelligence gathering, to C2, to logistics requirements and costs. The

military planners also need to consider the potential political and economic implications of the military tasks, and to advise national authorities of these implications and possible effects including unintended consequences of the operations. For example, in the Somalia relief operations there were two significant unintended consequences of the food deliveries. The first was that the food focused conflict and violence around the food distribution centers. Warlords, bandits and thugs were drawn to the lure of exploiting the food and using it as a weapon in their tribal warfare rivalries. Second, the abundant, free food drove local farmers out of business because they had no markets for their products. This further exacerbated the effects of the drought and clan warfare [Cornwallis IV Proceedings, forthcoming].

Finally comes the tough job of assigning coalition resources to accomplish the military tasks. Not all coalition members may be capable of all tasks, but for reasons of national pride may want to be included (or excluded from some tasks). Decisions about who will provide the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) resources and support, C2 resources, lift and logistics, need to be made and agreed to by the coalition members. And last but perhaps most contentious is the question of command arrangements. Will there be unity of command or unity of effort? Who will be in command and what is the chain of command . Failure to address at least the issues described above will in the best of circumstances greatly limit the mission's effectiveness, and in other cases doom it to failure

The Work of the MNWG

Over the course of the past two years the MNWG has met to address these and other problems. In 1998 two important workshops hosted by the US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence (ASD (C3I)) were held in the United States. The first workshop focused on Coalition Collaborative Planning, and the second on Coalition Force Integration and Management. And in May of 1999, the C4ISR MNWG held a collaborative planning seminar. The objective of this seminar was to "identify impediments and shortfalls in information sharing related to Collaborative Planning" [Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence, 1999].

The two earlier workshops identified information sharing as both crucial for a successful coalition, and at the same time, one of the most difficult problems. Information required to be shared ranges from weather to maps to intelligence to ROE. In many cases, much of this information is either not releasable to foreigners, or covered by bilateral agreements that proscribe sharing with parties outside the bilateral agreements. The biggest barriers to sharing information were analyzed in some detail and included:

- Physical Access. MNWG members had near universal approval for using liaison officers and multi-national staffs. But many also had bad experiences where they were denied access to US command centers because of security policies. On the surface this problem would appear easy to solve however it remains a thorny problem.

- Technology. The technological capability of tier two assigned force elements in many conceivable cases could be limited to the exchange of liaison officers and secure voice. Even among sophisticated nations in a coalition, these two means of exchanging information would be employed initially. The current defacto standard for secure voice is STU IIB/STU IIIA but the distribution of these devices is limited. Other technical issues include standards and resulting system interoperability problems. And even when communication and crypto problems are solved there remains the issue of national networked systems and data bases that contain both nationally sensitive information and information that is sharable. The problem then becomes how to access the latter and protect the former.

- Culture. In general, information is not released unless there is explicit approval to do so. Often information sharing agreements reached at senior levels do not filter down to the levels where the agreement is to be implemented. Information gatekeepers do not use initiative (nor are they empowered to)—they merely apply the extant authorized policy. And finally, language is an obvious cultural barrier to communications.

While much progress was made during the initial MNWG meetings, it was clear that much more work needed to be accomplished, particularly in the planning process. The representatives agreed to further analyze and attempt to resolve the issues through a Seminar Wargame wherein they would investigate information requirements, flows, and impediments in the conduct of a realistic coalition planing exercise. The objectives of the game were to assist in the development of more effective and efficient coalition warfare collaborative planning procedures and identify impediments and significant shortfalls. The game specifically addressed important functional areas in terms of national policies, technology, law, and tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP). Within the context of these tasks, the MNWG initially identified five topics for detailed examination:

- Articulation of military end state and related exit criteria
- Intelligence sharing to include threat projections
- Assessing Coalition courses of action
- Command and Control of Coalition forces during the mission
- Determining Rules of Engagement (ROE)

The analyses took place using a realistic scenario of a peace enforcement operation on the border between two African nations. Actual geographic features, location names and maps were used, however the names of the countries themselves were not used for political reasons. The game was played over the period of three and one-half days in a series of moves that addressed each of the major topics. Each move was broken into three phases:

1. National meeting to determine national views.
2. Coalition planning meeting to develop the procedures used by the coalition, based upon the scenario presented.
3. Facilitated discussion to develop the issues for consideration by the Six Nation Council, including:
- Description of the issue

- Policy, TTP, Technology, and legal impediments to resolution of the issue
- Near term fix selected for the game (if any)
- Near and long term fix(es) recommended for consideration by the Six Nation Council.

Results or the Seminar Wargame

Though the MNWG initially identified five topics for detailed examination, its primary focus was on Command and Control Arrangements, Releasability, and Common Doctrine and Procedures.

- <u>Command and Control Arrangements.</u> Better interoperability of information systems and a more robust exchange of information cannot be achieved without agreeing on a Command and Control Concept. The group discussed that standing alliance C2
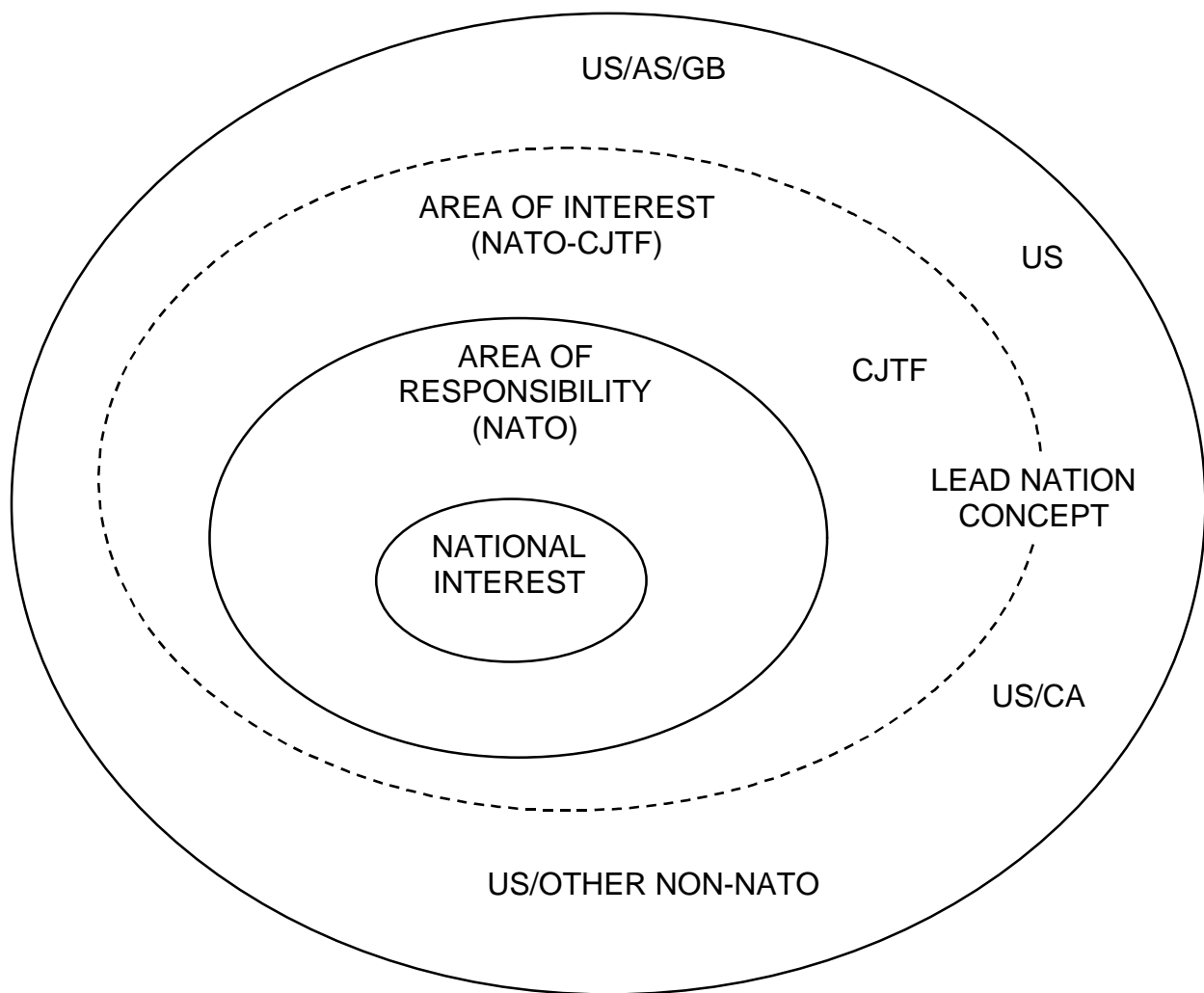

Figure 1. Command Arrangements and the Lead Nation Concept

structures (e.g., NATO) and the NATO CJTF concept have applicability in the NATO Area of Responsibility (AOR) and Area of Interest (AOI), and may be the preferred solution within those areas. However, within the NATO AOI and outside the AOI, the Lead Nation Concept (LNC) appears to be the primary viable alternative. Figure 1 illustrates these situations. The lead nation was defined as that nation with the will and capability, competence and influence to provide the essential elements of political and military leadership to co-ordinate the planning and mounting of the operation, and its execution. The development of a LNC was considered essential prior to being able to achieve the appropriate resolution on the information sharing requirements within Coalition Operations. The MNWG concluded that failure to address this issue has been a major obstacle to progress and a prerequisite to resolving other issues including those affecting information sharing.

- Releasability. Current security policies were born out of a political and technological era that has passed and these policies are unable to deal with the current multi-polar, coalition environment, as well as the present communications and information rich situation that now exists. In the kind of likely coalition anticipated by the MNWG there would be two tiers of participants—a core with significant force projection capabilities and a second tier who participate for other reasons. The core would be comprised of members like the six nations represented in the MNWG. These core nations need to establish multilateral government to government understanding and procedures to permit the identification and exchange of certain categories of information in advance of coalition operations. To resolve this issue, the MNWG recommended both short and long term solutions. The short term solution involves the development of a secure multi-point video-teleconferencing capabilities to facilitate information sharing and coalition building. A long term solution involves the development of standards, doctrine and a system to govern dissemination of information. This would also involve the development of coalition-wide information sharing agreement, rather than a web of bilateral agreements. In hand with the coalition information sharing agreement would be the provision for an information network that would provide information that members had agreed to share. This would allow for better collaboration planning across the network.

- Common doctrine and procedures. The MNWG recommended short term solution was to adopt unclassified NATO doctrine and definitions wherever possible. The long term solution involves continued review of the doctrine and initiation of a proposal in the UN for the adoption of the doctrine.

A complete list of the MNWG Seminar Wargame issues and recommendations is presented in Figure 2.

ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
Lead Nation Concept (LNC)	Six Nation Council (SNC) agrees use of LNC as a planning assumption for subsequent endorsement of Concept
Doctrine, Procedures, and Definitions	SNC establishes a working group to flesh out the LNC and subsequently address doctrinal issues, using NATO doctrines and definitions wherever possible (subject to NATO release)
Process/Capabilities for Coalition building	SNC agrees to the establishment of secure multi-point VideoTele-Conferencing
	SNC directs implementation to a suitable body (SNC WG)
Coalition Inclusion in National Op Plans	SNC conveys to national authorities the requirement to consider coalition options in development of Op Plans as appropriate
Prioritize and Release Information	SNC tasks working groups to develop standards/doctrine and a system to permit dissemination of information coalition-wide
	SNC recommend review of national releasability policies to accord with the results of the working group's efforts for daily use to support deliberate planning
Network Architecture	SNC will support acceleration of the development of operational coalition-wide area network to facilitate collaborative planning
	SNC will promote policy modification to permit interconnection of national systems for routine use
Status of Six Nation Council	SNC should consider formalizing their status with an appropriate agreement (i.e., the SNC and its working groups)

Figure 2. MNWG Seminar Wargame Issues and Recommendations

The Way Ahead

The efforts of the MNWG have not only made significant progress in resolving difficult issues, but also demonstrated that coalition command and control still requires additional serious work. However, to further illustrate the need for continued study, we can look at the current humanitarian aid action in Albania providing assistance to Kosovar refugees. Even with NATO's fifty-year history and the best of intentions, it is having difficulty in controlling the relief effort in Albania. As stated by Tim Ripley in Jane's Defense Weekly (1999), "Each national contingent is concentrating on its own projects and tasks, with little apparent co-operation and co-ordination, and NATO has been largely frozen out of the command of international forces." This lack of a unified command structure has led to difficulties such as the competition between national contingents for buildings to rent and people to employ.   This has resulted in rising costs and as one European officer in Albania has stated "the prices are going up – we are wasting a lot of money." These continued difficulties encountered in multi-national coalitions, regardless of their NATO standing, indicates the need for continued study and evaluation of coalition operations. The MNWG plans to continue its work for the foreseeable future. Figure 3 lists the near term activities.

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│  **The Way Ahead**                                                   │
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│  •  Publish Seminar/CPX Report, 30 June 1999                        │
│  •  Convene Six Nation Council, 14-16 September 1999                 │
│  •  Seminar/CPX EXCOM IPR, 16 November 1999                         │
│  •  Force Integration/Management and C2 Seminar/CPX, 11-14 January 2000 │
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Figure 3. MNWG Near Term Plans and Events

The MNWG is off to a good start and we expect good results in the years to come.

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