

Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION

by

Y. Yanakiev, T. Szvircev Tresch and J. Sutton

1.1 BACKGROUND

During the post-Cold War era there has been a significant increase in the number of military operations that have required NATO Nations and partners to contribute forces as part of multi-national coalitions. These coalitions execute a variety of missions like peacekeeping, peace enforcement, anti-terrorist, stability and support, search and rescue, humanitarian aid, etc.

Researchers and practitioners agree that the political legitimacy, the acceptance by the native population and the cost-effectiveness of the mission are among the most important advantages of these multi-national coalitions. Simultaneously, the effectiveness of the multi-national forces has been a controversial issue over a rather long period of time. Recent studies show that the main turbulences that could diminish the effectiveness of international coalitions are different goals, differences in logistics, education and training of troops, different doctrines, intelligence sharing and language barriers as well as leadership skills [69],[68]. In addition, different national and organisational cultures, concepts of tactics and mission planning, disciplinary codes, command and control systems, equipment and armament, and payment differences can be viewed as challenges to the coalitions' effectiveness [45]. Sutton and Pierce (2003) [70] identified national cultural behaviours associated with high power distance and high uncertainty avoidance to clearly impact team performance in the areas of situation assessment, coordination, assigning roles and responsibilities, and support behaviour. For a detailed discussion of national cultural behavioural differences that can impact the effectiveness of multi-national coalitions, see Sutton, Pierce, Burke, and Salas (2006) [71] and see also the *Occasional Paper 23* from the NATO Defence College [20].

The factors described above operate as organisational and cultural barriers to effective collaboration in multi-national settings, and are related, to a large extent, to the preparation of military leaders and teams to work in a coalition environment.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the factors and issues related to culture, coalitions and multi-national operations, for example, training, leadership, teamwork, command and control, inter alia. Consequently, NATO Research and Technology Organization (RTO) Human Factors and Medicine (HFM) Panel set up a Meta-Exploratory Team (ET) HFM-067 in 2006 to reinforce and consolidate the research efforts of the social and behavioural scientists from interested NATO Nations who were either currently participating or not yet involved in NATO RTO activities. The basis of HFM ET-067 was the collective knowledge of four extant Research Task Groups (RTGs), i.e., HFM RTG-120 – Exploration of the Area of Multi-National Operations and Inter-Cultural Factors; HFM RTG-127 – Operational Validation of Command Team Effectiveness Instrument; HFM RTG-138 – Adaptability in Coalition Teamwork, and HFM RTG-139 – Developing National Models of Military Leadership for Improved Coalition Operation.

The HFM ET-067 identified several specific gaps in current knowledge and awareness involving cultural and organisational challenges in coalition operations. They were related, but not limited to:

- 1) Cultural differences, communication and language barriers as well as organizational structures;
- 2) Allocation of roles and responsibilities;
- 3) Immature team practices; and
- 4) Imperfect understanding of leadership roles.

INTRODUCTION

In addition, the HFM ET-067 identified the need to develop models and tools for understanding, explaining and measuring different aspects of effective adaptation and cooperation in multi-national coalitions such as:

- 1) Models to predict individual performance, based on individual characteristics;
- 2) Models of the behaviour of individuals in multi-team systems;
- 3) Models to predict team and organizational performance;
- 4) Tools to measure individual differences in knowledge, skills, and ability; and
- 5) Tools to measure effectiveness of teams and organizations.

In 2007, the HFM Panel endorsed and the NATO Research and Technology Board (RTB) approved establishment of HFM RTG-163 titled, *Improving the Organisational Effectiveness of Coalition Operations*, as a follow up to HFM ET-067 to expand multi-national coordinated research into cultural and organisational challenges in coalition operations.

This was a direct contribution to one of the basic NATO Long-Term Capability Requirements (LTCRs), namely human performance improvement in current military operations.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The HFM RTG-163 was established to identify organisational and cultural factors critical to effective cooperation in coalition operations with particular focus on organisational effectiveness of NATO operational level Headquarters (HQs). Research findings are expected to help leaders and Nations identify training gaps that can be addressed in future pre-deployment training and improved ways of working in a multi-cultural environment.

More precisely, the goals of the HFM RTG-163 were to:

- Identify critical factors to effective coalition operations (e.g., leadership, national culture, organisational culture/structure, information sharing) using extant data and research literature.
- Investigate potential models and tools for understanding, explaining, and measuring different aspects of effective adaptation and cooperation in multi-national coalitions.
- Make recommendations regarding improvement of education and training of NATO and partner countries' militaries for coalition operations.

1.3 METHOD OF THE WORK

First, the HFM RTG-163 built upon the existing platforms of HFM RTG-138 (Key factors identified in a Cultural Adaptability Model developed from extensive field research at multi-national HQs) and HFM RTG-127 (Command Team Effectiveness – CTEF model and tool) as a basis for examining factors that enable or hinder organizational effectiveness in coalition operations.

In addition, the research team reviewed the GLOBESMART® Commander multi-media training tool (also a product of HFM RTG-138) then organized a demonstration of the training at the NATO School, Oberammergau, Germany in October 2008 and in Plovdiv, Bulgaria in May 2008 during the International Armaments Exhibition and Conference HEMUS.

As part of its regular meetings in October 2008 and June 2009, the research team organised two focus group discussions and subsequent interviews, with participation of Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs) in coalition operations from the NATO School in Oberammergau, Germany and from the NATO Allied

Command Transformation (ACT) in Norfolk, Virginia, United States, respectively. The goals of these discussions were to:

- 1) Identify barriers to organisational effectiveness within NATO HQs at the operational level;
- 2) Help define the term “organisational effectiveness” of NATO coalition operations; and
- 3) Obtain suggestions for improving organisational effectiveness within NATO HQs.

The description of the results can be found in Annex A and Annex B.

Following the above activities, HFM RTG-163 efforts were then focused on development of a theoretical model to study organisational effectiveness of coalition HQs, to include assessment of research methodology and data collection tools based on review of existing organisational effectiveness models and tools as well as results from SME focus group discussions and interviews. It was decided to focus the research on Non-Article 5 Crisis Response Operations (NA5CRO) as a context of NATO Alliance’s operations. The research approach distinguishes between operational and organisational effectiveness. Operational effectiveness represents factors external to an organization, whereas, organisational effectiveness represents factors that are internal to the organization. The HFM RTG-163 research team decided to limit the Task Group’s effort to the evaluation of organisational effectiveness of NATO HQs instead of operational effectiveness. Correspondingly, a definition of organisational effectiveness was developed as “the alignment of various organisational effectiveness dimensions (e.g., structure, process, human resource practices, and organizational culture) to the goals of the organisation” although it was agreed that certain other factors might not be captured under that definition, including: trust, leadership, etc.

The group identified three major operative goals to focus on within the NATO HQs:

- 1) Information sharing;
- 2) Decision making (speed and quality); and
- 3) Developing shared awareness regarding tasks and responsibilities within the NATO HQs.

These goals were assessed in light of the NATO HQ official goal to “support troops on the ground” and to implement effective command and control functions. The theoretical model of Organisational Effectiveness of NATO HQs executing NA5CRO was summarised in a research paper presented at NATO RTO System Analysis and Studies (SAS) research symposium (NATO SAS-081/RSY) on “Analytical Support to Defence Transformation” in Sofia, Bulgaria on 26–28 April 2010 (see Annex C).

An organisational effectiveness survey questionnaire was developed and pre-tested in educational settings via structured interviews at the NATO School Oberammergau and the Bulgarian National Defence Academy in 2009 – 2010. Feedback was used to improve the survey instrument.

NATO RTO HFM Panel granted HFM RTG-163 a one-year extension to test its theoretical model. In October 2010, HFM RTG-163 initiated data collection and carried out a field study at Kosovo Force (KFOR) Headquarters, Pristine, Kosovo. The methods employed during the study in KFOR HQ were both quantitative in the form of a questionnaire and qualitative in the form of semi-structured interviews with key personnel at KFOR HQ (see Annex D and Annex E). Data were collected from 103 military members and 33 civilian HQ personnel in the quantitative survey. Among the civilians, 5 are government civilians, 12 local Kosovo Albanian, Serbian and Bosnian contractors, and 16 contractors with international background. In addition, 15 interviews were conducted mainly at the Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS)-level, covering J1 – J5, J8, Headquarters Support Group (HSG), different structures of the Military Civil Advisory (MCA) Division and Joint Intelligence Cell (JIC). Preliminary results of the interviews and organizational assessment questionnaire were used to prepare a short report and it was presented to KFOR Commander in December 2010 (see Annex F).

The HFM RTG-163 team planned, coordinated, and executed eight meetings in the years of 2008 – 2011. As part of its regular meetings in November, 2010 at the NATO Defence College and in March 2011 at the U.S. Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI), the group organised two small-scale workshops to present, discuss findings, and disseminate research results among a broader audience at each site.

An important supplement to the HFM RTG-163 Program of Work was that contributed by the RTG Chair CAPT (N) D.Sc. Yantsislav Yanakiev and members Dr. Janet Sutton and Dr. Linda Pierce. These scientists initiated a bi-lateral RTO-supported project between Bulgaria and the United States on *Understanding Factors that Influence Coalition Teamwork*. Data collection for this project occurred at the “Novo Selo” Army Training Range, Sliven, Bulgaria in September 2009 among U.S. and Bulgarian military personnel stationed at the combined military installation. Findings were presented at the NATO RTO System Analysis and Studies (SAS) Research Symposium (SAS-081/RSY) on “Analytical Support to Defence Transformation” in Sofia, Bulgaria on 26 – 28 April 2010 (see Annex G).

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

In Chapter 2, we provide a summary of the results from focus group discussions and subsequent interviews with participation of experts knowledgeable of coalition operations in general and specifically operational HQs. Barriers and enablers to effective performance, associated recommendations, and basic characteristics of effective coalition HQs are presented. Based on the analysis of the results from SMEs discussions, we identified the main (official) goals of the NATO HQs as that of supporting the troops on the ground and executing effective command and control functions. In order to achieve these overarching goals, NATO HQs must implement the following operative goals:

- a) Effective and timely sharing of information;
- b) Quick and timely decision making; and
- c) Improved shared awareness of tasks and responsibilities.

Given these goals as sacrosanct to NATO HQs, our research team defines organisational effectiveness of NATO HQs as the degree of fit, or alignment, among various dimensions of organisational effectiveness such as organisational structure, processes, people, and culture towards goal achievement.

In Chapter 3, we present and discuss theoretical approaches and existing models on organisational effectiveness. We describe and examine five different models – the internal system approach to organisational effectiveness, the Command Team Effectiveness (CTEF) Model [28], the Star Model [30], the 7-S-Model [58] and the Behavioural Engineering Model (BEM; [33]). We evaluate their conceptual ideas and advantages for the purposes of our research, and based on that, we create a new theoretical model to study organisational effectiveness of coalition HQs.

Chapter 4 presents the operational procedures and measurement model. In addition, our research methodology is discussed, to include the instrument for organisational assessment survey, the interview protocol, and data collection procedures.

Chapter 5 summarises the results from the organisational assessment survey in KFOR HQ.

Chapter 6 presents the results from the interviews with key personnel in KFOR HQ.

Finally, Chapter 7 discusses the project implementation and summarises some practical implications as well as the need of future research.

The Annexes present:

- Annex A and Annex B – Transcript of the results from SMEs group discussions;

- Annex C – Research paper presented at NATO RTO System Analysis and Studies (SAS) research symposium on “Analytical Support to Defence Transformation” in Sofia, Bulgaria on 26 – 28 April 2010;
- Annex D and Annex E – Organisational survey questionnaire and interview protocol for semi-structured interviews with key personnel in KFOR HQ;
- Annex F – The report presented to KFOR Commander; and
- Annex G – The report from the Bulgarian-United States RTO supported project “Factors that Influence Coalition teamwork”, presented at NATO SAS-081/RSY in Sofia, Bulgaria on 26 – 28 April 2010.

1.5 AUTHORSHIP

Chapter 1: Yantsislav Yanakiev, Tibor Szvircev Tresch, and Janet Sutton.

Chapter 2: Yantsislav Yanakiev, Fred Lichacz, and Carol Paris.

Chapter 3: Esther Bisig, Tineke Hof, Sigmund Valaker, Tibor Szvircev Tresch, Stefan Seiler, and Anne Lise Bjørnstad.

Chapter 4: Ann-Renee Blais, Magdalena Granåsen, Esther Bisig, Anne Lise Bjørnstad, Tineke Hof, Fred Lichacz, Jenny Marklund, Joseph Lyons, Erin A. Moeser-Whittle, Sigmund Valaker, and Yantsislav Yanakiev.

Chapter 5: Ann-Renee Blais, Joseph Lyons, Anne-Lise Bjørnstad, and Erin A. Moeser-Whittle.

Chapter 6: Esther Bisig, Magdalena Granåsen, Sigmund Valaker, and Jenny Marklund.

Chapter 7: Sigmund Valaker, Anne-Renee Blais, Magdalena Granåsen, Anne Lise Bjørnstad, Fred Lichacz, Yantsislav Yanakiev, Izik Cohen, Delphine Resteigne, and Esther Bisig.

