

Annex A – RESULTS FROM SMEs FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AT NATO SCHOOL, OBERAMMERGAU, GERMANY DURING THE HFM RTG-163 MEETING, 22-24 OCTOBER 2008

Subject-matter experts from the NATO School, Provincial Reconstruction Teams in International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as well as Joint Forces Command Brunssum joined the group. **The discussion highlighted the following barriers to organisational effectiveness at NATO HQ:**

- Different perspectives.
- Right experience for the right job.
- Training attendance is lacking.
- Language barriers in translating commander's intent into action.
- Lack of shared goals:
 - PRTs are National assets and may have different goals.
 - NGOs may have different goals.
- Interactions among individuals (i.e., different meal schedules, different national policies on alcohol use).
- Lack of coordination – though it appeared that goals of HQ leadership were well-understood:
 - Problem is not higher-level leadership, it's lower level execution.

The session identified the following barriers to organisational effectiveness in ISAF HQ: (all but the first two were also identified in SFOR, BIH):

- 1) Rapid turnover of leadership and personnel.
- 2) Lack of adequate manning.
- 3) Differences in national and coalition definition of effectiveness.
- 4) Tour length too short (typically 4 – 6 months):
 - Learning takes a long time to develop the social network, then you are getting ready to come home.
- 5) National rotations are not synched:
 - Strike Force NATO was successful because the group trained together.
- 6) War-fighting ethos where mission is peacekeeping.
- 7) Different national work ethics:
 - Meal times created conflicts.
- 8) Team leaders have responsibility but no “real” authority:
 - No one could be disciplined, must rely purely on positive tactics.
- 9) No negative consequences tolerated (see above).
- 10) Personnel selection:
 - Perception that some nations never contribute, but merely ride out their time.
 - Frequently, individuals are not qualified for their assigned role (Nations have a commitment to fill a slot, and fill they do).

- 11) Language:
 - Native English speakers have difficulties with non-native English speakers.
 - Non-native English speakers often do not comprehend the meaning or context of English speech.
 - Native English speakers sometime assume incompetence on the part of non-native English speakers.
- 12) Lack of organisational knowledge because lessons learned are not systematically passed on:
 - There was no debriefing for many personnel returning from a NATO assignment!
- 13) Culture of fear for making incorrect decision.
- 14) Lack of technological interoperability in national systems (hampers information sharing).
- 15) Nation-Centric politics result in restrictive caveats (this was a major influence!):
 - Troops are forced to work around these political barriers, which at times increases the immediate risk on troops.
- 16) Personality conflicts.
- 17) Lack of individual, organisational, national trust.
- 18) Competing national doctrine.
- 19) Lack of NATO pre-deployment training.
- 20) Unclear NATO doctrine.
- 21) National symbols versus one NATO symbol.
- 22) U.S. dominance in pushing the “American” way of doing business.
- 23) National perception of women being less capable than men.
- 24) Intended organisational structure was no there in practice:
 - Commanders change it to how they want it.
- 25) Ghost structure created by senior national representatives.
- 26) National social communication networks.
- 27) National differences in understanding of on non-kinetic side of operations.

The discussion identified the following enablers of organization effectiveness:

- 1) No single Nation predominantly represented on HQ staff.
- 2) HQ staff with prior experience working together as a group.
- 3) Informal networks (i.e., social) are key to task accomplishment.
- 4) Pre-deployment training on how to work in NATO/coalition environment.
- 5) Need to be more NATO-oriented than Nation-oriented.
- 6) NATO standardization for education and training for coalition operations.
- 7) Elimination of national caveats. This challenges trust among Nations.
- 8) Pushing for development of NATO identity.

SME suggestions for improving organisational effectiveness:

- 1) Extend all Nation's tours of duty to 12 – 18 months (as opposed to the typical 4 – 6 months).
- 2) Staff as planned.
- 3) Train together.
- 4) Create many ice-breakers/social events (first day ice breakers need to be followed up on).
- 5) Eliminate political caveats for mission execution.

