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DOCUMENTED
BRIEFING

Assessing the U.S. Air Force Unified Engagement Building Partnerships Seminars

Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Jeffrey Engstrom

Prepared for the United States Air Force

Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

PROJECT AIR FORCE

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Preface

This documented briefing is an assessment of the United States Air Force's (USAF's) Building Partnership (BP) Seminars. It identifies options for improving the alignment of USAF's international programs to further develop USAF's Campaign Support Plan. The findings from this briefing were developed using the RAND security cooperation assessment framework and from case studies of two Unified Engagement BP Seminars held in Sweden (in 2009) and Estonia (in 2010).

This briefing is part of a substantial and growing body of RAND Project AIR FORCE work dealing with partnership building. The study was sponsored by the Director of Operational Planning, Policy and Strategy, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements, Headquarters USAF (HQ USAF/A5X), in coordination with its Regional Plans and Issues Division (AF/A5XX), Concepts, Strategy, and Wargaming Division (AF/A5XS), and Strategic Plans and Policy Division (AF/A5XP). The research was conducted within the Strategy and Doctrine Program of RAND Project AIR FORCE as part of a larger fiscal year 2010 study "Support to the Air Force Campaign Support Plan and AF/A5X International Programs." It builds on previous RAND Project AIR FORCE work, including the following:

- Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Joe Hogler, Jefferson P. Marquis, Christopher Paul, John E. Peters, and Beth Grill, *Developing an Assessment Framework for U.S. Air Force Building Partnerships Programs*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-868-AF, 2010.
- Jefferson P. Marquis, Joe Hogler, Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Michael J. Neumann, Christopher Paul, John E. Peters, Gregory F. Treverton, and Anny Wong, *Adding Value to Air Force Management Through Building Partnerships Assessment*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, TR-907-AF, 2010.
- Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Jefferson P. Marquis, Cathryn Quantic Thurston, and Gregory F. Treverton, *A Framework to Assess Programs for Building Partnerships*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-863-OSD, 2009.
- Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Kim Cragin, Eric Gons, Beth Grill, John E. Peters, and Rachel M. Swanger, *International Cooperation with Partner Air Forces*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-790-AF, 2009.

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Summary

USAF's UE BP Seminars, managed by its wargaming division (AF/A5XS), are designed to support the USAF's biannual Title 10 wargame, Unified Engagement. These seminars focus primarily on incorporating the insights of countries that do not formally participate in the larger wargame by eliciting their reaction to a number of supporting scenarios through table-top exercises during the seminars. To date, BP Seminars have taken place only in the areas of responsibility of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe and U.S. Pacific Air Forces.

We used RAND's security cooperation assessment framework to assess these seminars. This framework looks at six specific elements: guidance, programs, authorities, stakeholders, levels of analysis, and indicators and metrics for assessment. With it, we assessed the seminars held in Sweden in 2009 and in Estonia in 2010. Both seminars successfully strengthened cooperation among the United States and its partners in the Baltic region. However, in applying the framework, the RAND team identified several ways to significantly enhance the BP Seminars:

As with similar programs, the BP Seminars could benefit from the institutionalization that authoritative documentation, such as an Air Force instruction, would provide.

Establishing clearer links to combatant command guidance would, among other things, provide measurable objectives for each seminar. Such objectives are critical for post-seminar assessments.

Cost reduction is possible through both identifying and involving other potential stakeholders at the outset of planning a future BP Seminar.

After-action reports would be highly beneficial for capturing seminar insights, honing the relevance and value of future events, and demonstrating the importance and effectiveness of the BP Seminars to critical stakeholders.

Developing and implementing a follow-up mechanism, such as post-event interviews and participant surveys, would be invaluable for assessing the extent to which an event met its objectives, necessary areas for follow-up, and how to tailor future events.

Most of these suggestions would not be difficult to incorporate into the BP program architecture if introduced early stage in the event-planning process. Implementing them will help increase the program's visibility and effectiveness, reduce its costs, and further demonstrate its value within USAF and to U.S. partners worldwide.

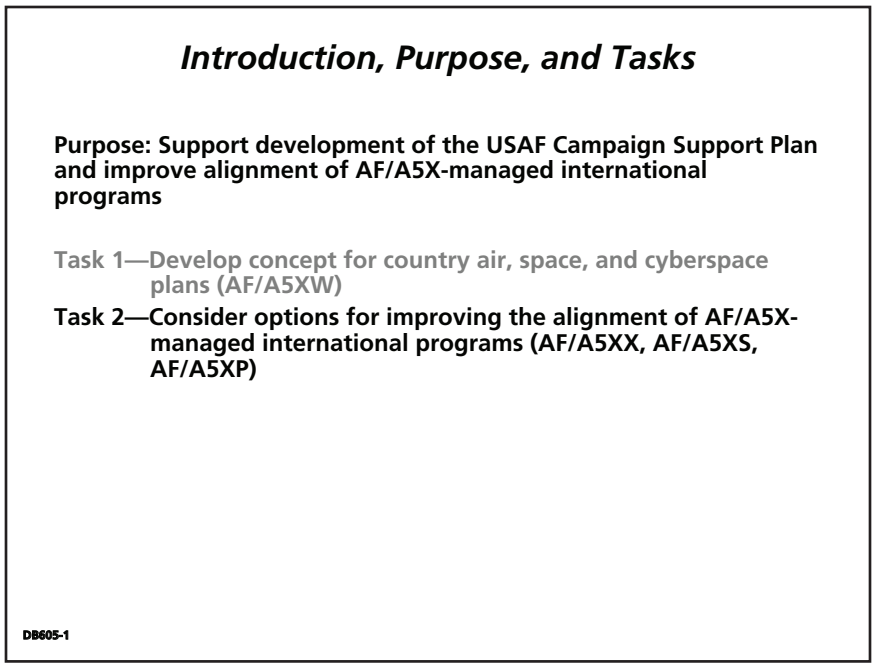
Finally, this briefing also demonstrates the application of RAND's security cooperation assessment framework and further affirms its utility and broad applicability to partnership building programs managed by USAF.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank the USAF sponsors for their support. We would specifically like to thank AF/A5XS staff supporting the Unified Engagement BP Seminars. Moreover, AF/A5XS staff devoted their valuable time to meeting and working with the RAND team on numerous occasions and answered countless follow-up questions. We would like to add a special thanks to the efforts of John Harris to these ends. Also, the contributions of Lt Col Lisa Nemeth, A. J. Torres, and John Goetchius are much appreciated. Finally, the authors wish to thank the staffs of U.S. Air Forces in Europe and U.S. Pacific Air Forces for their valuable insights regarding the effectiveness of this program from a regional perspective. RAND's participation in three Europe-based seminars (Romania, Sweden, and Estonia) was critical to obtaining the data to support the analysis in this annotated briefing.

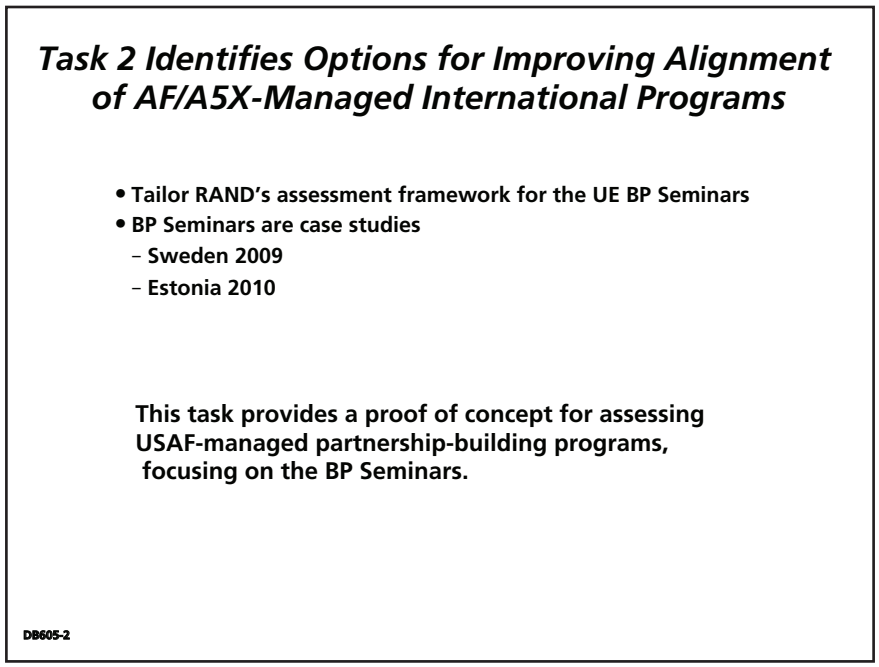
Abbreviations

AF/A3/5	Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Plans and Requirements, Headquarters United States Air Force
AF/A5X	Director of Operational Planning, Policy and Strategy, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Plans and Requirements, Headquarters United States Air Force
AF/A5XP	Air Force Strategic Plans and Policy Division
AF/A5XS	Air Force Concepts, Strategy, and Wargaming Division
AF/A5XX	Air Force Regional Plans and Issues Division
AOR	area of responsibility
BP	building partnerships
CONOP	concept of operation
GEF	Guidance for Employment of the Force
MAJCOM	major command
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PACAF	Pacific Air Forces
PAF	Project AIR FORCE
RSAF	Royal Swedish Air Force
SAF/IA	Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs
UE	Unified Engagement
USAF	United States Air Force
USAFE	United States Air Forces in Europe

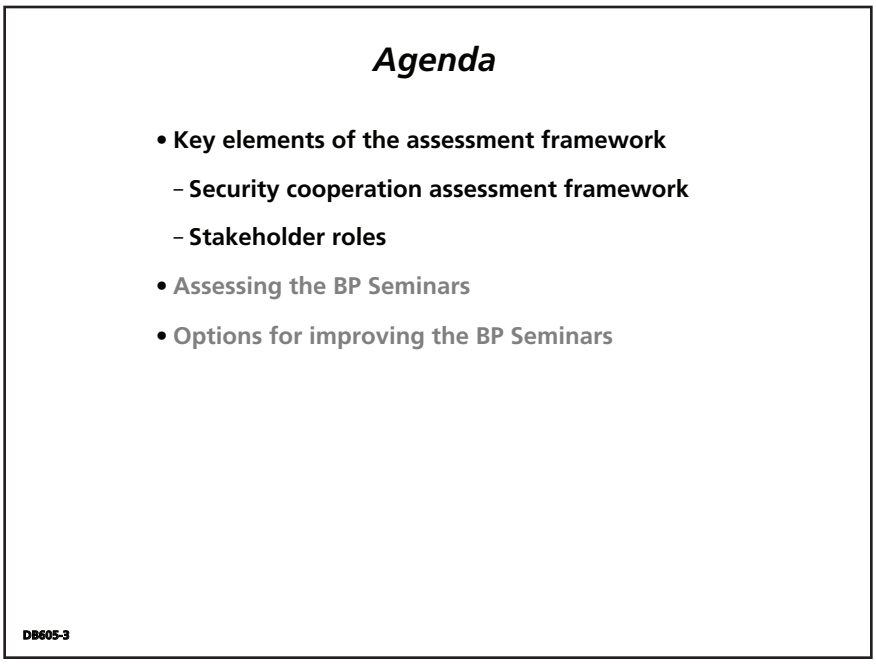


This annotated briefing summarizes the results of case studies developed from two Unified Engagement (UE) Building Partnerships (BP) Seminars, held in Sweden (in 2009) and Estonia (in 2010), and demonstrates a proof of concept using the RAND Corporation's security cooperation assessment framework. Both seminars brought members of the air forces of (in alphabetical order) Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden together with that of the United States. These seminars were designed to explore ways to increase partnerships among these countries. We applied the assessment framework to further improve the utility of these seminars.

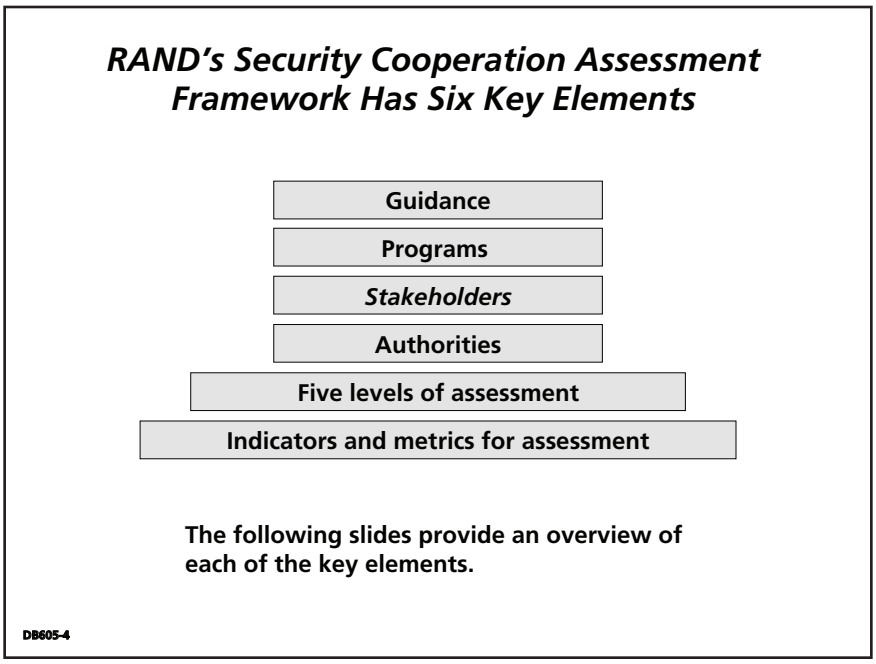
The work described in this documented briefing is part of a broader research effort to assist the Director of Operational Planning, Policy and Strategy, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force (AF/A5X) with development and implementation of USAF's Campaign Support Plan. This briefing addresses the second task, whose purpose was to consider options for enhancing the potential of BP Seminars to help improve the alignment of the international programs that the seminars' three key stakeholders manage. These three stakeholders are Regional Plans and Issues Division (AF/A5XX), Concepts, Strategy, and Wargaming Division (AF/A5XS), and Strategic Plans and Policy Division (AF/A5XP).



To identify options for improving the alignment of AF/A5X-managed international programs, we first tailored RAND's assessment framework to the UE BP Seminars and then used the BP Seminars held in Sweden and Estonia as cases studies.



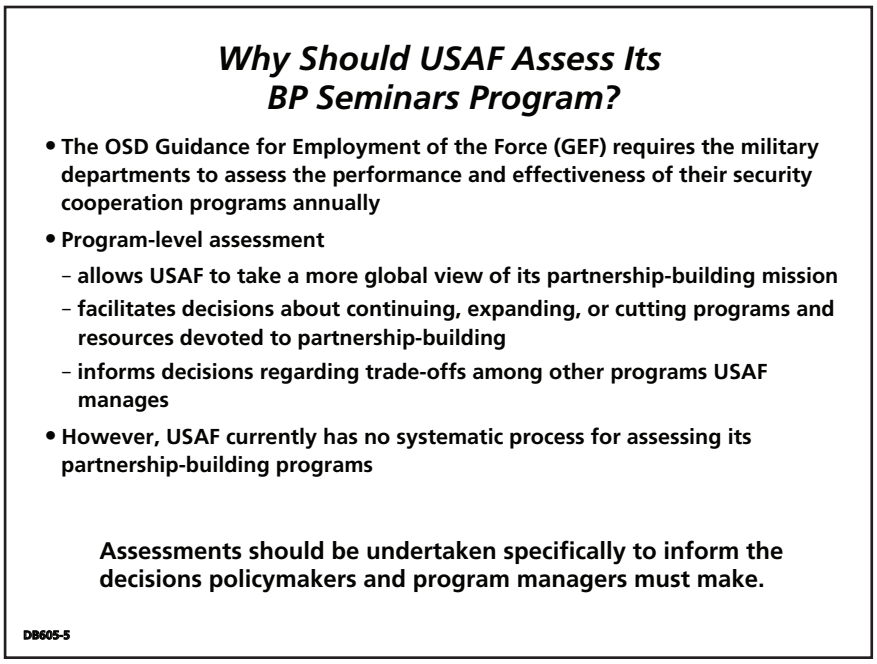
First, this documented briefing looks at the key elements of RAND's security cooperation assessment framework. This includes elements of the framework, why USAF should assess the BP seminars program, guidance, authorities, assessment levels, and assigning stakeholders to the assessment levels. We then identify and explore potential stakeholder roles based on responsibilities and authorities each exercises regularly.



RAND's security cooperation assessment framework has six key elements:

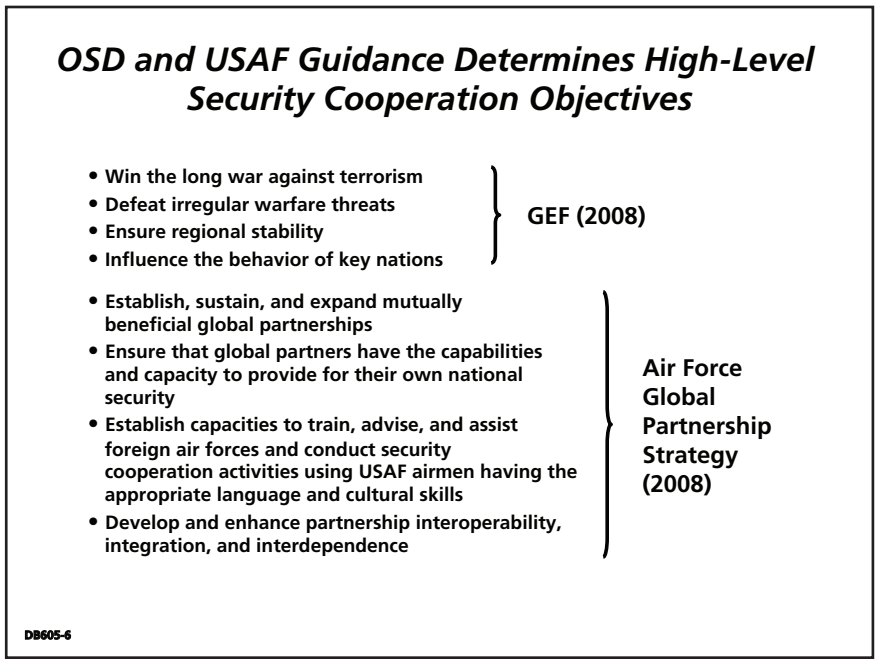
- guidance
- programs
- stakeholders
- authorities
- five levels of assessment
- indicators and metrics for assessment.

The following slides explore each of these elements the context of the UE BP Seminars.



Why should USAF assess its partnership-building programs? The Office of the Secretary of Defense's (OSD's) GEF stipulates annual assessments of the performance and effectiveness of the military departments' security cooperation programs.[1] While assessment currently occurs as the guidance stipulates, USAF does not have a systematic process for assessing its partnership-building programs. Such a systematic assessment would provide a number of tangible benefits for policymakers and program managers, including allowing USAF to take a global, strategic view of its partnership-building mission rather than its individual components; informing program management about the aspects that need to be improved and expanded or to be cut; and making more-informed decisions when weighing trade-offs with respect to USAF's other programs and missions.

[1] Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), *Guidance for Employment of the Force*, Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2008, not available to the general public.



For USAF's partnership-building programs, two main sources of guidance determine security cooperation objectives:

GEF views security cooperation as a campaign-level mission and stipulates a number of broad high-level goals directly relevant to security cooperation.[1] These include the role of security cooperation as it relates to defeating terrorism, defeating irregular warfare threats, ensuring regional stability, and influencing the behavior of key nations.

The Air Force Global Partnership Strategy is more specific, citing partnership-building as the centerpiece of USAF security cooperation. As a result, the strategy stipulates a number of goals for partnership-building programs, including developing partnerships that are established, sustainable, and mutually beneficial; developing global partner capabilities and capacities so that they can provide for their own national security needs; ensuring proper USAF capacity to train, advise, and assist foreign air forces; and increasing interoperability, integration, and interdependence among foreign air forces.

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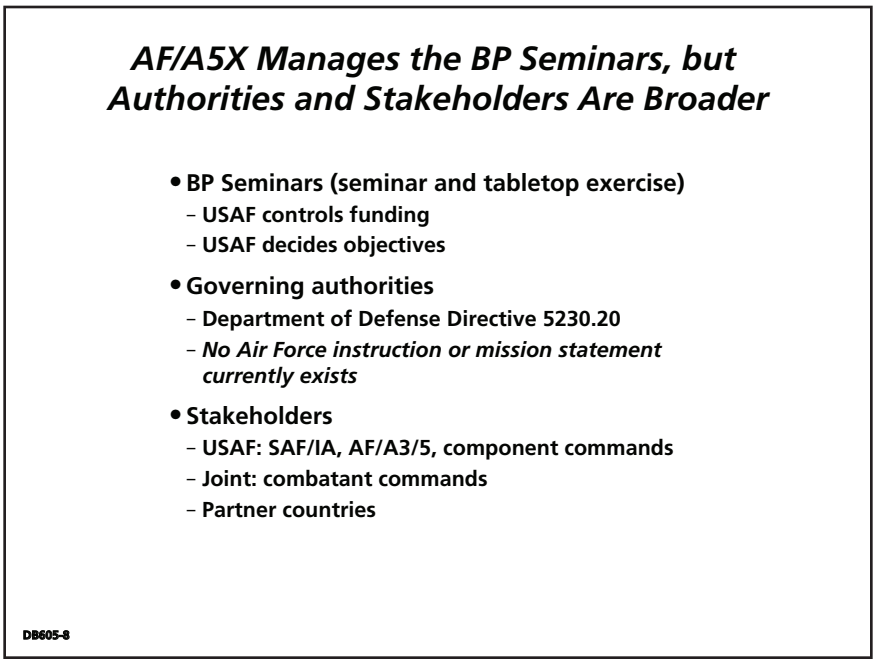
[1] Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Joe Hogler, Jefferson P. Marquis, Christopher Paul, John E. Peters, and Beth Grill, *Developing an Assessment Framework for U.S. Air Force Building Partnerships Programs*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-868-AF, 2010, p. 10.

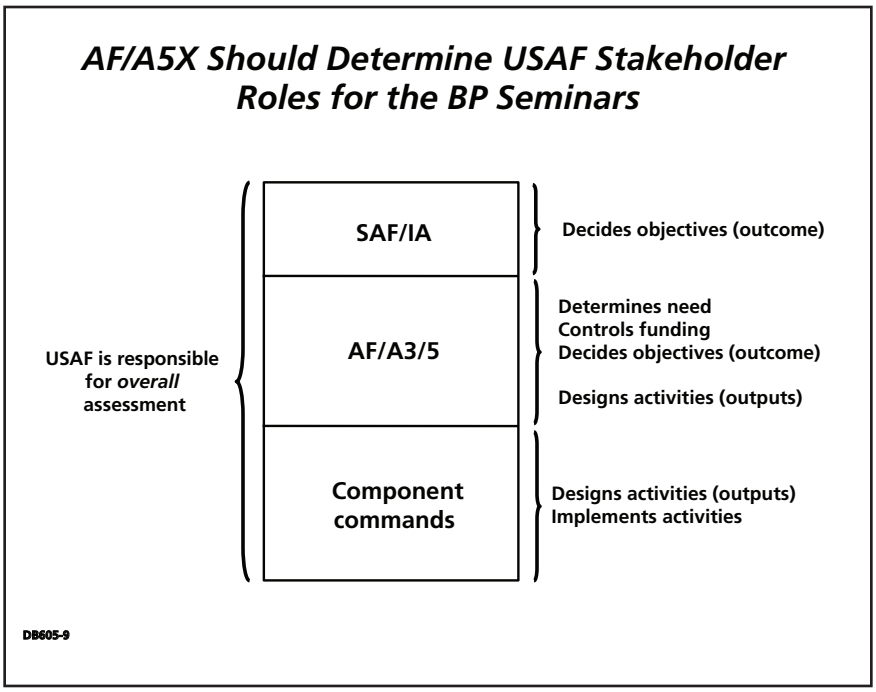
Two titles of the U.S. Code provide general authorization for USAF partnership-building programs: Title 10 authorizes the service to raise, train, and maintain military forces, and Title 22 authorizes security assistance to other countries.[1] Furthermore, these programs fall into three management categories: Air Force, joint, and Department of State. We specifically focused on ways to implement RAND's assessment framework to a partnership-building program under AF/A5X's direct purview, such as the BP Seminars. The assessment framework could also be expanded to include another AF/A5X–managed program, the Operator Engagement Talks, or a SAF/IA–managed program, the Military Personnel Exchange Program, among many others.

[1] U.S. Code Title 10, Armed Forces, as of 2009; U.S. Code Title 22, Foreign Relations and Intercourse, as of 2009.

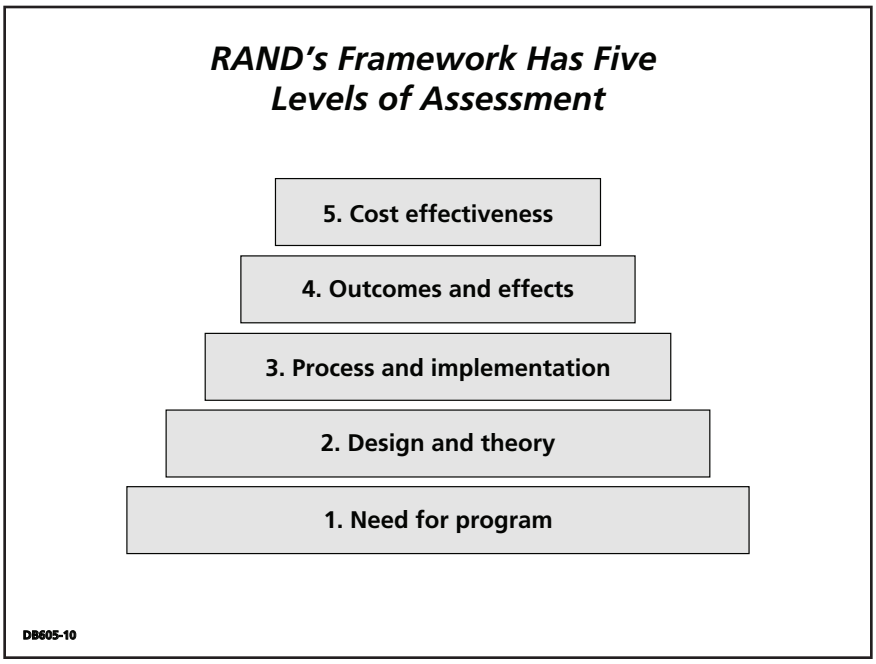


While AF/A5X manages the BP Seminars, the authorities and stakeholders involved include a much broader range of organizations. The Air Force controls the funding of and determines objectives for the BP Seminars and tabletop exercises. The sole governing authority for the BP Seminar program currently is Department of Defense Directive 5230.20, *Visits and Assignments of Foreign Nationals*, because no relevant Air Force instruction currently exists.[1] Broadly speaking, stakeholders include the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs (SAF/IA); the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Plans, and Requirements (AF/A3/5); combatant commands; component commands; and partner countries.

[1] Instructions exist for other Air Force and jointly managed programs. One example is Air Force Instruction 16-107, *Military Personnel Exchange Program*, Washington, D.C.: Department of the Air Force, February 2, 2006. A joint example is Air Force Instruction (Interservice) 16-105, *Joint Security Cooperation Education and Training*, January 3, 2011.



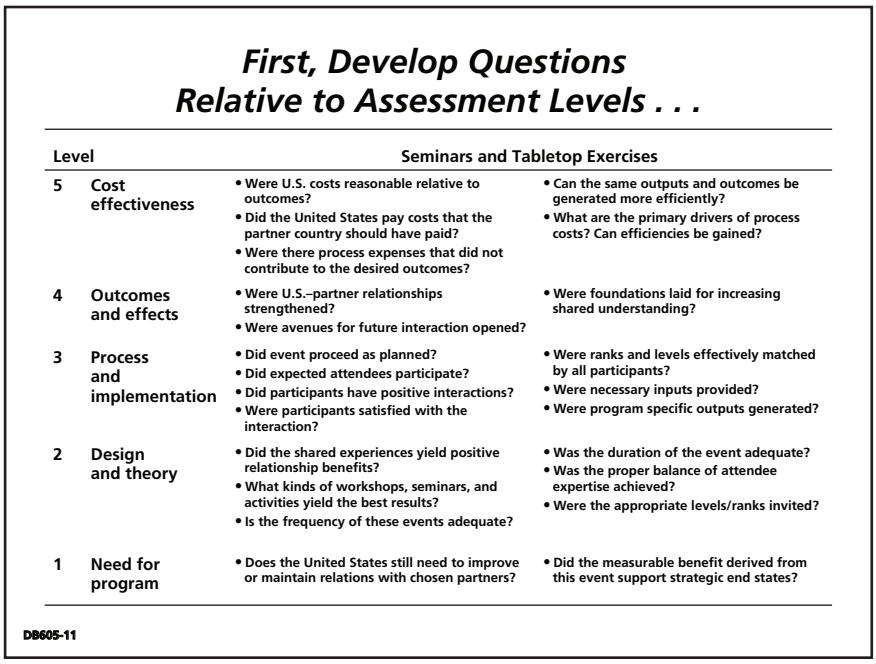
Establishing and understanding the different stakeholder roles is fundamental for carrying out assessments. Each stakeholder's exact role is determined by such aspects as current interests and equities and the need to ensure objectivity and avoid potential conflicts of interest when assessing both program accomplishments and potential shortcomings. To this end, AF/A5X should determine specific stakeholder roles for program assessment of the BP Seminars. A notional setup is that both SAF/IA and AF/A3/5 play a role in deciding outcome objectives. AF/A3/5 would also determine need and control funding and, in conjunction with component commands, design program activities. Along with codesigning activities, component commands would also implement program activities.



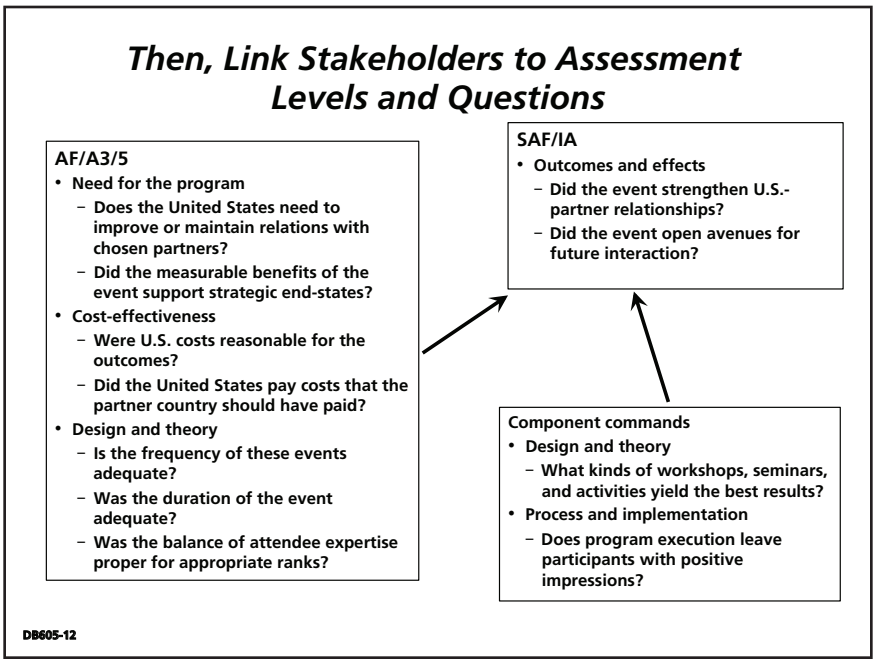
RAND's framework has five levels of assessment:

1. the need for the program and, from a U.S. government perspective, whether the program fills a specific gap or niche or solves a problem
2. how key stakeholders develop program theory and design
3. all the processes undertaken for a particular program
4. outcomes and effects
5. cost-effectiveness.

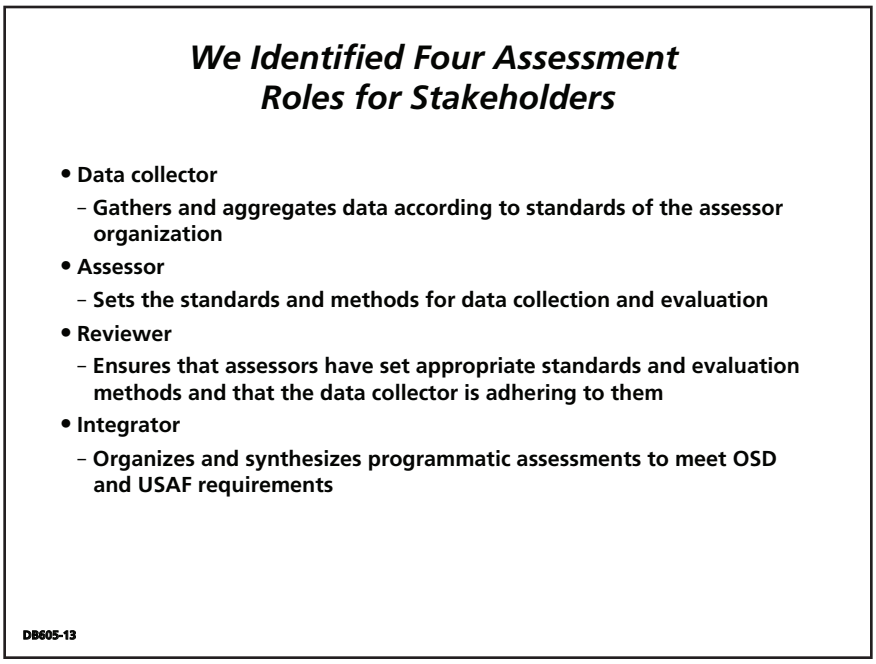
For BP Seminars, level 3 includes preparing for the seminars (developing seminar objectives, tabletop exercise scenarios, securing resources for the seminar, and resolving problems).



In applying the RAND framework's five levels of assessment to the BP Seminars, we developed a number of questions for each assessment level to build indicators and other means of assessing the BP Seminars. The questions above are illustrative and serve as a starting point for discussion among the various stakeholders. Using these or more event-tailored questions will help elicit important ideas, comments, and further questions that stakeholders may have.



Having identified the three main stakeholders (AF/A3/5, SAF/IA, and the component command), we notionally linked them to the assessment levels and corresponding questions to designate which stakeholder would answer particular types of assessment questions to be used by the integrator (in this instance, SAF/IA) to carry out programmatic assessments. These notional assignments were based on the various roles, responsibilities, and authorities these stakeholders have and exercise on a daily basis. This linked AF/A3/5 to questions on the need for the program (level 1), cost effectiveness (level 5), and design and theory (level 2). The component commands were linked with design and theory (level 2) and process and implementation (level 3). SAF/IA was linked to outcomes and effects (level 4).



Stakeholders also have four roles during an assessment. First, the *data collector* is responsible for collecting and aggregating data according to standards set by the assessor organization. Because all stakeholders collect data, all are also data collectors. Those that control resources or conduct administrative and executive processes are the *core data collectors*.

Second, the *assessor* sets standards for the collection and evaluation of data for the various data collectors. The stakeholders that establish need, set outcome objectives, or set output objectives should conduct the assessments. AF/A5XX establishes need and objectives, and SAF/IA sets outcomes through USAF's Global Partnership Strategy. To ensure assessment objectivity and to minimize the potential for possible conflicts of interest, it is very important that the stakeholders tasked as assessors not also be tasked as reviewers.

Third, the *reviewer* is responsible for ensuring that the assessors have set appropriate data collection standards and developed appropriate evaluation methods and that data are being collected and evaluated according to these standards and methods. Stakeholders that establish need or set outcome objectives should also conduct reviews.

Finally, the *integrator* is responsible for organizing and synthesizing programmatic assessments to meet OSD and Air Force requirements. Stakeholders that establish need or set outcome objectives should integrate assessments.

Notional Linking of Stakeholders to Assessment Roles for the BP Seminar Program

Assessment Decision	Data Collectors	Assessors	Reviewers	Integrator
Need	AF/A3/5 Component commands	AF/A3/5	SAF/IA AF/A3/5	SAF/IA
Design and theory	AF/A3/5 Component commands	AF/A3/5 Component commands	SAF/IA AF/A3/5	SAF/IA
Process and implementation	AF/A3/5 Component commands	AF/A3/5	SAF/IA AF/A3/5	SAF/IA
Outcomes and effects	AF/A3/5 Component commands	AF/A3/5 Component commands	SAF/IA	SAF/IA
Cost-effectiveness	AF/A3/5 Component commands	AF/A3/5 Component commands	SAF/IA	SAF/IA

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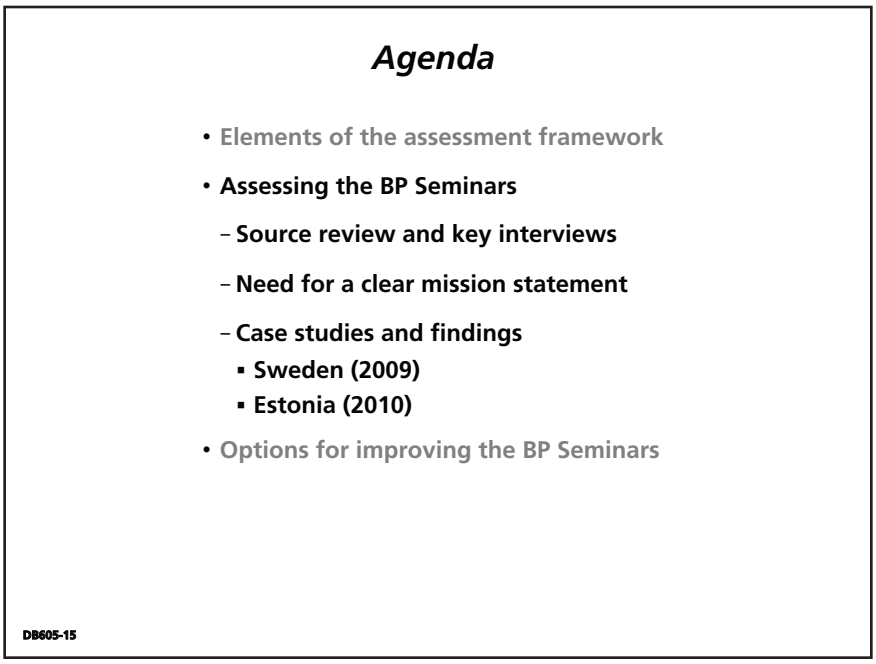
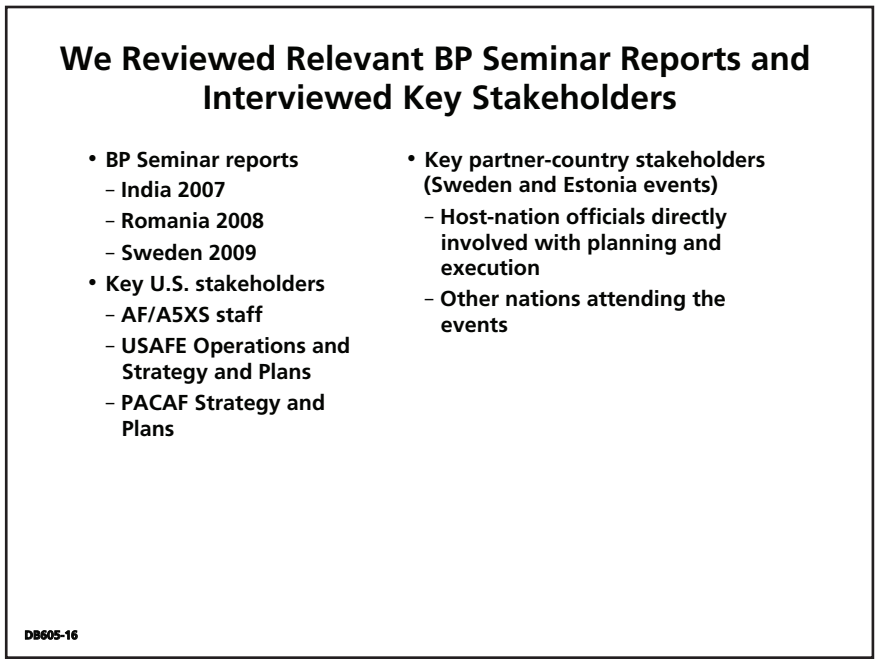
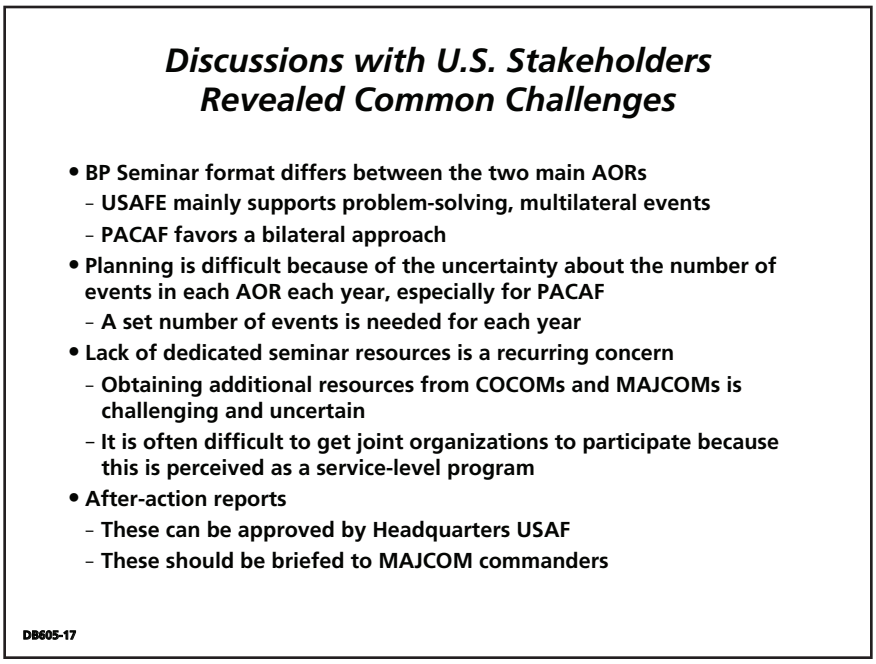
This slide notionally links assessment roles to various stakeholders. This configuration would change using different program examples, but for such Air Force–managed programs as the BP Seminars, SAF/IA would fill the integrator role because it is responsible for the strategic guidance and setting the outcome objectives. AF/A3/5 and the component commands also have critical roles to play, primarily as data collectors and assessors.



We will now turn from our discussion of RAND's assessment framework and its general application and focus on or assessment of the BP Seminars. We begin by looking at the results of an extensive source review and focusing discussion with key U.S. and partner-country stakeholders we conducted early in the project. Next, recognizing a need for consistent application and purpose, we present a preliminary mission statement for the BP Seminars. Finally, we look at the objectives and results of our two case studies, Sweden and Estonia.



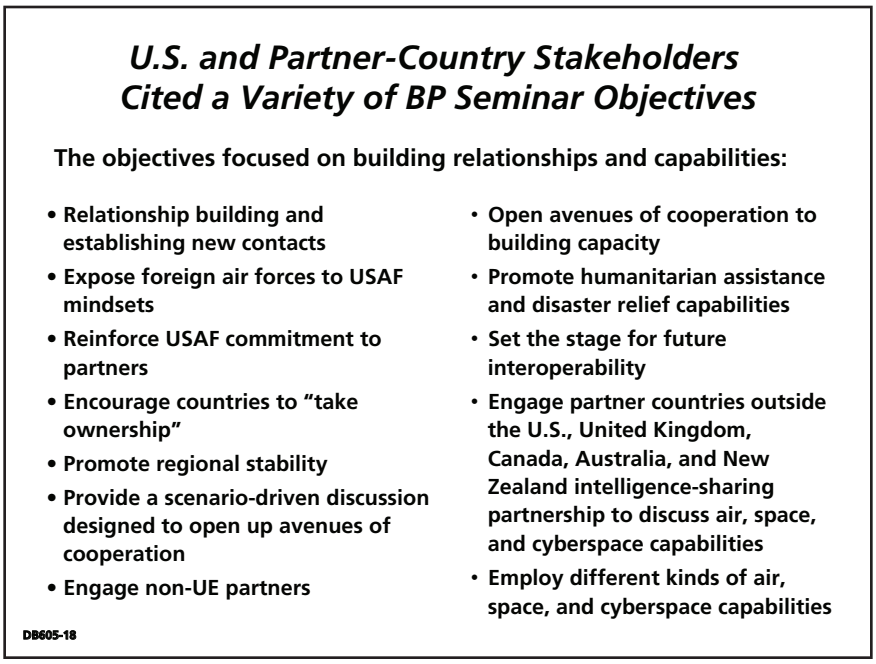
We undertook a review of recent BP Seminar reports, including those for the seminars in India, Romania, and Sweden, then interviewed representatives of key stakeholders. Key U.S. interviewees represented AF/A5XS, U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) Operations (A3) and Strategy and Plans (A5), and Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) Strategy and Plans (A5). Key partner-country stakeholder interviewees included host-country officials from Sweden and Estonia and officials from other countries attending the seminars.



Discussions with U.S. stakeholders revealed common challenges across the two main areas of responsibility (AORs) in which the BP Seminars take place: U.S. European Command and the U.S. Pacific Command AOR. BP Seminars in the U.S. European Command AOR involve large, multilateral events, involving many partner countries, as with the two case studies. Seminars in the U.S. Pacific Command AOR, however, are primarily bilateral (one partner country each).

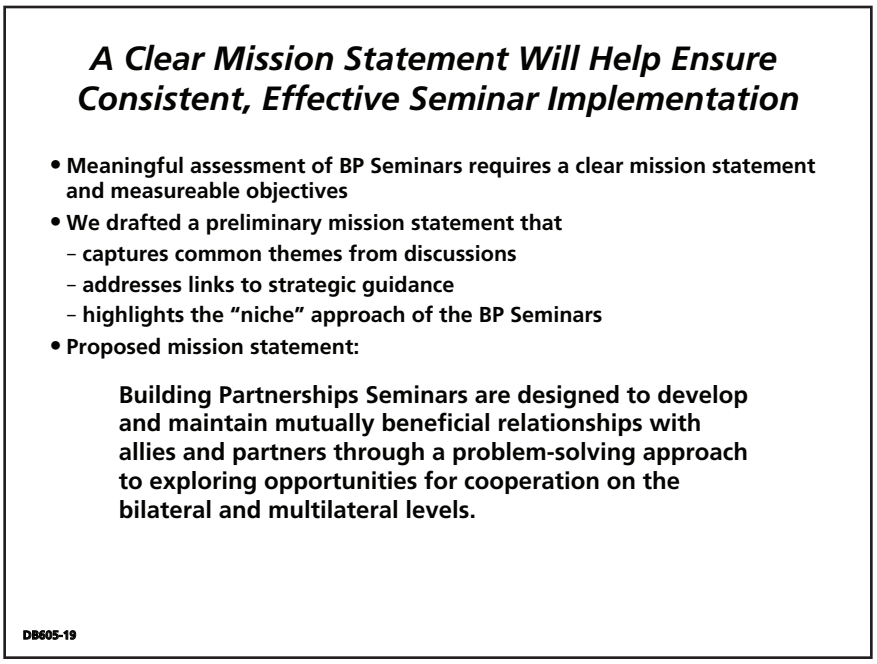
These differences reflect the broader alliance structures in the two AORs. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Europe is multilateral, while the United States maintains "hub-and-spoke" treaty alliances with many of its partner countries in Asia.

Planning for BP Seminars can be a challenge in any case, especially for PACAF, because of the uncertainty surrounding the total number of events each year. Setting a specific number annually would dramatically aid planning of future seminars. Furthermore, dedicated seminar resources are lacking, and seeking the necessary resources from the combatant commands and the major commands (MAJCOMs) continues to be challenging and uncertain. Our research also revealed a perception that the seminars are focused on air force issues for the United States and the partner countries, which contributes to the challenge of soliciting participation from other services.



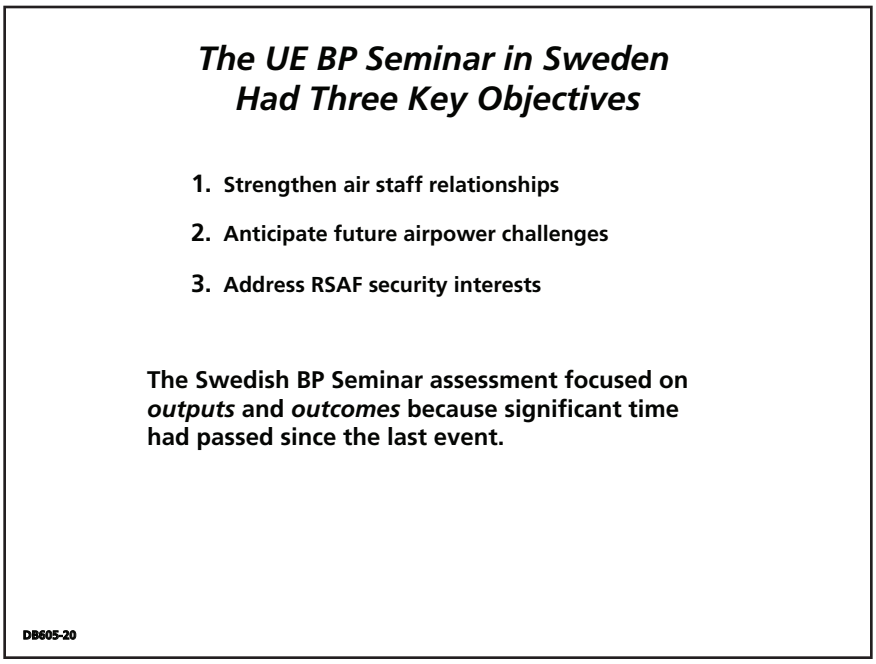
The focused discussions with U.S. and partner-country stakeholders elicited quite a few BP Seminar objectives, including relationship building; reinforcing USAF partnership commitments; promoting regional stability; engaging non-UE partners; engaging partners outside the U.S., United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand intelligence sharing partnership to discuss air, space, and cyberspace capabilities; and promoting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capabilities.[1] The number and diversity of objectives listed demonstrates the need for a unifying mission statement.

[1] This intelligence-sharing partnership is sometimes referred to as Five-Eyes, denoting the five participants involved, as listed above. For further information on this partnership, see Martin Rudner, "Hunters and Gatherers: The Intelligence Coalition Against Islamic Terrorism," *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2004. pp. 193–230.



We propose that AF/A5X develop a clear mission statement for the program to ensure consistent and effective implementation of future BP Seminars. Such a mission statement is important for bringing various stakeholders into a common understanding of the BP Seminars, something that may currently be lacking. Along with measurable objectives, a clear mission statement would also aid meaningful evaluation by providing for an apples-to-apples comparison of multiple seminars over time.

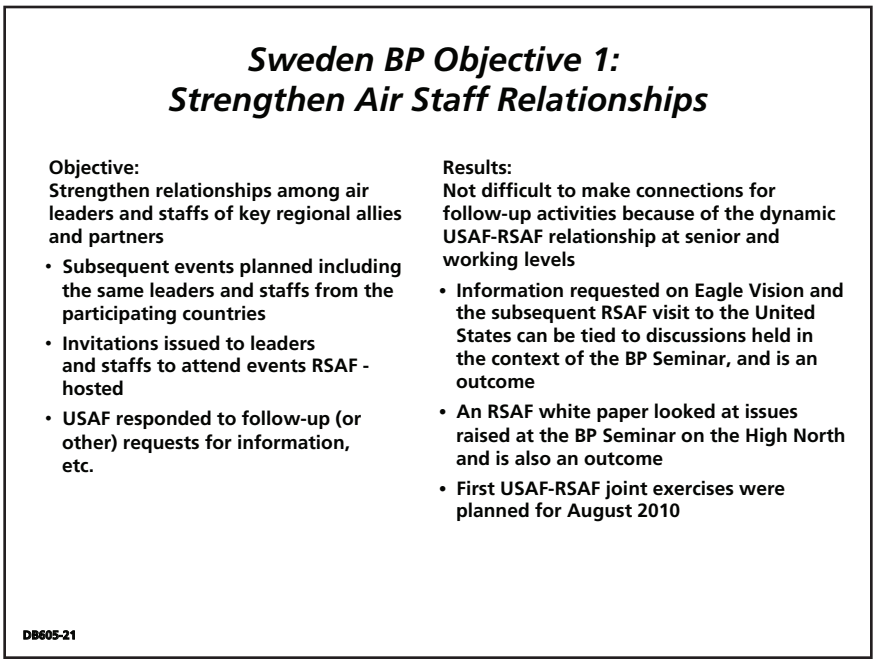
The proposed mission statement is the result of common themes from seminar discussions, highlighting the niche and gap-filling approach of the BP Seminars.



For the first case study, we looked at a BP Seminar held in Sweden in 2009. We examined in detail the seminar's three objectives, which USAF and the Royal Swedish Air Force (RSAF) had developed jointly, and the seminar results:

- strengthen air staff relationships
- anticipate future air power challenges
- address RSAF security interests.

Because significant time had passed since the previous seminar, this assessment focused on this event's outputs and outcomes.



The first objective of the BP Seminar in Sweden was to strengthen relationships among air staff leaders and the staffs of key regional allies and partners.[1] Subsequent events were planned to reengage the same leaders and staffs from the participating countries. For example, RSAF took the initiative to invite the seminar participants to attend a number of events they were hosting. Lastly, follow-up requests for information were provided by USAF.

Making connections to follow-up activities is not difficult because of the dynamic relationship between USAF and RSAF at both senior and working levels. Outcomes from the seminar included RSAF's interest in Eagle Vision, "a deployable ground station for processing imagery received directly from commercial satellite platforms," and a subsequent visit to the United States.[2]

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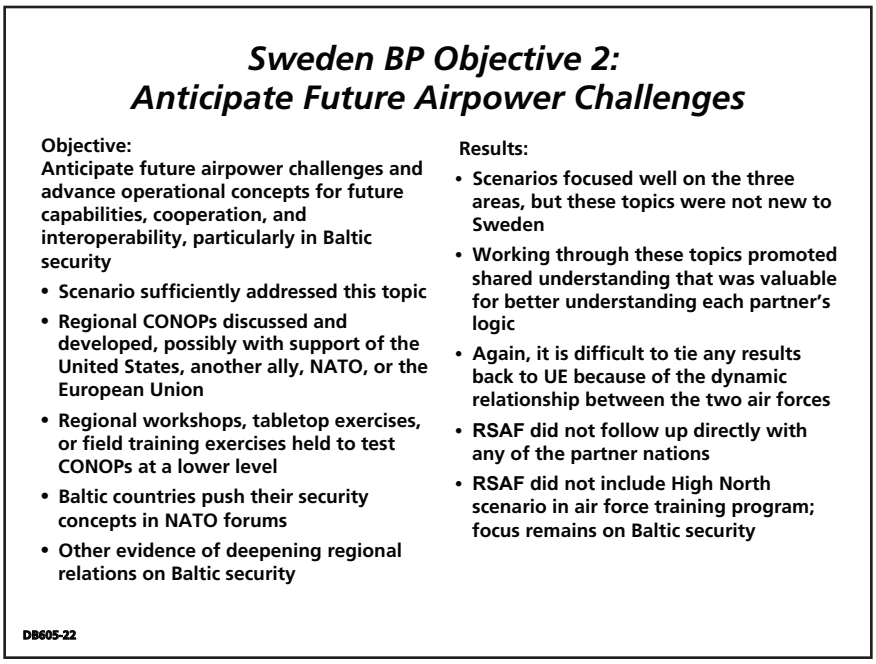
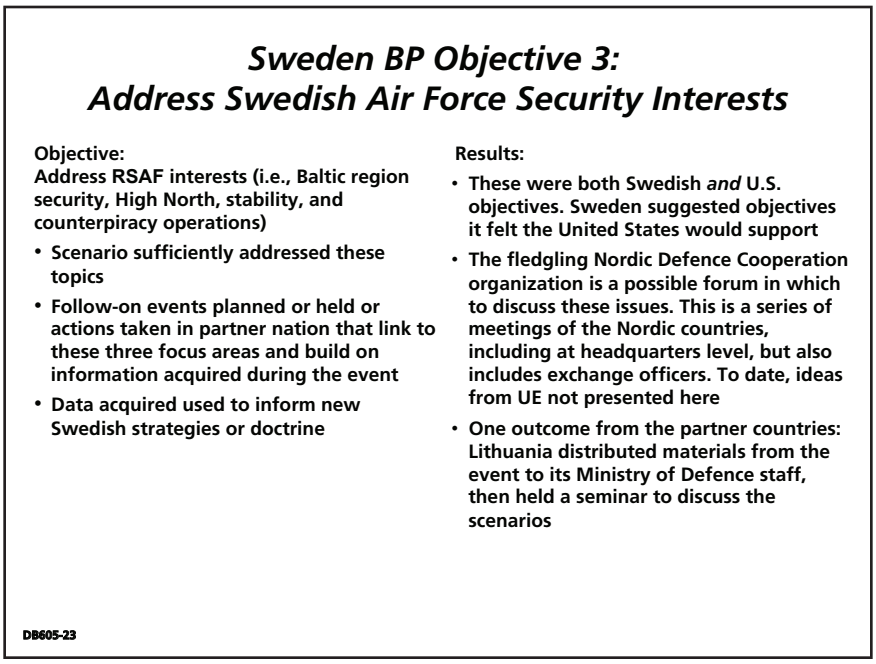
[1] In addition to the United States and Sweden, other partner-country attendees at this seminar included Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.

[2] Federation of American Scientists, "Eagle Vision, Eagle Vision II," Washington, D.C., November 21, 1998.



The second objective was anticipating future airpower challenges and advancing operational concepts for future capabilities, cooperation, and interoperability. Not surprisingly, the scenario for the tabletop exercise focused on future challenges and operational concepts relevant specifically to Baltic security. While these topics were not new to RSAF, the shared understanding attained with other partner nations was highly beneficial, as were the insights about specific issues and challenges they collectively face. Because this scenario was held at a high (strategic) level, among the air staffs of the attending countries, follow-on regional workshops, tabletop exercises, and field exercises were held to test the newly developed concepts of operation (CONOPs) at the lower operational and tactical levels. A further benefit this objective yielded was that the Baltic countries have strengthened and deepened their relations and can now better promote Baltic security issues in NATO forums. Unfortunately, from a sustainability standpoint, RSAF did not follow up directly with any of the partner nations. Also, RSAF has yet to include a High North scenario focused on Arctic security issues into its own training program.[1]

[1] High North scenarios focus on a variety of Arctic security issues and concerns (e.g., access to energy reserves) shared by U.S. NATO allies and Sweden.



The final objective was to address RSAF interests. Sweden suggested Baltic regional security, High North issues, stability, and counterpiracy operations, believing that the United States would be most interested and supportive of these but not necessarily because all (i.e. High North) were of specific interest, at least initially. All these objectives were successfully incorporated into the scenario.

While the Nordic Defense Cooperation organization, created in late 2009 by Nordic Council member states, provides an outlet for regular interaction between the air staffs of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden on these topics, membership in the organization does not extend to a number of other Baltic states, including seminar participants Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.[1] As a result, the BP Seminar provided a valuable forum to discuss common issues with the Baltic states, an opportunity that otherwise has heretofore not existed.

The results of this objective were immediately apparent. Sweden used seminar data to update strategies and doctrine, and Lithuania distributed materials from the event to its Ministry of Defense and held a seminar to discuss the scenario.

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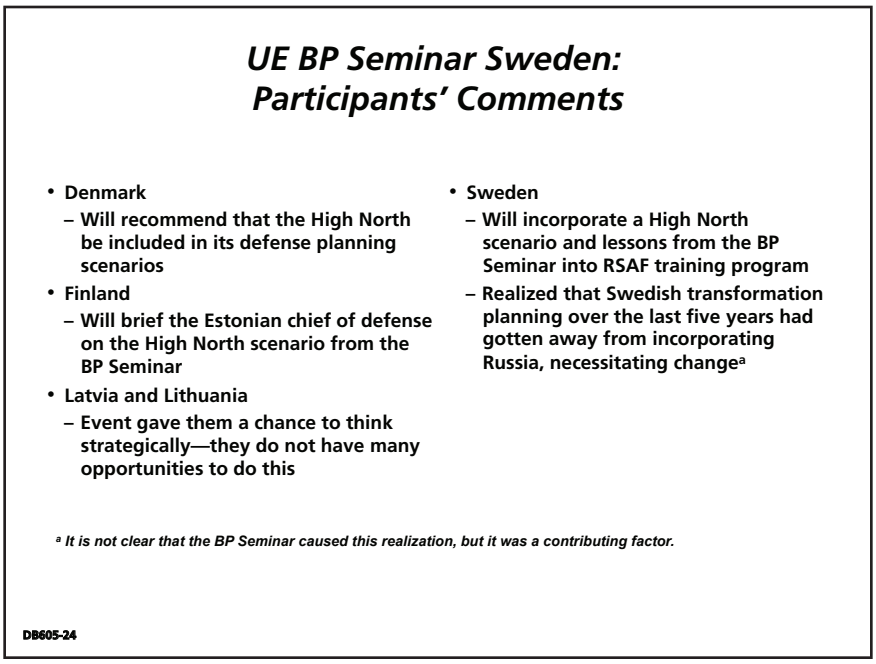
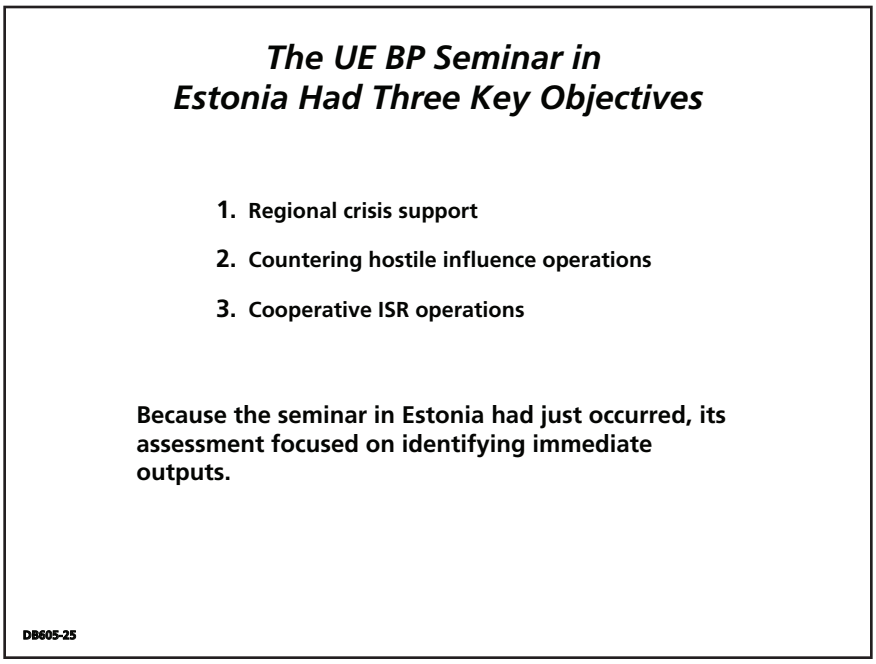
[1] The Nordic Council also includes the autonomous territories of Greenland, Åland, and the Faroe Islands and has offices in nonmember countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania as well as two in Russia. See Nordic Council, "Countries and Territories," Norden website, undated.



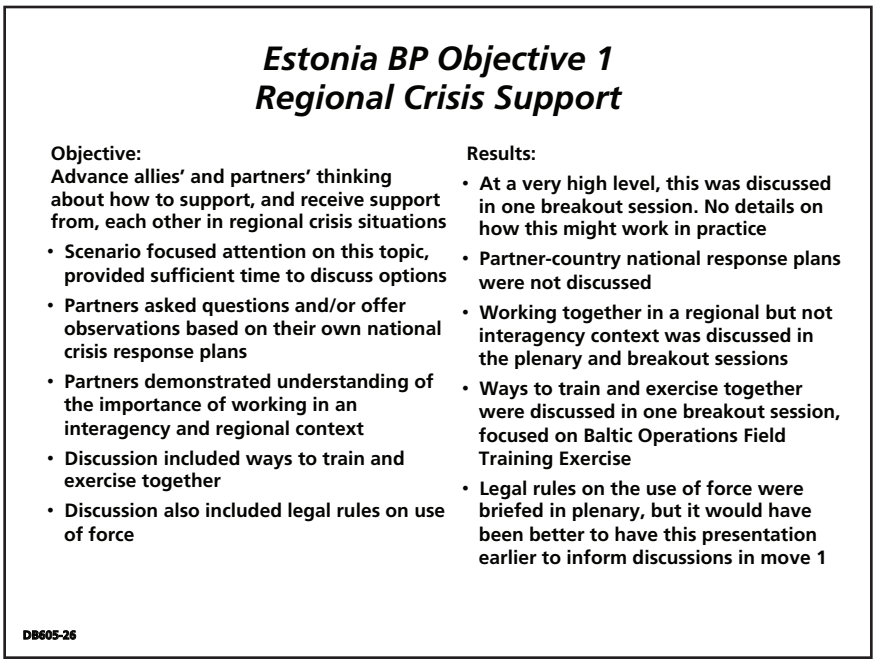
Comments from seminar participants highlighted the value of the BP Seminars for both building relationships and sharing information. This seminar helped Denmark, Finland, and Sweden recognize a greater need to focus on High North issues, and Denmark and Sweden specifically announced that they would increase their focus on this issue and would implement the insights in training and planning scenarios. Finland, Latvia, and Lithuania appreciated this seminar as a forum for discussing future strategic issues—something that they do not have many opportunities to do. USAF benefited from gaining a deeper understanding of current and potential future regional security issues in the High North and from further developing relationships with its Northern European partners. These insights and others underline the need for data collection to both measure the outcomes of future seminars and increase the effectiveness of future events.



For the second case study, we looked at a BP Seminar held in Estonia in 2010 by taking a detailed look at the seminar's three objectives and their results:

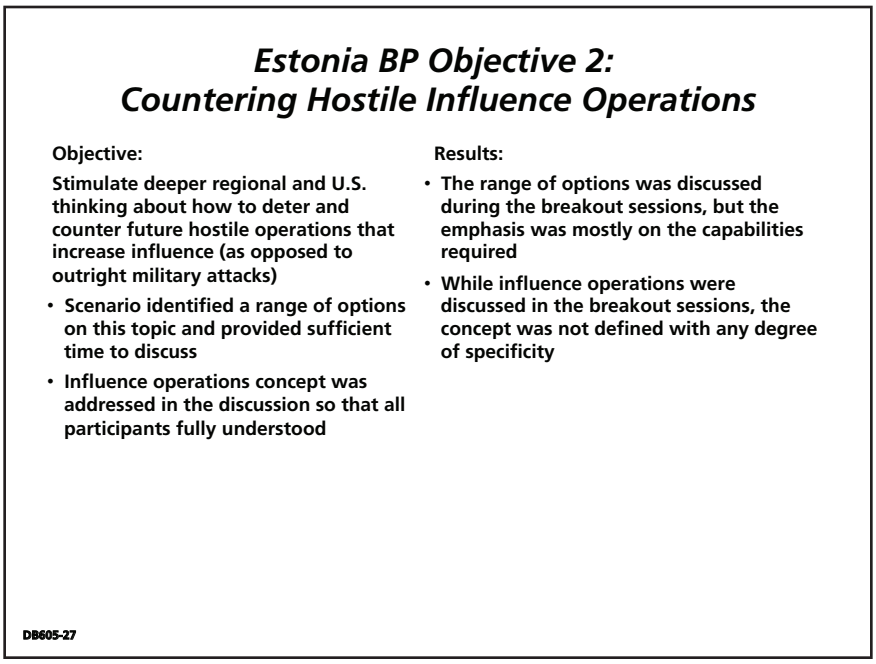
1. understanding regional crisis support
2. countering hostile influence operations
3. promoting cooperative intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operations.

Because significant time had passed since the previous seminar, this assessment focused on this event's immediate outputs.



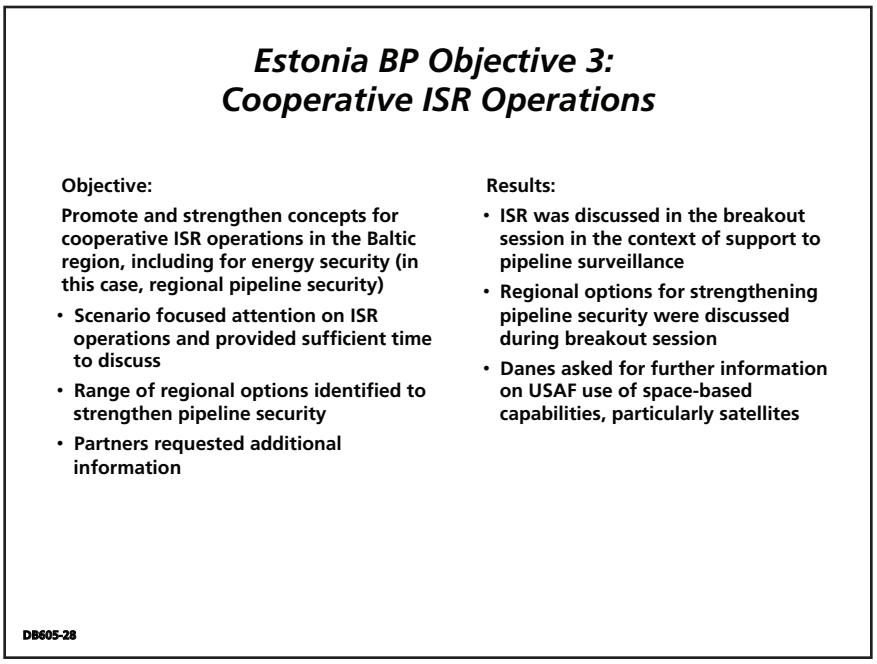
The first objective, advancing allies' and partners' thinking on how to support and receive support from each other during regional crisis situations, was new and somewhat novel to the participants. Therefore, discussions based on the scenario set the foundation for further exploration and, it was hoped, eventual realization of true cooperation and support during crisis situations among Baltic nations.

Seminar participants shared observations on their respective national crisis plans, discussed ways to train and exercise together, and discussed the various rules of engagement on the use of force that the participants had to deal with in responding to crisis situations. As a preliminary exploration toward future cooperation and support, the discussion remained at a high level and, as such, national response plans were not investigated.

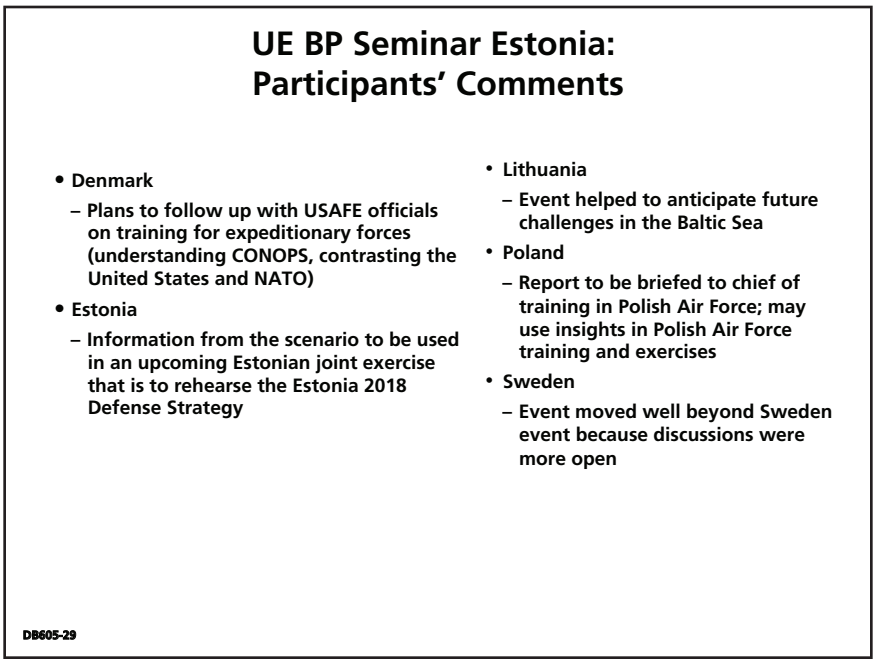


The second objective was to stimulate regional and U.S. thinking about how to deter or counter future hostile influence operations, such as the cyber attacks against Estonia in 2007. The scenario conceptually unpacked the meaning of influence operations to provide a common understanding for discussion. However, the concept of influence operations has itself not yet been defined with any degree of specificity, which hampers a common response.

The scenario also identified a range of potential options in dealing with such hostile operations, and a breakout session discussion focused on the capabilities required to deter or repel such attacks.

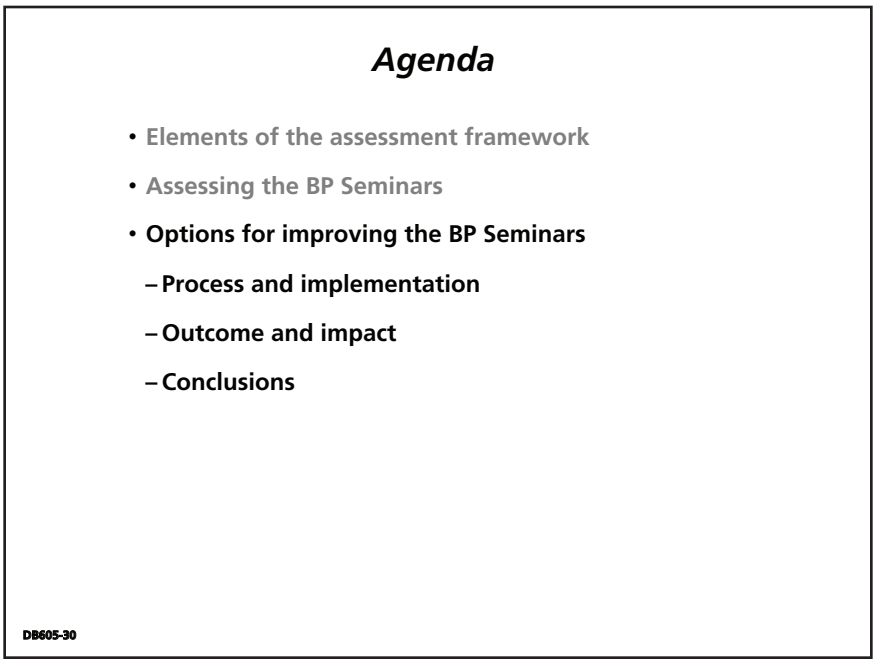


The final objective of the Estonia seminar was promoting and strengthening cooperative ISR operations in the Baltic, including energy security. The scenario specifically looked at pipeline security, and the breakout sessions focused on pipeline surveillance and regional operations to strengthen pipeline security. Partners requested additional information related to cooperative ISR operations; in particular, the participants from Denmark asked for further information on USAF use of space-based capabilities.

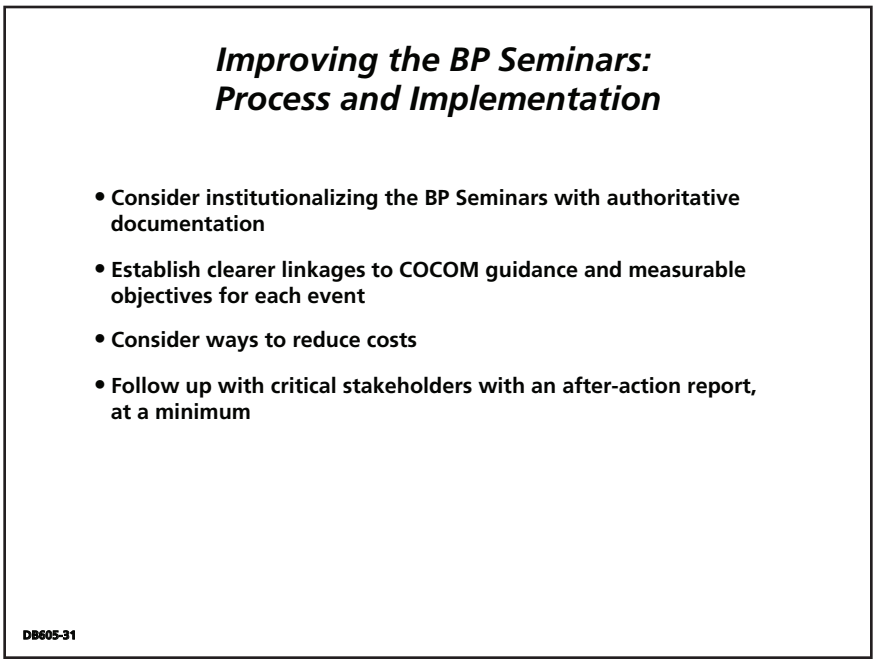


Comments from participants in the Estonia seminar again highlighted the value of the BP Seminars and underlined the need for data collection to both measure the outcomes of future seminars and increase the effectiveness of future events. Representatives of countries mentioned using seminar scenario data to inform planning for future exercises and training (Estonia and Poland), anticipate future challenges (Lithuania), request additional information (Denmark), and facilitate future multilateral dialogue and relationship building. An Estonian Air Force general participating in the seminar even offered the use of an Estonian air base to NATO allies for training purposes.

Participants from Sweden remarked that the discussions during this seminar were more open and candid than in previous seminars, and participants from Denmark thought that engaging the involvement of even higher-level personnel in the seminars would be beneficial. Both comments highlight the value of the seminars for building multilateral relationships. Furthermore, USAF broadened its understanding of how to deter and counter future hostile influence operations and how to provide support in such circumstances to its Baltic partners.



Finally, we look at ways to substantially improve future BP Seminars by examining the process and implementation of the seminars and their outcomes and effects. We will conclude with some specific recommendations for the USAF, particularly for AF/A3/5.

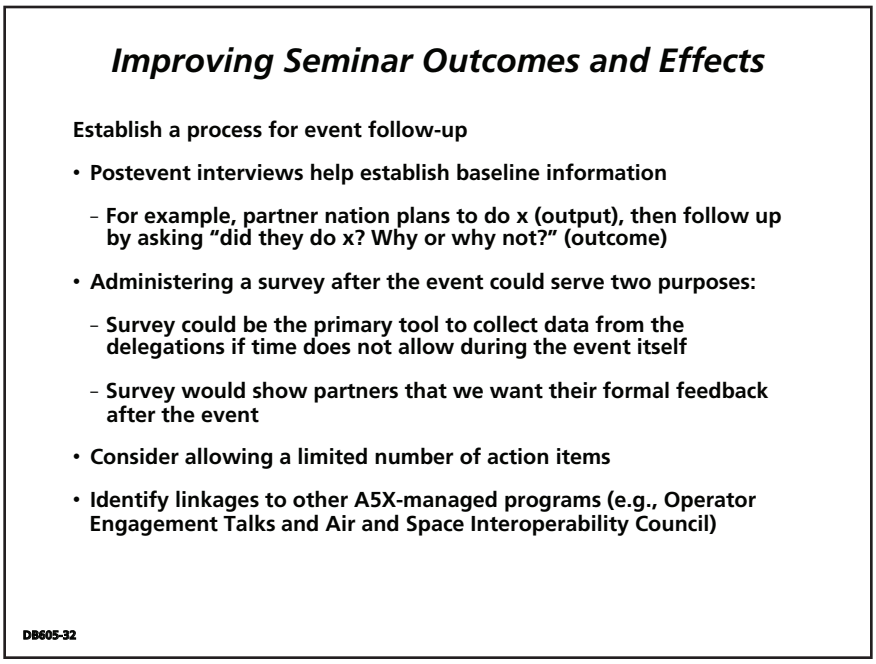


First, the process and implementation of the BP Seminars would benefit from development of authoritative documentation, such as an Air Force instruction. As noted earlier, such documentation already exists for similar programs, such as the Military Personnel Exchange Program and the Joint Security Assistance Training program.

Second, establishing clearer linkages to combatant command guidance is important, as is developing measurable objectives for the BP Seminars.

Third, ways to reduce costs should be considered. For example, other stakeholders at SAF/IA, the combatant and component command levels, and possibly even the functional MAJCOMs might be able to contribute resources if some of their objectives are addressed in the seminars.

Finally, developing an after-action report with critical stakeholders (including SAF/IA, AF/A3/5, and the component commands) is important for demonstrating the value of the seminars and discussing any issues or challenges that arise from them, using elements of the assessment framework.



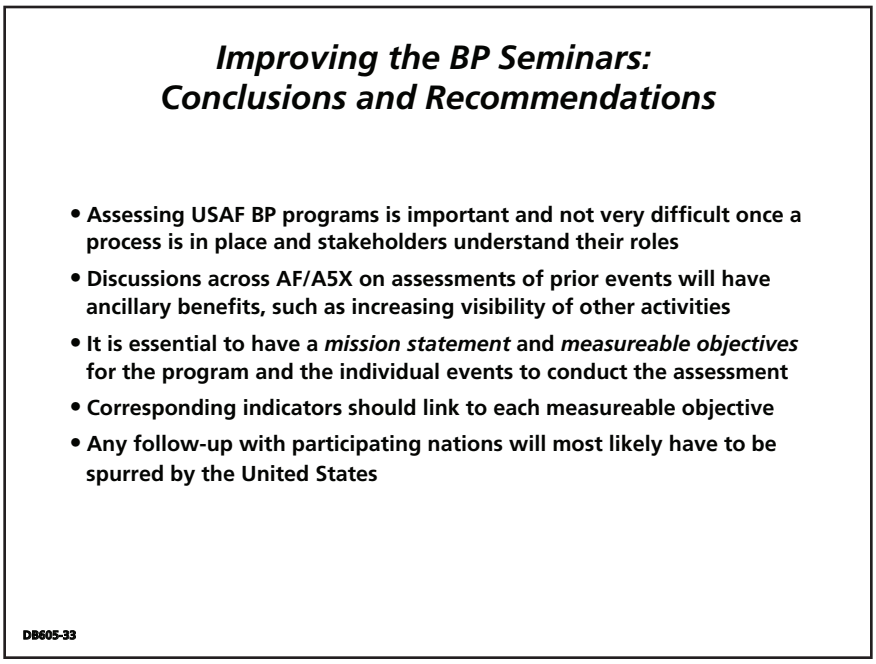
Another way to improve the outcomes and effects of the BP Seminars would be to establish an event follow-up process.

One element of this could be to collect data during the seminar specifically on a partner country's stated plans to implement, update, or change some program element in response to the seminar. Follow-up interviews after the event would seek to find out whether these plans were successful and why (or why not).

Another element could be a post-event survey that would serve two purposes: (1) demonstrate that the United States values the partner country's formal feedback and (2) be a primary data collection tool if circumstances do not allow greater data collection by other means, such as rapporteur note taking and participant interviewing.

Limiting the number of action items makes it easier to address the most pertinent and timely issues of importance to the USAF and its partners.

Finally, it would be useful to identify any potential linkages to other AF/A5X-managed programs, such as the Operator Engagement Talks and the Air and Space Interoperability Council, to further engage partner countries.



We conclude this documented briefing with five recommendations. First, assessing the BP Seminar program is important, worth the effort, and not very difficult once a process is in place and once the various stakeholders understand their roles.

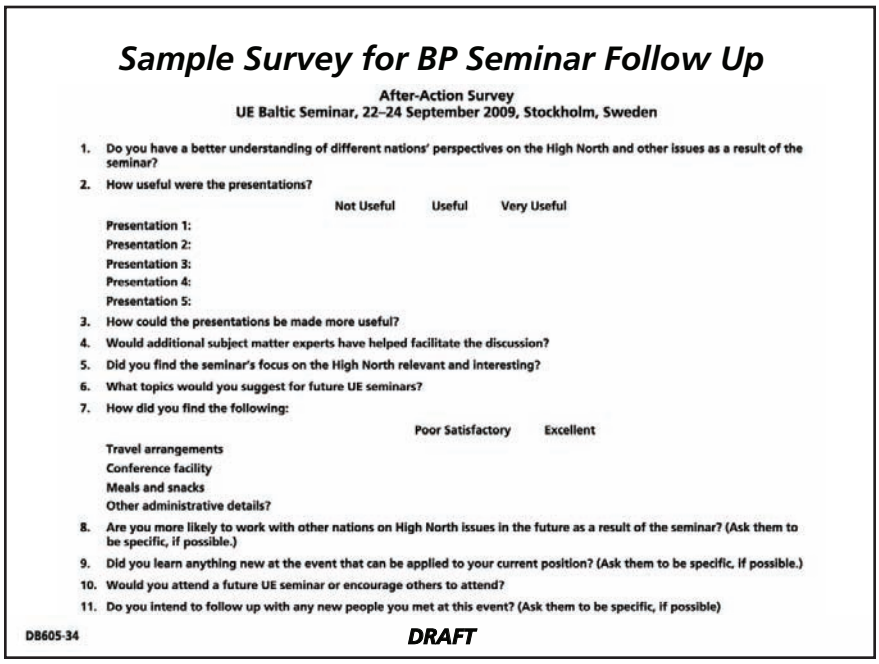
Second, discussions across AF/A5X on the assessments of prior BP events will have many ancillary benefits, including increasing the visibility of other activities.

Third, measurable objectives are essential for proper assessment of the success and utility of individual seminars and of the seminars over time, respectively. Furthermore, development of a mission statement unifies effort by providing common purpose through addressing links to strategic guidance and highlighting the unique value of the BP Seminars.

Fourth, corresponding indicators should be associated with each measurable objective, such as need for program, cost effectiveness, design and theory, and outcomes and effects. In this way, indicators captured during a BP seminar can be used to make a more informed assessment about whether or not a particular objective was accomplished and if not how to make future improvements.

Finally, it would be helpful to follow up with the host country after the event to assess the overall utility of the seminar and tailor follow-on seminars to meet specific and evolving host country needs. In this way, the United States will be able to more effectively use the BP Seminars to benefit the host country and increase interest for follow-on seminars.

In assessing the two BP Seminars, we believe the study has provided a proof of concept for future assessment of USAF-managed partnership-building programs such as the Operator Engagement Talks and the Military Personnel Exchange Program using RAND's assessment framework.



Sample Survey for BP Seminar Follow Up

After-Action Survey
UE Baltic Seminar, 22–24 September 2009, Stockholm, Sweden

1. Do you have a better understanding of different nations' perspectives on the High North and other issues as a result of the seminar?
2. How useful were the presentations?

	Not Useful	Useful	Very Useful
Presentation 1:			
Presentation 2:			
Presentation 3:			
Presentation 4:			
Presentation 5:			

3. How could the presentations be made more useful?
4. Would additional subject matter experts have helped facilitate the discussion?
5. Did you find the seminar's focus on the High North relevant and interesting?
6. What topics would you suggest for future UE seminars?
7. How did you find the following:

	Poor	Satisfactory	Excellent
Travel arrangements			
Conference facility			
Meals and snacks			
Other administrative details?			

8. Are you more likely to work with other nations on High North issues in the future as a result of the seminar? (Ask them to be specific, if possible.)
9. Did you learn anything new at the event that can be applied to your current position? (Ask them to be specific, if possible.)
10. Would you attend a future UE seminar or encourage others to attend?
11. Do you intend to follow up with any new people you met at this event? (Ask them to be specific, if possible)

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Provided here is a sample follow-up survey for the end of a BP Seminar. This survey solicits participant input on a number of seminar aspects, including whether the event enhanced their understanding of common challenges and other countries' perspectives on them, the quality of the presentations, the relevance of the topic and gathered expertise, the likelihood that they will implement any knowledge gained, and whether or not they intend to follow up with any of the other participants. All these questions seek an understanding of outcomes and effects of the seminars toward enhancing future events.

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