SUMMARY

The Army Vision recognizes explicitly that in future operations, Army forces will perform missions as part of a larger joint-combined-multinational force. Given the importance that Army doctrine places on coalition operations, and the capability gap between the U.S. Army and even the most sophisticated partner ground forces, it will be critical to take steps to increase multinational force compatibility (MFC) before any deployment. Preparing for such a future is one aspect of the Army’s Title 10 functions, and it entails finding ways to enhance the long-term compatibility of its units with units of the most important and most likely coalition partners. The Army’s international activities (IA), most of which enhance MFC, are the main vehicle for meeting this goal. This study’s principal purpose is to help improve the Army’s planning of its IA activities, in order to enhance the performance of ground forces in coalition operations across the spectrum of missions. This entails two key steps: (1) improve the organizational mechanisms to monitor and administer Army international activities, and (2) devise a long-term MFC plan.

IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL MECHANISMS

In recognition of the need for greater coordination of its international activities, the Army set up the office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Army, International Affairs (DUSA-IA), with the mandate to plan, coordinate, and facilitate the Army’s international activities. Despite the creation of DUSA-IA, a coherent formulation and implementation of the Army’s IA is still hampered by a lack of information sharing and coordination across Army agencies. Such
COORDINATION REMAINS ELUSIVE BECAUSE THE CURRENT BUDGETARY SYSTEM MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY RESOURCES DEVOTED TO IA. MOREOVER, DUSA-IA/MFC DOES NOT HAVE THE ABILITY TO MONITOR OR INFLUENCE THE ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS FOR ALL RELEVANT ARMY INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAMS. THIS LEADS TO TWO CONSEQUENCES DETRIMENTAL TO ARMY MFC EFFORTS. FIRST, THE LACK OF CLEAR AND DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF RESOURCES DEVOTED TO THE ARMY’S INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES (AND MFC EFFORTS SPECIFICALLY) REDUCES THE VISIBILITY OF THE ARMY’S EFFORTS IN INTRA-ARMY PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, AND BUDGETING PROCESS. SECOND, THE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE RESOURCES DEVOTED TO MFC MAKES IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE EVALUATION OF THE ARMY’S MFC EFFORTS, THUS CONSTRAINTING SEVERELY THE ARMY’S ABILITY TO ASSESS TRADEOFFS IN MFC EFFORTS AND TO CHOOSE MFC EFFORTS ACCURATELY. THUS, THE VISIBILITY AND VERIFIABILITY REQUIREMENTS OF ARMY MFC EFFORTS (NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE EXPLICIT IMPORTANCE PLACED ON MULTINATIONAL COALITION OPERATIONS IN THE ARMY VISION) ARE NOT BEING MET.

THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM LIE IN THE LACK OF EFFECTIVE AND APPROPRIATE PLANNING PROCESSES, WHERE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COALITION FORCES AS A WHOLE IS INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT TO MISSION SUCCESS. THE CURRENT SYSTEM WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR, AND THEREFORE IS NOT CAPABLE OF, SUPPORTING DUSA-IA IN ITS OFFICIAL ROLE AS THE AGENCY THAT (1) ESTABLISHES AND DISSEMINATES POLICY GUIDANCE ON HOW ARMY IA PROGRAMS SET SUBSTANTIVE OBJECTIVES AND FUNDING PRIORITIES, AND (2) PROVIDES A HIGH-LEVEL EVALUATION OF HOW THE MFC “SYSTEM” IS PERFORMING AS A WHOLE. THIS IN TURN MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR DUSA-IA TO FULFILL ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE ARMY’S RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES WILL REQUIRE CHANGES IN THE COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA ON FUNDING FOR SUCH ACTIVITIES. UNDER THE CURRENT SYSTEM, THE LACK OF INFORMATION ON FUNDING OR ACTIVITIES BY INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR THE ARMY TO KNOW WHETHER ACTIVITIES WITH SOME COUNTRIES ARE UNDER- OR OVEREMPHASIZED. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE ON-LINE DATABASE, THE THEATER ENGAGEMENT PLAN MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (TEPMIS), WILL BE A MECHANISM TO DO THIS, SINCE TEPMIS IS ENVISIONED TO PROVIDE CONSOLIDATED DATA ON ARMY INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO THE CINCs. THIS WOULD COVER MOST OF THE ACTIVITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO ENHANCED MFC CAPABILITIES, SUCH AS EXERCISES, OFFICER EXCHANGES, AND THE IMET PROGRAM. RESOURCES DEVOTED TO ACTIVITIES THAT MAY NOT BE INCLUDED IN TEPMIS, SUCH AS
those for cooperative R&D, are easily identified within the Army’s budget. Combining such data with that from TEPMIS should provide a relatively complete picture of the distribution of resources for Army IA—helping the CINCs, the Army agencies implementing the various programs, and DUSA-IA in its role as proponent of MFC-enhancing activities.

In seeking to improve DUSA-IA’s functioning, the Army might want to consider several alternative structures for managing the execution of its IA programs. We recommend a strengthening of the two-way relationship between DUSA-IA and the field offices, a link necessary to make DUSA-IA the key advocate and center of the establishment and dissemination of policy guidance on how IA programs should be run. In this case, DUSA-IA would not control funding for all IA, but it would have visibility of and influence over the allocation of funding for IA, particularly those that directly enhance MFC.

DEVISING A LONG-TERM MFC PLAN

For DUSA-IA to be effective in its role as the main proponent of the Army’s MFC-related activities, it needs to have an overall blueprint or vision of what it needs to accomplish. In the area of prioritization of partners and activities, current Army MFC efforts are not guided by any concrete long-term plan. Yet without such a blueprint, there is a real danger of ineffective and inefficient outcomes or, at a minimum, a lack of synergy between the various Army activities designed to enhance MFC. We propose a four-step process that (1) identifies the most likely long-term U.S. coalition partners, (2) provides a means of pinpointing the compatibility shortcomings of the potential partners across the full range of missions, (3) links specific Army MFC policies to the shortcomings, and (4) allows for cost-efficiency assessments at the program level and still within the overall planning framework, so as to enable the determination of cost-effective resource allocation. Once cost-effectiveness assessments of MFC efforts become possible, a fifth—currently hypothetical—step of integrating the Army’s own force planning with that of allies and likely partners would become a realistic option. In other words, Army planners could carry out cost-benefit assessments on the basis of tradeoffs between own and ally capabilities, knowing in detail the
costs involved and possibly in cooperation with select allies and partners.

To identify the most likely U.S. partners, we developed a methodology for anticipating the propensity of a given country to join the United States in a coalition operation. We applied the methodology to all countries of the world with a military establishment. To identify compatibility shortcomings, we developed the Military Compatibility Assessment Tool (MCAT), a substantively modified version of RAND’s DynaRank decision support system (and a Microsoft Excel workbook available for Macintosh and Windows-based personal computers) designed at RAND in 1998 to assist Department of Defense decisionmaking. Both the methodology for identifying countries likely to participate with the United States in coalition operations and the MCAT can be used by the Army in its future evaluations. The methodologies developed here are not meant to be used mechanistically. But they do provide shortcuts to decision-making and assist in creating a cohesive overall Army MFC policy.